



Apply by April 6 for USDA grants to train beginning farmers & ranchers

By Agri-Pulse Staff

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Washington, Feb. 17 – USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has announced the availability of more than \$18 million in grants to help train, educate and enhance the sustainability of the next generation of farmers through the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP).

“Beginning farmers and ranchers are critical to creating rural prosperity in the United States, but they face unique challenges and require education and assistance to ensure their profitability and sustainability,” said NIFA Director Roger Beachy. “These grants will provide training America’s next generation of farmers and ranchers need to succeed.”

BFRDP is an education, training, technical assistance and outreach program designed to help U.S. farmers and ranchers, specifically those who have been farming or ranching for 10 years or less. NIFA will make grants available to organizations to design programs to help beginning farmers and ranchers. Project results are expected to be disseminated widely to all farmers. Proposals are due April 6. For information and applications go to: www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/beginningfarmerandrancher.cfm

This is the second year of the program create by the 2008 Farm Bill which makes \$19 million more available in fiscal years 2011 and 2012. In FY 2009, BFRDP made 29 awards for approximately \$17 million.

Priority will go to projects that are partnerships and collaborations led by or including nongovernmental and community-based organizations with expertise in new agricultural producer training and outreach. All applicants are required to provide funds or in-kind support from non-federal sources at least equal to 25 percent of the federal funds requested.

NIFA plans to fund only standard projects and a few educational enhancement teams in FY 2010, with projects limited to three years. Budget requests in the proposals must not exceed \$250,000 per year. For standard projects, NIFA is looking for proposals in these specific areas:

- Mentoring, apprenticeships and internships
- Resources and referrals
- Assisting beginning farmers or ranchers in acquiring land from retiring farmers and ranchers
- Innovative farm and ranch transfer strategies
- Entrepreneurship and business training
- Model land leasing contracts
- Financial management training
- Whole farm planning
- Conservation assistance
- Risk management education
- Diversification and marketing strategies
- Curriculum development
- Understanding the impact of concentration and globalization
- Basic livestock and crop farming practices
- Acquisition and management of agricultural credit
- Environmental compliance
- Information processing

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