

GUIDELINES FOR MULTISTATE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Developed by the State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors

in cooperation with the

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA
(CSREES)

and the

Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy
(ESCOP)

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GUIDELINES FOR MULTISTATE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

MISSION STATEMENT FOR MULTISTATE RESEARCH

The mission of the multistate research program is to enable research on high -priority topics among the State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAES) in partnership with the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), other research institutions and agencies, and with the Cooperative Extension Service (CES). In this way, technological opportunities and complex problem solving activities which are beyond the scope of a single SAES, can be approached in a more efficient and comprehensive way.

INTRODUCTION

The Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) amended the Hatch Act of 1887, the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, and sections 1444 and 1445 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1979 (NARETPA). The amendments require USDA-approved Plans of Work from each of the eligible SAES, prior to the distribution of the formula funding provided under these authorities.

The AREERA also amended the Hatch Act to identify the Multistate Research Fund (MRF) (previously named the Regional Research Fund). The amendment specifies that:

“Not less than 25 percent shall be allotted to the States for cooperative research employing multidisciplinary approaches in which a State agricultural experiment station, working with another State agricultural experiment station, the Agricultural Research Service, or a college or university, cooperates to solve problems that concern more than 1 State. The funds available under this paragraph, together with the funds available under subsection (b) for a similar purpose, shall be designated as the ‘Multistate Research Fund, State Agricultural Experiment Stations’.”

Both the Hatch Act and the Smith-Lever Act were amended to require integrated research and extension activities. The amount to be expended was set at not less than 25 percent, or twice the states' FY 1997 expenditures for integrated activities. The Smith-Lever Act was also amended to require that each institution receiving funds under Sections 3(b) of that Act expend a portion of those funds for a multistate program, beginning in FY 2000.

The AREERA also requires that all formula-funded research (including multistate research) undergo scientific peer review. This review requirement is the responsibility of the individual stations, but this responsibility may be delegated to the regional association of SAES directors from which a multistate activity originates. Guidelines for peer review that are understood to meet this requirement are provided in Appendix C. For purposes of multistate research, a peer review is considered to be an acceptable substitute for merit review.

APPLICABILITY

The following guidelines supersede the previous administrative manual for Regional Research, and interpret the administrative guidance developed by CSREES for consistent implementation of procedures by participating SAES and other cooperators.

The 1890 and 1994 Land-Grant Universities are not required in the AREERA to have any multistate research or any integrated research and extension activities. Also, the 1862 Land-Grant Universities of American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Micronesia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are exempted from the integrated research and extension activity requirements. However, any of these institutions may voluntarily participate in these types of activities.

ORGANIZATION

The regional associations of SAES directors serve as coordinating entities for multistate research activities. The intent is to bring institutions together, plan for identification of problems and opportunities that can be addressed through multistate collaboration, and plan for shared use of resources. These regional associations are made up of the SAES directors of the following states and territories:

North Central Regional Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors: Connecticut (two stations), Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York (two stations), Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.

Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors: Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Micronesia, The Northern Mariana Islands, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

These guidelines are intended to provide recommendations on the organization and operation of multistate research activities. For region-specific information on implementation procedures go to the regional associations' home pages at the following URLs:

North Central	http://www.wisc.edu/ncra/
Northeastern	http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/NERA/

Southern <http://www.msstate.edu/org/saaesd/>
Western <http://www.colostate.edu/Orgs/WAAESD/>

For more general information, go to the CSREES home page at the following URL:

CSREES <http://www.ree.usda.gov/new/csrees.htm>

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CSREES: The Secretary of Agriculture is responsible for the administration of the multistate research program and has delegated this responsibility to CSREES. In addition to promulgating rules and regulations for carrying out the program, CSREES is responsible for providing the leadership for the program at the national level and provides administrative oversight and authorization for the individual and collective, federally supported activities of the SAES.

SAES Directors: SAES directors have primary responsibility for the multistate research program in their respective states and for determining the most effective use of federal and non-federal funds in support of multistate research. The directors are responsible for peer reviews of all proposed projects. For MRF projects and certain other activities, peer review is delegated to the regional associations of SAES directors. They also authorize their station's representatives to multistate research activities and determine the resources to be committed [in terms of financial support, and for human resources (SYs, PYs, and TYs)]. They are expected to document all expenditures through appropriate reporting mechanisms. The directors are required to submit CRIS Forms AD-416, AD-417, AD-419, and AD-421 to document their station's participation in, and contributions to, multistate research projects.

Regional SAES Directors' Associations: The regional associations are responsible for obtaining (either directly or indirectly) information from organized stakeholder listening activities, establishing the region's research priorities, managing their region's research portfolio, and for establishing partnerships with appropriate entities. The associations are responsible for assuring, through peer reviews, the quality of the science conducted, and the relevance of multistate research activities to stakeholder needs. Regional associations delegate responsibilities to administrative advisors (AA) that ensure the efficient and effective conduct of multistate research and other regional activities.

Each of the SAES Regional Associations maintains a regional association office administered by an Executive Director who coordinates all aspects of the multistate research program. This office is an information resource for Administrative Advisors, committee chairs, and committee members in the development and implementation of multistate activities. The location of these offices can be found on the respective association www homepages.

Administrative Advisors: An AA is appointed for each multistate research project, coordinating committee, information exchange group, and advisory committee. The AA is responsible for

facilitating communication, making arrangements for peer reviews of proposals, applying the appropriate national and regional policies, assuring the quality of the governance of that activity, authorizing annual and other meetings, fulfilling the reporting requirements of the activity, and facilitating the conduct of an activity's business.

Representative From CSREES: A national program leader (NPL) is assigned by the Administrator of CSREES as the Agency's representative to each multistate research project, coordinating committee, or other activity for involvement beginning with the earliest stages of organization. CSREES representatives provide a national perspective to individual projects or other activities and to the regional associations by assisting in reviews of their multistate research portfolios. CSREES representatives also assist in assuring that a multistate research activity does not represent duplication of effort. In addition, CSREES representatives are responsible for providing communication from and to the federal partner and provide administrative reviews of projects or activity proposals. They also monitor, in conjunction with the AA, the progress and accomplishments of the project. The nature and extent of such involvement by representatives of CSREES greatly facilitates the process for review and approval of projects and other activities.

