

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: STRATEGIC AGRICULTURAL INITIATIVE (SAI) GRANT PROGRAM

ACTION: REQUEST FOR INITIAL PROPOSALS (RFIP) - INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

RFIP NO: REG4-APTMD-04

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) N0: 66.716

SUMMARY: The goal of the SAI program is to reduce the risks from pesticides, especially to infants and children, used in the production of food and fiber with an emphasis on minor use crops (most fruits and vegetables). The in-field adoption by farmers *and consumers* of already identified potential low-risk integrated crop or pest management tools and strategies is a priority. Previous awards and information about the Region 4 SAI can be found at the following web site:

< <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/local/region4/ag/index.htm> >

Applications for this competitive opportunity are being solicited by EPA Region 4's Pesticides Section.

DATES: Projects must be postmarked, e-mailed, or faxed no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on **Friday, July 30, 2004**. Applicants will be notified of their status by phone and/or email on Tuesday, **August 31, 2004**. Applicants must submit a complete request for federal assistance by 5:00 p.m. EST on **Thursday September 30, 2004**.

FUNDING/AWARDS: There is approximately \$387,000 available for grants under this call for proposals. Grantees may request from \$50,000 to \$100,000 for a single project. **GRANT FUNDS CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE FOR WORK BEGINNING IN LATE WINTER OR EARLY SPRING 2005.**

ELIGIBILITY: Non-profit, State organizations and Tribes in Region 4 (AL, GA, FL, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN) are eligible to receive funding under the SAI grant program.

SELECTION CRITERIA: Projects should include risk reduction from highly toxic pesticides as their strongest component but may include promotion of other best management practices, which ultimately lead to less reliance on pesticides. A holistic approach to pest management is encouraged which considers the entire ecosystem, including predator and prey ratio and soil health. A significant goal is to rapidly spread known technology and information about ways to reduce dependence on the more highly toxic pesticides. Projects which partner with farmers and include farmer to farmer transfer of information are strongly encouraged.

If the project submitted builds on an ongoing or previous SAI project, please include a detailed explanation as to how the additional funds will expand the scope of the current or past project.

Projects will be considered for planning, field research, education and/or implementation, however *strong preference will be given to implementation projects.*

Desirable: *Projects which are responding to a documented pest management need, such as the loss of a*

key pesticide, which has been identified by farmers; has the potential to result in wide-scale changes in agricultural practices; there is a viable solution to the problem or for which a recent USDA strategic pest management plan already exists. Projects which address pesticide issues within a watershed where pesticides have been identified as contributing to ground and/or surface water contamination.

MATCHING FUNDS AND INDIRECT COSTS: No matching funds are required, however it is strongly encouraged that projects leverage funds from other partners to make maximum use of resources. Indirect costs are determined by the participating educational or non-profit organization's previously set rate for federal agencies. This is the **maximum** amount of indirect costs which can be reimbursed. Indirect costs should be included in the amount of federal funds requested to complete the project. *Proposals that are designed to maximize the use of resources for "on-the-ground" activities will be viewed more favorably than projects that have high administrative costs. Projects similarly ranked with lower indirect costs will compete more favorably.*

REVIEW PROCESS: An EPA Region 4 multi-media review team of at least four persons will evaluate all grants submitted and rank them according to the stated objectives and criteria listed below. A total score of 110 points is possible, including bonus points.

RANKING CRITERIA: Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criterion.	Maximum Points Per Criterion
1. How well the project meets the goals of the SAI to reduce pesticide risks and transition farmers or other targeted audience such as consumers to safer alternatives	20
2. Evidence (<i>such as letters of support</i>) that the project has the support of local farmers or other targeted audience, if an implementation project.	10
3. Likelihood that the project will result in changed behavior on the part of the target audience.	10
4. Qualifications and experience of the applicant relative to the proposed project and past performance, if a recipient of a previous SAI grant or other federal grant involving pesticides.	10
5. Applicant's demonstrated experience in the field of the proposed activity.	10
6. Applicant has the properly trained staff, facilities and infrastructure and <i>partners</i> in place to conduct the project.	10
7. Project clearly identifies how project results will be conveyed to the public.	10
8. Describes measurable outcomes and a method for evaluating success at the conclusion of the project. <i>We want to know what changed as a result of the project. How is the environment improved?</i>	20

Bonus points (10 pts.): Project focuses on water bodies that States identify as impaired by pesticides on their 303d lists.

NOTE: Additional criteria addressing geographical distribution and critical crop needs across Region 4 as well as lower indirect costs may also be applied. The Region reserves the right to reject all proposals or applications and make no awards.

DURATION OF PROJECT: Project duration should not exceed twenty-four (24) months from the funded date.

PROPOSAL FORMAT: See “2004/05 Proposal Format” on page 4 for details.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Applicants when submitting their proposals should clearly mark information they consider confidential. EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency regulations at 40 CFR, Part 2, Subpart B.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW: Awards are subject to the dispute resolution process in accordance with 40 CFR 30.63 and Part 31, subpart F. Intergovernmental review requirements are based on Executive Order 12372.

