

Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Washington, DC 20250; at 202-720-5623, 202-720-4730 (fax) or via electronic mail at [bhwitt@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:bhwitt@csrees.usda.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations (5 CFR part 1320) that implement the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the information collection and recordkeeping requirements imposed by the implementation of these guidelines have been submitted to OMB for approval. Those requirements will not become effective prior to OMB approval. The eligible institutions will be notified upon this approval.

*Title:* Reporting Requirements for State Plans of Work for Agricultural Research and Extension Formula Funds.

*Summary:* The purpose of this collection of information is to implement the requirements of section 7 of the Hatch Act of 1887, as amended (7 U.S.C. 361g); section 4 of the Smith-Lever Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 343); and section 1444(d) and section 1445(c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), as amended (7 U.S.C. 3221(d) and 3222 (c)), which require that before funds may be provided to a State or eligible institution under these Acts a plan of work must be submitted by the proper officials of the State or eligible institution, as appropriate, and approved by the Secretary of Agriculture.

*Need for the Information:* The Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA), Pub. L. 105-185, amended the Hatch Act of 1887, Smith-Lever Act, and sections 1444 and 1445 of NARETPA to require plans of work to be received and approved by CSREES prior to the distribution of funding authorized under these Acts. This collection of information will satisfy the plan of work reporting requirements as imposed by these Acts. This collection of information includes two parts: (1) The submission of a FY 2005-FY 2006 Plan of Work Update to extend the current FY 2000-FY 2004 5-Year Plan of Work by two years; and (2) the submission of the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results for the current 5-Year Plan of Work (*i.e.*, for FY 2003 and FY 2004) and the FY 2005-FY 2006 Plan of Work Update (*i.e.*, for FY 2005 and FY 2006).

1. The first collection of information is required in order to satisfy the above

amendments to the Acts that authorize the distribution of agricultural research and extension formula funds to States and eligible institutions. In addition to a description of planned programs, the FY 2005-FY 2006 Plan of Work Update must include information on how critical short-term, intermediate, and long-term agricultural issues in the State will be addressed in research and extension programs; how the State or eligible institution has developed a process to consult users of agricultural extension and research in the identification of critical agricultural issues in the State and the development of programs and projects targeting these issues (also referred to as stakeholder input); how the State or eligible institution has made efforts to identify and collaborate with other universities and colleges that have a unique capacity to address the identified agricultural issues in the State and the extent of current and emerging efforts (including the regional and/or multistate efforts) to work with these institutions; the manner in which research and extension, including research and extension activities funded other than through formula funds, will cooperate to address the critical issues in the State, including activities to be carried out separately, sequentially, or jointly; and for extension, the education and outreach programs already underway to convey available research results that are pertinent to a critical agricultural issue, including efforts to encourage multicounty cooperation in the dissemination of research information.

Section 103(e) of AREERA (7 U.S.C. 7613(e)) also required, effective October 1, 1999, that a merit review process be established at the 1862 land-grant institutions and 1890 land-grant institutions in order to obtain agricultural research and extension formula funds. The current 5-Year Plan of Work includes a section for the description of the merit review process to ensure that such a process is in place prior to the distribution of agricultural research and extension formula funds.

Sections 104 and 105 of AREERA also amended the Hatch Act and Smith-Lever Act to require that a specified amount of the agricultural research and extension formula funds be expended for multistate activities and that a description of these activities be reported in the plan of work. Section 204 of AREERA further amended the Hatch Act and Smith-Lever Act to require that a specified amount of the agricultural research and extension formula funds be expended for activities that integrate cooperative research and extension and that a description of these

activities be included in the plan of work. Two components of the 5-Year Plan of Work submission have been included to meet these additional requirements.

2. The second collection of information will be the Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results. This will be based on the existing 5-Year Plan of Work and the approved FY 2005-FY 2006 Plan of Work Update, and will assist CSREES in ensuring that federally supported and conducted research and extension activities are accomplished in accordance with the management principles set forth under section 102(d) of AREERA (7 U.S.C. 7612(d)). These principles require that to the maximum extent possible, CSREES shall ensure that federally supported research and extension activities are accomplished in a manner that integrates agricultural research, extension, and education functions to better link research to technology transfer and information dissemination activities; encourages regional and multistate programs to address relevant issues of common concern and to better leverage scarce resources; and achieves agricultural research, extension, education objectives through multi-institutional and multifunctional approaches and by conducting research at facilities and institutions best equipped to achieve these objectives.

CSREES is proposing to request a Plan of Work Update to the existing 5-Year Plan of Work (*i.e.*, FY 2000-FY 2004) instead of a new 5-Year Plan of Work in order to allow CSREES to incorporate the recommendations from the USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG) Audit No. 13001-3-Te, CSREES Implementation of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) in the plan-of-work process. In addition, CSREES needs time, once the final recommendations are made, to develop a viable electronic option for compliance with the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA). Currently, institutions are submitting their reports via e-mail in WordPerfect file format, Microsoft Word file format, or ASCII file format, and CSREES proposes to have the institutions to do so until a viable electronic option is available. CSREES also is in the process of developing a "One-Solution" for reporting for all CSREES grant programs including those covered in the 5-Year Plan of Work. A "One-Solution" integrated reporting system will be more streamlined and effective, eliminate duplicative reporting, and provide additional program and fiscal