Regional Multistate Research Committee: Each regional association of directors may choose to have a multistate research committee or subcommittee. This entity may be delegated the responsibility for either approving or recommending to the membership project or activity development, and the evaluation of the progress of all approved activities.

TYPES OF MULTISTATE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Multistate Research Projects: The membership of a Multistate Research Project is called the technical committee, and is made up of SAES scientists, an AA, CSREES representative, other public and private sector scientists, and as applicable, extension specialists and/or extension agents. This type of activity involves cooperative, jointly planned research employing multidisciplinary approaches in which a SAES, working with other SAES, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), or a college or university, cooperates to solve problems that concern more than one state and usually more than one region. In addition, the following must be demonstrated in the project proposal:

1. The objectives are clearly focused.
2. Each participant listed has direct involvement in the accomplishment of the stated objectives.
3. The project is multistate and multidisciplinary
4. The project proposal has been peer-reviewed.
5. The proposed project is oriented toward accomplishment of specific outcomes and impacts and based on priorities developed from stakeholder input.
6. The project is responsive to CSREES goals.

The format for Multistate Research Projects appears in Appendix A. Steps for development and

approval of Multistate Research projects are described in Appendix N.

Multistate Research Coordinating Committees (CC) and Information Exchange Groups

(IEG): The membership of a CC or an IEG is made up of an AA, CSREES representative, scientists, and as applicable, extension specialists and/or extension agents. A coordinating committee or IEG provides opportunity for scientists, specialists, and others to work cooperatively to solve problems that concern more than one state, share research data, and coordinate research and other types of activities. This is presently one of the most common mechanisms for functionally integrated activities such as the regional IPM programs. The format for requesting establishment of a CC or IEG appears in Appendix B. These activities are reviewed and approved by the sponsoring regional association. (Appendices J and K are suggested as guidelines for regional associations). The steps for development and approval of Multistate Research CCs and IEGs are described in Appendix N.

National Research Support Projects (NRSP): NRSPs are made up of four AAs (one appointed from each SAES regional association), a CSREES representative, and scientists from SAES and elsewhere, as appropriate. This type of activity focuses on the development of enabling technologies, support activities (such as to collect, assemble, store, and distribute materials, resources and information), or the sharing of facilities needed to accomplish high priority research, but which is not of itself primarily research. NRSPs are eligible for off-the-top funding. The format for requesting establishment of an NRSP appears in Appendix B. The steps for development of NRSPs are described in Appendix N.

NRSP AAs will present budgets to their regional associations at their spring meetings. SAESs will vote on the NRSP budgets and the votes (electronic or otherwise) from each region will be tallied by the respective ED no later than June 1. The EDs will then pool the votes and forward a single recommendation to CSREES for funding in the next fiscal year. Requests from a NRSP for budget changes that are necessitated by extraordinary situations should be brought to the attention of the regional associations for consideration at their spring meetings.

NRSPs will be reviewed in their fourth year (i.e., one year prior to the scheduled termination date) and the results of this review will be available prior to the spring meetings of the regional associations. Projects may be reviewed at other times during the course of the project if a review is deemed necessary based on consultation with the project AA's.

Rapid Response Research Activity: The purpose of rapid response research (Series-500) activities is to provide a mechanism to assure responsiveness to acute crises, emergencies, and opportunities using the multistate research approach and MRF. Activities may range from formally organized research on targeted objectives to very informal research coordination or information exchange activity, depending on the circumstances. To create a rapid response activity directors from two or more SAES must agree to form the activity. The proposal is a report of intent which is submitted to the regional association's chair (usually through the ED's office). The Chair of the regional association approves the project and serves as the AA to the

project or assigns that responsibility to another director. Neither CSREES nor regional association approval is required. The technical committee for a Rapid Response Research activity is made up of an AA, CSREES representative, research scientists, and as applicable, extension specialists and/or extension agents. These activities have two years from the date of initiation to convert to an association sanctioned activity; thus, the technical committee has the option, at a later date, to obtain approval as a multistate research project or other multistate research activity, through normal procedures. The format for requesting the establishment of a Rapid Response Research Activity appears in Appendix F. Steps for development of a rapid response research project or activity are described in Appendix N.

Integrated Multistate Activities: Any of the above types of activities may be suitable as an integrated activity with CES. Extension specialists and agents may be invited to participate in any activity deemed appropriate by the responsible research and extension directors. The sponsoring regional association of SAES or CES Directors will document extension's participation. It is the responsibility of CES Directors to document expenditures through appropriate reporting mechanisms.

Research Advisory Committees: An advisory committee is most commonly made up of university department heads/chairs, or other institutional managers, along with an AA and sometimes an agency representative. Advisory committees provide stakeholder linkages, technical advice and review to regional associations. These committees operate under the purview of regional associations.

**MULTISTATE RESEARCH ACTIVITY IDENTIFIERS
AND CODES COMPARED AMONG REGIONS**

Description	Northeast Region	North Central Region	Southern Region	Western Region
Multistate Research Projects	NE-	NC-	S-	W-
Committee of scientists/extension faculty that coordinate research and exchange of information	NEC-	NCR-	IEG- (Information Exchange Group) SERA-IEG- (Extension/Research Activity -IEG)	WCC-
Committee responsible for writing proposal for new/revised MRP	NE <i>Ad Hoc</i> Technical Committee	NCT-	DC- (Development Committee)	W <i>Ad Hoc</i> Technical Committee
Emergency or Rapid Response Research Activities	NE - 500 Series Projects	NC - 500 Series Projects	S - 500 Series Projects	W - 500 Series Projects
Committee serving in advisory role usually by discipline and consisting of Dept. Heads/Chairs	NEA-	NCA- NCS-	AC- (Advisory Committee)	n/a

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In order to facilitate the organization and operation of the national multistate research portfolio the four participating regional associations of SAES directors have agreed to the following policies and procedures.

