

description of the program for which funds are requested (either part I.C.1 for the Commodity Partnerships program or part II.C.1 for the Targeted States program), the applicant must demonstrate that it can identify specific tasks and provide reasonable time lines that further the purpose of this program. Applicants will obtain a higher score to the extent that the tasks of the project are specific, measurable, and reasonable, have specific time frames for completion, relate directly to the required activities and program objectives described in this announcement, and are sensitive to the needs of producers that are small, have limited resources, are minorities, or are beginning in the farming or ranching business. For guidance on a delivery plan format, applicants are encouraged to refer to a table format available from the RMA Web site (<http://www.rma.usda.gov><<http://www.rma.usda.gov>>) or upon request.

#### 4. Project Benefits—Maximum 25 Points

The applicant must demonstrate that the project benefits to farmers and ranchers in the State or area warrant the funding requested. Applicants will be scored according to the extent they can: (a) Reasonably estimate the number of producers reached through the project; (b) justify the estimates with clear specifics related to the delivery plan; (c) identify the actions producers will likely be able to take as a result of the project; and (d) identify specific measures for evaluating the success of the project. Reviewers' scoring will be based on the scope and reasonableness of the applicants' estimates of producers reached through the project, clear descriptions of specific expected project benefits for producers, and well-constructed plans for measuring the project's effectiveness.

#### 5. Bonus (Drought Mitigation in Selected Areas)—Maximum 20 Points

[Limited to applications under the Commodity Partnership program. Bonus scoring does not apply to applications submitted under the Targeted States program.] Bonus points will be awarded for those applications under the Commodity Partnership program that address the educational needs of producers of livestock and forage and livestock producers who use rangeland with respect to drought risk mitigation. Bonus points will be awarded based on the extent that the project focuses on helping these producers understand the programs, tools, and risk management strategies for effectively managing their operations in the face of drought in the States of Montana, South Dakota,

Arizona, Multi-state Area 1 (Utah, Nevada, Wyoming), New Mexico, Texas, Idaho, Oregon, Colorado, Louisiana, and Nebraska.

#### C. Confidentiality

The names of applicants, the names of individuals identified in the applications, the content of applications, and the panel evaluations of applications will all be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of review panel members will remain confidential throughout the entire review process and will not be released to applicants. At the end of the fiscal year, names of panel members will be made available. However, panelists will not be identified with the review of any particular application.

### Part V—Additional Information

#### A. Requirement To Use Program Logo

Applicants awarded partnership or cooperative agreements will be required to use a program logo and design provided by RMA for all instructional and promotional materials.

#### B. Requirement To Provide Project Information to an RMA-Selected Contractor

Applicants awarded partnership or cooperative agreements will be required to assist RMA in evaluating the effectiveness of its education programs by providing documentation of educational activities and related information to any contractor selected by RMA for program evaluation purposes.

#### C. Private Crop Insurance Organizations and Potential Conflicts of Interest

Private organizations that are involved in the sale of Federal crop insurance, or that have financial ties to such organizations, are eligible to apply for funding under either of the two educational programs described in this announcement. However, such entities will not be allowed to receive funding to conduct activities that would otherwise be required under a Standard Reinsurance Agreement or any other agreement in effect between FCIC and the entity. Such entities will also not be allowed the receive funding to conduct activities that could be perceived by producers as promoting one company's services or products over another's. If applying for funding, such organizations are encouraged to be sensitive to potential conflicts of interest and to describe in their application the specific actions they will take to avoid actual and perceived conflicts of interest.

#### D. Access to Panel Review Information

Upon written request from the applicant, scores from the evaluation panel, not including the identify of reviewers, will be sent to the applicant after the review and awards process has been completed.

#### E. Notification of Cooperative or Partnership Agreement Awards

Following approval by the awarding official of RMA of the applications selected for funding, project leaders whose applications have been selected for funding will be notified. Within the limit of funds available for such a purpose, the awarding official of RMA shall enter into partnership or cooperative agreements with those applicants whose applications are judged to be most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this announcement. The agreements provide the amount of Federal funds for use in the project period, the terms and conditions of the award, and the time period for the project. The effective date of the agreement shall be on the date the agreement is executed by both parties and it shall remain in effect for up to one year. RMA will then extend to award recipients, in writing, the authority to draw down funds for the purpose of conducting the activities listed in the agreement. All funds provided to the applicant by FCIC must be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are obligated in accordance with the approved agreement and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, and the applicability of Federal costs principles. No commitment of Federal assistance beyond the project period is made or implied for any award resulting from this notice. Notification of denial of funding will be sent to applicants after final funding decisions have been made. Reasons for denial of funding can include incomplete proposals, scored low or were duplicative.

#### F. Confidential Aspects of Proposals and Awards

When an application results in a partnership or cooperative agreement, it becomes a part of the official record of RMA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to be considered confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within an application, including the