MAILING ADDRESS:

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APPLICATION PROCESS: Applicants receiving notice of favorable status on projects submitted will be required to submit a complete federal grant application package by 5:00 p.m. EST on **Thursday, September 30, 2004**. Prompt and complete submission of your application will reduce processing time. While funds **may** be available earlier, project directors should plan to begin projects, depending on the nature of the project, in winter or spring of 2005. **Failure to submit the grant package by September 30, 2004, may result in EPA withdrawing funding and allocating it to another applicant.**

The application package must include completed forms from the application kit. Application kits are available at http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm or by calling the EPA Contact above. The application kit contains the following information:

- Application for Federal Assistance - (SF 424)
- Instructions for completing the application
- Assurances/Certifications

Prospective applicants may wish to obtain a copy of the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm Select from sidebar “Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 40, Part 30 (for institutions of higher education, hospitals, and other non-profit organizations) or Title 40 , Part 31 (State and Local Governments). These sections of the CFR include regulations applicable to assistance awards to be made under this program. Copies of the CFR are available at your local U.S. Government Bookstore, the U.S. Government Printing Office or on the Internet at:

<http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_00/40cfr1_00.html> Scroll to “Part 31” and select..

Strategic Agricultural Initiative 2004/05 Proposal Format

Proposals must be typewritten, double spaced in 12 point or larger print using 8.5 X 11 inch paper with minimum 1 inch lateral and vertical margins. **The page limit for the narrative section is ten (10) pages.** Pages must be numbered in order starting with the proposal narrative and continuing through appendices. One original is required. An electronic copy is requested. Please submit the electronic copy either on a 3.5" disk, “IBM” compatible, readable in Word Perfect WP6/7/8 for Windows or via email to: <Schroeder.Lora@epa.gov>

Cover Page

Proposals must use the cover page format provided in **Attachment A**. The cover page must include the total duration of the project (project period) as well as the proposed duration for which funding is requested (budget period). (Note: Remember funds are not expected to be available for use before late winter/early spring of 2005.)

Abstract

The abstract shall be a stand-alone document, not to exceed one page, containing the specifics of what is proposed and what you expect to accomplish regarding measuring movement toward reducing pesticide risk and/or use or pollution prevention. It shall identify the measurable environmental results you expect including potential human health and ecological benefits.

Table of Contents

A one-page table listing the different parts of your proposal and the page number on which each part begins.

Proposal Narrative

(Parts I through VI not to exceed 10 pages)

- I. Project Title** - A brief description of the project.
- II. Objectives** - A numbered list (1, 2, etc.) of concisely written project objectives - in most cases, each objective can be stated in a single sentence.

- III. **Justification** - For each objective, discuss the potential outcome in terms of environmental, human health, pesticide risk and/or use reduction or pollution prevention. If appropriate, the target pest(s) and crop(s) should be explicitly stated. This section should be numbered with a justification corresponding to each objective.
- IV. **Literature Review** - Briefly describe relevant information currently available. This should also include information on projects currently in progress that are relevant or provide the basis for either the experimental design or the validation of a new approach to pest management.
- V. **Approach and Methods** - Describe in detail how the program will be carried out. Describe how the system or approach will support the program goals.
- VI. **Impact Assessment** - Please state how you will evaluate the success of the program in terms of measurable results. *We want to know what has changed as a result of the project. How is the environment improved? For instance, if your goal is the reduced use of toxic pesticides, there should be a baseline from which to measure success.*

Proposal Appendices

These appendices must be included in the grant proposal. Additional appendices are not permitted.

- A. **Literature Cited** - List cited key literature references alphabetically by author. The objective of this section is to demonstrate knowledge of related projects and/or information of potential relevance to the project.
- B. **Timetable** - A timetable that includes what will be accomplished under each of the objectives during the project and when completion of each objective is anticipated.
- C. **Major Participants** - This appendix should list all farmers, farm organizations, researchers, educators, and conservationists and others having a major role in the proposal. Provide name, organizational affiliation or occupation (such as farmer) and a description of the role each will play in the project. Letters of support are strongly encouraged.
- D. **Biographical Information**- Applicant should provide biographical information sufficient to determine experience in the field of the proposed activity.

E.

Project Budget

Project Period: From:

To:

Budget Category	EPA Grant Funding	Other Funding Available (not required)	Total Funding
Personnel			
Fringe Benefits			
Travel			
Equipment			
Supplies			
Contractual			
Other (detail):			
Total			

**Attachment A
COVER PAGE FORMAT**

PROJECT TITLE:

PROJECT COORDINATOR:

Organization:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Fax:

PROJECT DURATION:

TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST:	REQUEST	MATCHING FUNDS (Not Required)	
		Non-Federal	Federal
First Year Funding:	_____	_____	_____
Second Year Funding:	_____	_____	_____
Total Funding Request:	_____	_____	_____