- The portfolio of projects and other activities should reflect the needs of the region's stakeholders and the priorities derived from those expressions of need. Inasmuch as the collective SAES system is to operate as a national network, any SAES is free to address its priorities through participation in the projects that are sponsored by any of the other regional associations.
- Membership to multistate research activities (but not access to formula funding) is open to all SAES scientists, Extension educators, and others who are in a position to contribute to that activity. This should be seen as encouragement to committees to reach out to others when organizing an activity, recognizing that the multistate research authority is a unique and powerful organizing principle.
- Requests to join an on-going multistate research project must originate with the administrator of the proposed member's institution; in the case of a SAES that would be the director; for ARS that might be a laboratory director; for a private laboratory that might be the scientist's

supervisor. This correspondence must include the information required in Appendix E. The request is forwarded to the AA who will consult with the technical committee to arrange for implementation. The AA working with the ED's office of the sponsoring regional association and CSREES will arrange for completing the necessary documentation.

- Changes in an on-going project which cannot be handled by individual state or agency addenda should be effected by amendments to the approved Multistate Research project proposal. These are approved in the same manner as new projects or revisions. The amendment will be added to the original project proposal as an attachment. The amendment should also be reflected in the SAES-422 annual report as part of the minutes of the annual meeting.
- It is recommended that there be one standard type of governance for all multistate research activities with the election of a chair, a chair-elect, and a secretary. All officers are to be elected for at least two-year terms to provide continuity. Administrative guidance will be provided by an assigned AA.
- All decisions by a committee will be made in an open and democratic process. To ensure fairness in decision making, voting is restricted to one vote per respective entity; an entity being a SAES, CES, federal agency, private sector representative, etc.
- One AA will represent the sponsoring regional association, having management oversight responsibilities for that activity. Eligibility for serving as an AA is determined by the sponsoring regional association. All appointments as an AA rest with the authority of the sponsoring regional association. In the case of NRSPs, one AA from each region shall be appointed, with one of those to be designated as the lead AA.
- Decisions regarding annual allocations to NRSPs are made at the spring meetings of the regional associations. All other decisions on national off-the-top funding are made at the annual meeting of the Experiment Station Section (ESS) by a simple majority of all eligible SAES directors present at the meeting. Eligibility for voting is defined as one vote per member station.
- The AAs for a new (or revised) NRSP will present the project and its five year budget plan to the regional associations at their spring meetings. The NRSP will be approved for five years. However, its budget will be voted on annually.
- The process for record keeping for multistate research management shall be an electronic (paperless) management system using CRIS, the regional associations' World Wide Web (WWW) home pages, individual project and activity home pages (see Appendix L), and the ESCOP WWW home page, as the primary holders of information.

- Common multistate research activity proposal formats are used by SAES and the regional associations (refer to Appendices A, B, and F for proposal formats).
- Peer review will be conducted following the guidelines (refer to Appendices C and G) and certified in the state Plan of Work.
- The information requested in Appendix E, “Format for Projected Participation Reporting,” shall be a required component in all proposals for multistate research activities. This information:
 1. Demonstrates that an activity is multistate, multidisciplinary, and appropriately, integrated.
 2. Demonstrates that the classification of a multistate research activity relates to the federal-state partnership's five goals, which in turn relates to the state-based Plans of Work. This form will be used by the respective association’s Multistate Research Committee for review as per Appendix H.
 3. Identifies the objectives in which each person will be a participant.
- The AA of each multistate research activity will submit an annual SAES-422 (see Appendix D) to highlight the collective outputs, outcomes, and possible impacts resulting from an activity.
- All identifiers and titles of terminating projects will be changed at the end of their approved period unless specifically approved by the sponsoring regional association of SAES Directors and CSREES for an extension. A request for an extension describes incomplete activities (e.g., data collection, validation, analysis, and/or writing) necessary to complete the project objective(s), and why unforeseen obstacles prevented timely completion. An extension request which is contingent upon the fate of a proposed new, replacement, or revised MRF project is unacceptable. A request for an extension, with justification, is submitted by the AA to the multistate research committee with sufficient time to allow for review and recommendation by the regional association of directors. Generally, this requires one year in advance of the programmed termination date of the project.
- Any multistate research project may be approved for a period of time appropriate to the activities to be performed. Most importantly, the initial proposal should set out the intended outcomes and set intermediate milestones for judging progress. Normally the time allowed would be for five years, but a regional association is not bound to that amount of time. For example, a plant breeding project may need to be approved for 15 years. The ultimate responsibility for monitoring the performance and results of a multistate research project rests with the sponsoring regional association of SAES Directors. It is recommended that periodic (e.g., every three years) and/or midterm evaluations be conducted for all types of multistate research activities.

- The standard format for all printed materials is Times New Roman, in 12-point font size. Material should contain one inch margins and single spaced text with double spaces between paragraphs and headings.

PROJECT APPROVAL

Multistate Research Projects: Upon approval of a multistate research project by the sponsoring regional association (see Appendix H), the Chair of that association's Multistate Research Committee, through the ED's office, will submit the proposal with cover correspondence (see Appendix M) to CSREES certifying compliance with the requirements of AREERA and CSREES. These requirements are:

- Multistate (i.e., results benefitting two or more states)
- Multidisciplinary/cooperative
- Peer-reviewed
- Clearly focused objectives
- Each participant listed has direct involvement in the accomplishment of objectives
- Orientation on outcomes and impacts
- Based on priorities developed from stakeholder input
- Project is responsive to CSREES goals

CSREES will then, in turn, authorize expenditure of MRF through notification to each participating entity.

REPORTING

Attention has been given to limiting reporting requirements to those needed to meet the requirements of AREERA as interpreted through discussion between CSREES and the SAES.

CRIS Forms: Forms approved by CSREES [the AD Series (-416, -417, -419, and -421) and others] will serve as the basis for planning, implementing and reporting. SAES directors will continue to be responsible for submitting appropriate forms at the initiation of an approved multistate project as described in these guidelines.

SAES-422: The AA for each multistate research activity with assistance of its members submits an annual SAES-422 report to highlight the milestone accomplishments, collective outputs, outcomes, and possible impacts resulting from an activity. The report is due 60 calendar days following the annual meeting. This annual report should also include minutes of meetings or citation of their location (URL) if they are to be found at a website for the activity. The SAES-422 is intended to facilitate a participating station's Plan of Work accomplishments reporting, and should assist national activities that document the contributions of multistate activities. The locations of record for the SAES-422 reports will be the CRIS for multistate research projects, and the regional association's ED's office for all other activities. SAES-422 reports are forwarded electronically by AA's to their Executive Director. Annual reports for multistate

research projects are then forwarded to CRIS by the Executive Director.

Orientation on Outcomes/Impacts: Activities approved for expenditure of MRF are to be organized around research outcomes/impacts. This reflects the intent of Congress, as stated in the purposes of agricultural research and education in the AREERA, and is expected to give more focus to the activity's intended objectives. The outcome/impact expectations are reflected in the recommended multistate research activity proposal formats (see Appendices A, B, and F).

Annual Evaluations: CSREES will use the individual station's annual SAES Plan of Work reports on accomplishments and results and the SAES-422 reports to evaluate the success of multistate research activities.

COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE

Chair: The chair of the committee is responsible for organizing the meeting agenda, conducting the meeting, and assuring that task assignments are completed. Normally, the chair is elected for at least a two-year term, to provide continuity. Chairs are eligible for reelection.

Chair-elect: The chair-elect normally succeeds the chair, and is expected to support the chair by carrying out duties assigned by the chair. The chair-elect serves as the chair in the absence of the elected chair. Normally the chair-elect is elected for at least two years. The chair-elect is eligible for reelection.

Secretary: The secretary is responsible for the distribution of documents prior to the meeting. The secretary is also responsible for keeping records on decisions made at meetings (a.k.a. keeping the minutes), maintaining an updated roster of participants (as a list server), and assisting in the preparation of the accomplishments report (i.e., the SAES-422). The secretary normally succeeds the chair-elect. Secretaries are eligible for reelection.

Members: In addition to carrying out the agreed research collaboration, research coordination, information exchange, or advisory activities, project members are responsible for reporting progress, contributing to the ongoing progress of the activity, and communicating their accomplishments to the committee's members and their respective employing institutions.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AA	Administrative Advisor
AREERA	Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998
ARS	Agricultural Research Service, USDA
CC	Coordinating Committee
CES	Cooperative Extension Service
CRIS	Current Research Information System, USDA
CSREES	Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA
ED	Executive Director
ESCOPE	Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy
ESS	Experiment Station Section
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
FY	Fiscal Year
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act of 1993
IEG	Information Exchange Group
MRF	Multistate Research Fund
NRSP	National Research Support Projects
PY	Professional Year
SAES	State Agricultural Experiment Station(s)
SY	Scientist Year
TY	Technical Year
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

GLOSSARY

Activity - A generic term to indicate a research project or extension program. The ambiguity of this term allows research and extension directors to coordinate intent without disagreement on terms.

Administrative Advisor - A research administrator that has been delegated the responsibility by his or her regional association to represent the association's responsibilities for a multistate research project, coordinating committee, information exchange group, or advisory committee. Usually the administrative advisor is a current director of an SAES, or, as allowed by individual regional associations, may be an extension director, a department head, or ARS administrator.

Base Funds - A term synonymous with formula funds, but preferred by some research managers as less pejorative.

Coordinating Committee - An authorized group of research scientists and in many cases extension specialists and extension agents working on a topic area of shared interests, with coordinated activities and the exchange of outputs. (Synonymous with Information Exchange Group.)

Electronic Signatures - Administrative authorizations of decisions and approvals for actions, sent electronically as accepted substitutes for pen-and-ink signatures.

Formula Funds - As authorized by the Hatch Act of 1887, annual federal appropriations that are distributed to states based on state agricultural profiles.

Full-Time Equivalent - A management term used to express time commitment or appointment of people. For example, 0.5 FTE is a one half-time appointment. FTEs are commonly summed to express amounts of time commitment, such that two half-time appointments working on a similar activity are termed 1.0 FTE.

Function - Teaching, research and outreach are the three functions of a land-grant university. In some uses teaching and extension are referred to as education. Extension and continuing education are often referred to as outreach.

Hatch Funds - Payments to State Agricultural Experiment Stations authorized by the Hatch Act of 1887 to provide support for carrying out the purposes of the federal-state partnership in agricultural research. Hatch funding requires an equal state match.

Impact - The economic, social, health, or environmental consequences derived as benefits for the intended users. These are usually quantitatively measured either directly or indirectly as indicators of benefits. (An example of an impact would be improved human nutrition for so

many individuals through genetically engineering rice to contain the precursors to vitamin A.)

Indicators - Surrogate measures of research outcomes or benefits, often used when directly measuring research outcomes or benefits would be not feasible. (For example, an indicator of improved water quality might be the increased use of biological control technologies in crop agriculture.)

Information Exchange Group - (See Coordinating Committee.)

Input - Resources assigned to a project, program, or activity, usually in the form of finances, human resources and equipment.

Matching Funds - The Hatch Act of 1887 (as amended) requires that the Hatch formula funds be matched one-to-one with non-federal funds.

Merit Review - Evaluation of a proposed activity by professionally knowledgeable users of an intended technology, especially for relevance and responsiveness to stakeholder needs.

Milestone - A time line-linked accomplishment that needs to be completed before subsequent activities can begin, or can be completed. As an example, to genetically engineer a crop by 2005 a transformation method needs to be reduced to practice by 2002 (a milestone).

Multidisciplinary Research - More than one scientific discipline represented in a project, program or activity. An example would be an agricultural economist working with geneticist to develop more profitable crop cultivars.

Multistate Research Fund - Formerly called the Regional Research Fund, this was renamed as the Multistate Research Fund in the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act (AREERA) of 1998. The AREERA requires that not less than 25% of all Hatch allocations must be used for multistate research activities, and must be matched by non-federal funds.

National Multistate Partnership Committee - A committee representing the state and federal partners that is charged with nationwide coordination of the Multistate Research portfolio.

National Research Support Projects - Activities that support research needs, but are not research *per se*, are authorized as NRSPs. Examples include genomic sequencing, germplasm collections and research management databases such as the Current Research Information System.

Off-the-top Funding - Money set aside for approved activities prior to any distribution to the SAES. Agreement to take funding "off-the-top" requires the approval of the SAES directors and authorization by CSREES.

Outcome- Outcomes describe the significance of the results, showing in what ways the end user will benefit. (For example, the outcome from the adoption of a new cultivar might be increased regional production, or greater profitability.)

Output - Outputs are the results of research activities, such as data, information, biological or physical materials and observations. (For example, the output from a plant-breeding program might be a named variety. The output from a survey might be the analyzed survey results.)

Peer Review - Evaluation of a proposed set of research activities for scientific quality, relevance and technical feasibility by scientists fully knowledgeable and capable of conducting the research themselves.

Performance Goal - A general target set for a research program, the accomplishment of which would be accepted as success. (An example of performance goal is to make American agriculture more competitive. Research projects are understood to be contributing their outputs toward some larger performance goal.)

Plan of Work - An organized statement of planned institutional activities that covers multiple years (usually five), and is composed of several programs (i.e., collections of projects) which are functionally integrated whenever appropriate.

Professional Year - This is the portion of time for persons who hold positions in professional categories and who are assigned to research activities of the project. Such professionals usually hold a bachelors and/or masters degree(s). Graduate students, by virtue of their degree and acceptance into graduate school may be categorized as "professionals."

Program - A well-defined set of projects or activities that share a common theme or purpose. Degrees of coordination for a program's activities range from very informal to highly structured (see Plan of Work).

Project - A well-defined set of research activities. Multistate Research Projects are very much different from typical Hatch Projects in that there are multiple participants at multiple locations in a Multistate Research Project, and a greater total allocation of funds.

Project Proposal - A project or program document that sets out (usually for five years) the objectives of a project, the shared responsibilities for the planned activities, and the expected outputs, among other items. The approved project proposal serves as the contractual agreement among participating institutions.

Scientist Year - This is the portion of time for scientists (Assistant Professor, Assistant Scientist, and above) who are responsible for creative scientific study, thought, originality, judgements, and accomplishments directly assignable to the activity reported.

Stakeholder - Individuals, or groups of individuals, or organizations/institutions with a direct interest in the outcome of public investments in agriculture research and education. This could be producers of agricultural products, consumers of agricultural products, or sponsors of research activities from federal and state governments.

Technical Committee - The research scientists, and as applicable, extension specialists and extension agents, participating in a Multistate Research Project, plus the administrative advisor and the CSREES representative make up the project's technical committee.

Technical Year - This is the portion of time for technicians, aids, and laboratory assistants assigned in support of a project or an activity.

APPENDIX A

Format for Multistate Research Project Proposals

Note: A project proposal is limited to 15 pages total, exclusive of any appendices. The standard for all printed materials is Times New Roman, 12-point font size. Material should contain one inch margins and single spaced text with double spaces between paragraphs and headings. In principle, this page restriction is placed on project proposals to communicate to the authors the need to be succinct. A proposal not meeting these criteria will not be processed for review or approval.

Project Number: To be assigned by the sponsoring regional association.

Project Title: A brief, clear, specific statement of the subject of the research. This should not exceed 140 letters and spaces. Do not use terms such as “Research on...”, or “Studies of...”, or “Investigation of..”.

Requested Project Duration: From _____ to September 30, _____ (usually five years). [Multistate research projects may be proposed for approval to start at any time of the year. However, it is desirable that a project's starting date be October 1, the first day of the federal fiscal year (FFY). The termination date for all projects will be September 30, the end of the FFY.]

Statement of the Issue(s) and Justification: This section should explain why the work needs to be done, and should include statements on the following points:

- The need as indicated by stakeholders. (That is, explain how the proposed research addresses national and/or regional priorities developed following stakeholder input.)
- The importance of the work, and what the consequences are if it is not done.
- The technical feasibility of the research.
- The advantages for doing the work as a multistate effort.
- What the likely impacts will be from successfully completing the work.

Related, Current, and Previous Work: A brief review, using information from CRIS and elsewhere, of related research on the problem and how the proposed work will supplement and extend it. If the proposal is for a replacement project, the accomplishments achieved under the previous project should be reviewed with identification of those areas requiring further investigation. Specific reference should be made to related multistate research projects or other multistate activities. If there is any apparent duplication, the proposed work should be justified.

List essential, cited references. It is expected that the proposal will not include a classical in-depth literature review.

Objectives: Clear, concise, one-sentence statements for each researchable objective arranged in a logical sequence. Include only objectives on which significant progress can be made during the life of the project with the resources committed. Do not specify the exchange of information, the coordination of research, the development of standardized techniques, or joint publication as objectives, as these are to be organized under other types of activities. Each participant should indicate in Appendix E those objectives in which he/she will participate.

Methods: Briefly summarize the research methods that will be used to address each of the objectives. Explicit information should be included to enable the reviewers to evaluate the approach and to discern joint planning and coordination by the technical committee, the sharing of equipment, possible pooling of data, data analysis, and the multistate summarization of findings, in other words, show that this is a collaborative effort.

Measurement of Progress and Results: This section has three purposes. It is intended to show what the products of the research will be, how these products will affect the stakeholder or end user, and what critical points of achievement are needed for progress toward meeting objectives. To do this you should address the following items:

- **Outputs:** The results of research activities, such as data, information, biological or physical materials and observations. For example, the output from a plant-breeding program might be a named variety. The output from a survey might be the analyzed survey results.
- **Outcomes or Projected Impacts:** Outcomes describe the significance of the results, showing in what ways the end user will benefit. For example, an outcome from the adoption of a new cultivar might be increased regional production, or greater profitability. Impacts are the economic, social, health, or environmental benefits derived by the intended users. These are usually quantitatively measured either directly or indirectly as indicators of benefits. An example of an impact would be improved human nutrition to so many individuals through genetically engineering rice to contain the precursors to vitamin A.
- **Milestones:** Timeline-linked accomplishments that need to be completed before subsequent activities can begin, or can be completed. As an example; to genetically engineer a crop by 2005 a transformation method needs to be reduced to practice by 2002 (a milestone).

Projected Participation: Include a completed table of resources utilizing the format in Appendix E.

Rationale: *This table identifies the name and areas of specialization of the members of the technical committee and other principal leaders by state and agency/institution. It is also intended to identify the committed average annual input of each cooperating state agency and institution in scientist years (SY), professional years (PY), and technical support years (TY), and full-time equivalents (FTE) in Extension. This information is needed to permit*

others to assess the sufficiency of human resources that are to be devoted to the activity. A minimum of 0.1 SY per participating station is required and the total resources allocated to the project needs to be sufficient to accomplish the stated objectives. The CRIS codes demonstrate the multidisciplinary requirements of AREERA and will assist Directors in completion of the AD-417 after the project is approved. It will also allow for the classification of the activity within the federal-state partnership's five goals, which are the basis of reporting the state-based plans of work, and for USDA's reporting on its responsibilities relative to the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA).

Outreach Plan: Briefly describe how results of the project are to be made available in an accessible manner to the intended users of the information (e.g., refereed publications, non-refereed but peer reviewed publications, workshops, producer field days, etc.). If applicable, include descriptions concerning equality for service, ease of access to services/information, and any focus on under-served and/or under represented communities/consumers that may benefit from this proposed activity and what the plans are for disseminating information to these and other groups.

Organization and Governance: Provide a very brief description of the organization of the technical committee with emphasis on unique items such as the formation of an executive committee and its functions, any subcommittees that are planned for specific functions, any anticipated program coordinators/managers and their responsibilities, etc. If you are using the standard form of governance state so. Otherwise, describe the processes that will be used for selecting leadership and for decision making.

Authorization: Electronic Signature of the Administrative Advisor with the date of submission.

APPENDIX B

Format for Multistate Research Coordinating Committee Information Exchange Group and National Research Support Project Proposals

Note: The following is suggested to the regional associations as a guide to authors when developing a multistate research coordinating committee or an information exchange group. The standard for all printed materials is Times New Roman, 12-point font size. Material should contain one inch margins and single spaced text with double spaces between paragraphs and headings. The proposal is limited to three pages, exclusive of any appendices.

Project or Activity Number: (to be assigned by the sponsoring regional association)

Requested Duration: From _____ to September 30, _____ (usually four or five years). [It is desirable that an activity's starting date be October 1, the first day of the federal fiscal year (FFY). The termination date for all activities will be September 30.]

Title: A brief, clear, specific statement of the subject of the planned activity. This should not exceed 140 letters and spaces. Do not use terms such as "Research on...", or "Studies of...", or "Investigation of...".

Statement of Issue and Justification: Include brief statements of (1) the nature and significance of the issue(s) for which multistate coordination is proposed, and (2) how the proposed activity addresses national and/or regional priorities. (Limit this section to approximately one page). In this statement identify the sets of stakeholders, customers, and/or consumers for whom the activity is intended.

Objectives: Give clear and succinct statements that describe what is to be done, against which the progress of the proposed activity can be measured. Objectives for these types of activities need to emphasize coordination of activities and the exchange of information. They must not be generalized objectives, but rather they should be very specific. They may not necessarily be traditional research objectives. An objective that would be "to prepare a multistate research project outline" is inappropriate, although research projects may evolve from a coordinating activity. If the objective of the activity is to write a multistate research project outline, a request should be made to the sponsoring regional association to create an *ad hoc* technical committee for that specific purpose.

Expected Outcomes and Impacts: Briefly discuss the expected outcomes and the impacts of the proposed activity. Examples of possible outcomes include, but are not limited to:

- Coordination of specific research and extension programs.
- Exchange of ideas and/or information/data.
- Generate interest in a specific research and extension area (e.g., a symposium or workshop).
- Publication of joint research articles and/or review articles on a common issue.
- Evaluation and standardization of methods or techniques leading to the development of a common protocol.
- Identification of critical/key research and education issues.

Internal and External Linkages: Include a complete table of resources utilizing the format in Appendix E.

Rationale: *It is important to document the extent of participation in the proposed activity to show integration across functions, disciplines, institutions, and/or states. The names of participants, their employing institution, his or her scientific discipline, the type of appointment (research, extension, joint research and extension, etc.), and SY, PY, and TY commitments should be listed on the "Projected Participation Report."*

Educational Plan: If applicable, include descriptions concerning equality for service, ease of access to services/information, and any focus on under-served and/or under represented communities/consumers that may benefit from this proposed activity and what the plans are for disseminating information to these and other groups.

Governance: If standard, state so. Otherwise, describe the processes that will be used for selecting leadership and for decision making.

Budget: If proposing a new or revised NRSP, the AAs present the project and its five year budget to the regional associations at their spring meetings. The NRSP will be approved for five years; however, its budget will be voted on annually.

Authorization: Electronic signature of the Administrative Advisor with the date of submission.

APPENDIX C

Peer Review Guidelines:

Performance Standards and Operational Guidelines for State Agricultural Experiment Stations

Intention: This appendix sets out performance standards and operational guidelines for peer reviews of research to be supported at State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAES) by federal formula funds. The intention is to facilitate individual stations and their collective multistate activities in complying with the provisions of the federal Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA).

Definition: Scientific review of an individual research project proposal is defined as: the evaluation of the conceptual and technical soundness of an intended research activity by individuals qualified by their status in the same discipline, or a closely related field of science, to judge a project's worthiness and relevance to a set of stated program goals.

Scope: The topics covered by this document pertain to research project proposals that are to be sanctioned and funded as part of the federal-state partnership in agricultural research. These standards and guidelines do not apply to proposed research that is subject to peer review by competitive grant agencies and peer review of research publications. However, in the aggregate, all research projects sponsored by stations and the regional association's adopting these guidelines will have been formally peer reviewed, before the expenditure of any federal funds.

Process: Prior to the initiation of any research project (to be supported wholly or in part by federal formula funding or by a special research grant), the responsible SAES director (or, in the case of multistate projects, the administrative advisor) will call for a review of the proposed research activities. A minimum of three peer scientists (i.e., individuals qualified by their status in the same discipline, or a closely related field of science), one of which may be a CSREES representative, will be asked to read and provide written comments on the proposed activities.

Terms of Reference: The terms of reference for the reviewers will focus their attention on questions of the quality of the proposed science, the technical feasibility of the research, the validity of the scientific approach, relevance to stated programmatic goals and on the likelihood for completing the stated objectives. Additional comments may be sought on the project's relevance to a station's (or regional, or national) priorities, the degree of integration with extension (as appropriate), responsiveness to stakeholder needs, and the accuracy of any claims for multi-disciplinary and multistate collaboration.

Responsibility: All review activities for proposed station projects are the responsibility of the station's director. All review activities for a proposed multistate research project are the responsibility of the administrative adviser.

Appointment of Reviewers: Reviewers may be selected from the same campus or from another institution, at the discretion of the SAES director (or the regional associations) or by the person delegated this authority. In the selection of reviewers consideration may be given to the expenses associated with reviewing individual project proposals. Consideration will be given to appointing reviewers who are without any apparent conflicts of interest.

Documentation: Reviewers will be asked to present their findings in writing (see Appendix G), and records of the reviewers comments will be preserved for the life of the project, or for a period of three years in the event that a project is not initiated. Document storage will, for the most part, be electronic.

Research not Covered: Projects funded by competitively awarded grants, federal contract research projects, and federal cooperative agreements are not subject to these provisions, as they would be reviewed under other authorities.

Performance Standards: Peer review of proposed projects is expected to provide the following performance outcomes:

- Maintain and/or enhance the quality of science funded by the federal-state partnership;
- Identify more opportunities to partner with other states, federal research agencies, and our Cooperative Extension counterparts; and
- Assure relevance to programmatic goals, and, in turn, provide responsiveness to stakeholder needs.

Performance outcomes from reviews will be monitored by the responsible station director (or the regional associations) through the annual process of reporting results and impacts, which is in turn made part of the Plan of Work reporting requirements. Adjustments to this review process will be made, as needed.

APPENDIX D

SAES-422 Format for Multistate Research Activity Accomplishments Report

Note: This report is submitted each year of an activity's duration and is due 60 calendar days following the annual meeting. The SAES-422 is forwarded electronically by AA's to their Executive Director. Annual reports for MRF projects are then forwarded to CRIS by the Executive Director.

Project/Activity Number:

Project/Activity Title:

Period Covered:

Date of This Report:

Annual Meeting Date(s):

Participants: Provide a list of those who attended each meeting, and their employing institution. As an alternative, list the URL for the meeting minutes, if that report contains the list of those who were present. And, if available, add the address for the list server as well.

Brief summary of minutes of annual meeting: Provide information with a focus on the decisions made. As an alternative, list the URL for your meeting minutes.

Accomplishments and Impacts: In this section focus on intended outcomes and potential impacts. This information should be built around the activity's milestones, as they were identified in the original proposal. The report should also reflect on the items that stakeholders want to know, or want to see. Also, describe plans for the coming year in no more than one or two short paragraphs.

Publications: List the publications for current year only (with the authors, title, journal series, etc.).

Authorization: Electronic signature of the Administrative Advisor, with the date.

APPENDIX E

Format for Reporting Projected Participation

For each participant in this activity, include his/her name and e-mail address, employing institution/agency, and department; plus, as applicable:

- For research commitment, indicate the CRIS classifications [Research Problem Area(s) (RPA), Subject(s) of Investigation (SOI), and Field(s) of Science (FOS)], and estimates of time commitment by Scientists Years (SY) (not less than 0.1 SY), Professional Years (PY), and Technical Years (TY);
- For extension commitment, indicate FTE and one or more of the seven extension programs; and,
- Objective(s) under which the each participant will conduct their studies.

Project or Activity Designation and Number (if applicable): _____

Project or Activity Title: _____

Administrative Advisor: _____

Participant Name and E-mail address	Institution and Department	Research						Extension		Objectives				
		CRIS Codes			Personnel			FTE	Program	1	2	3	4	5
		RPA	SOI	FOS	SY	PY	TY							
Total SY, PY, TY and FTE		X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X	X

APPENDIX F

Format for A Rapid Response Research Activity

Note: To create a rapid response (Series-500) activity directors from two or more SAES must agree to form the activity. A proposal for a Series-500 activity is a report of intent which is submitted to the regional association's chair (usually through the ED's office). The proposal should be limited to two pages or less not including appendices. These activities have two years from the date of initiation to convert to an association sanctioned activity.

Project or Activity Number: (to be assigned by the sponsoring regional association)

Administrative Advisor:

Date of Submission: (month/day/year)

Title: A brief, clear, specific statement of the subject of the planned activity. This should not exceed 140 letters and spaces. Do not use terms such as "Research on..", or "Studies of..", or "Investigation of..".

Statement of Issue and Justification: Include a brief statement of the nature and significance of the issue(s) for which the multistate activity is proposed. (Be sure to limit this section to approximately one-half page).

Types of Activities: A short description of the types of activities to be undertaken should be included here. The organization should fit the needs for forming the multistate research activity. For example, an activity may be organized as a Multistate Research Project with very specific objectives and agreed collaborative responsibilities, or it may be a very informal activity similar to Research Coordinating Committees or Information Exchange Groups.

Objectives: Give clear and succinct statements that describe what is to be done, against which the progress of the proposed activity can be measured.

Expected Outputs, Outcomes and/or Impacts: Briefly discuss the expected outputs, outcomes and the impacts of the proposed activity.

List of Participants: Include a complete table of resources utilizing the format in Appendix E.

Review: In order to expedite implementation of this project, an interim review is conducted by the Multistate Research Committee, but no formal peer review is necessary.

Authorization: Electronic signature of the Administrative Advisor, with the date.

APPENDIX G

Peer Review Form

Peer Reviews by Scientists of Proposed Multistate Research Activities

Project Number:

Project Title:

Administrative Advisor:

Proposed Termination Date:

Rate the technical merit of the project:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Unacceptable
• Sound scientific approach	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Achievable goals/objectives	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Appropriate scope of activity to accomplish objectives	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Potential for significant outputs (products) and outcomes and/or impacts	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Overall technical merit	_____	_____	_____	_____

Comments: _____

Your recommendation (select one):

_____ Approval

_____ Approve with revision

_____ Disapprove

Signature:

Name of Reviewer and Date

APPENDIX H

MULTISTATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE EVALUATION FORM

Each Multistate Research Committee member will receive this evaluation form as an e-mail attachment (or via other electronic means) with the project proposal and comments from the peer reviewers, if available.

Current or Previous Multistate Research Project Number: _____

I. Statement of Issue(s) and Justification

1. Does the proposal convincingly address the extent of the problem and the importance to agriculture, rural life, consumers and science? Does the proposal explain what the consequences are if the research is not done?
2. Does the proposal adequately explain why this research should be conducted by multiple institutions and other entities (e.g., ARS/USDA) through a regional collaborative effort?
3. Does the proposal indicate how the proposed research addresses national and/or regional priorities?
4. Does the proposal describe the probable impacts from successfully completing the work?

II. Related Current and Previous Work

1. Does the proposal adequately explain how this research relates to previous work in this area and how the proposed work will supplement and extend knowledge in this area? Was a CRIS search conducted? Although a classical, in-depth literature review is not required, does the proposal cite appropriate literature?
2. If the proposal is for a replacement project, are the accomplishments achieved under the previous project adequately reviewed with identification of those areas needing further investigation?
3. Does this proposal duplicate research being conducted through other multistate projects? Did the Development Committee specifically address potential duplication and, if potential duplication exists, did the committee specifically address how duplication will be avoided?

III. Objectives

1. Are the research objectives clear and appropriate for the desired outcomes?
2. Does the proposal clearly indicate the level of participation of each institution and other participating entities (e.g., ARS/USDA, Cooperative Extension, private industry, etc.) for each objective?

IV. Methods (Procedures)

1. Is a procedure or approach outlined for each objective stated in the proposal?
2. Is collaboration and/or interdependence such as the use of common protocols, central data collection or analysis, sharing of equipment, common use of research samples or data, or other evidence of direct collaboration described in the proposal?
3. Are research responsibilities of all the participants clearly stated?
4. Is there a plan for how the research findings will be tied together in a collaborative manner on a regional basis?

V. Measurement of Progress and Results

1. Outputs: Does the proposal describe expected outputs from the research?
2. Outcomes and Impacts: Does the proposal describe the significance of the results, showing in what ways the end user will benefit? Does the proposal adequately explain the potential benefits and impact of the proposed research?
3. Milestones: Does the proposal include statements related to milestones; that is, time-linked accomplishments that must be completed before subsequent activities can begin or can be completed?

VI. Participation (Resources) Report

1. Does the proposal include a complete "Projected Participation Report" as prescribed in Appendix E of the Guidelines for Multistate Research Activities?
2. Is multidisiplinarity clearly demonstrated in the report?

VII. Outreach Plan

1. Does the proposal describe how results of the project are to be made available in an accessible manner to the intended users of the information (e.g., refereed publications, workshops, producer field days, etc.)?
2. If the proposed project is to become an integrated (multifunctional) activity involving participants from Cooperative Extension, is the nature of their involvement adequately described?

VIII. Organization

1. If the organization of the technical committee is to be different from that prescribed in the Guidelines for Multistate Research Activities, does the proposal include an adequate description of the planned organizational structure of the technical committee?

IX. Scientific Quality

1. Does the proposal show evidence of high scientific quality?
2. If copies of peer reviews have been provided, has the Development Committee adequately addressed the concerns and comments provided by the peer reviewers?

X. Format

1. Is the proposal formatted as prescribed in Appendix A of the Guidelines for Multistate Research Activities?

XI. Summary

Please indicate the primary changes you believe should be made before final approval by the Multistate Research Committee.

Recommendation:

_____ Accept without revision

_____ Accept with minor revision

_____ Accept with major revision

_____ Reject

Signature

Chair, Multistate Research Committee and Date

APPENDIX I

(Optional)

Midterm Review of Multistate Research Projects

(To Be Completed During the Third Year of Project)

Activity Number: _____

Title: _____

Administrative Advisor: _____

Proposed Termination Date: _____

1. **Progress Report:** Describe results since the project was last approved; compare actual accomplishments with the objectives in the project; reasons should be given if project objectives were not met. Rate this project on accomplishment of stated objectives.

_____ Excellent **Comments:** _____
_____ Good _____
_____ Fair _____
_____ Unacceptable _____

2. **Linkages:** Provide evidence that collaboration occurs among project participants and with other projects/agencies. How well is the technical committee working together? Document any linkages. Rate this project on linkages.

_____ Excellent **Comments:** _____
_____ Good _____
_____ Fair _____
_____ Unacceptable _____

3. **Funding:** Has outside funding been obtained from other federal and state agencies or the private sector by the technical committee to support project activities? Rate this project on its accomplishments in leveraging outside funding to help solve the problem being investigated.

_____ Excellent **Comments:** _____
_____ Good _____
_____ Fair _____
_____ Unacceptable _____

4. Information and Technology Transfer. Document information and technology transfer which is required for every project supported by Multistate Research Funds. Rate this project on plans or accomplishments for delivering the results to users which include other researchers (journal articles, technical reports, etc.), Cooperative Extension Service, industry, producers, students, etc.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	Comments: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Good	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable	_____

Recommendation:

- Approve/continue with normal revision.
- Approve/continue with revision (provide specific recommendations).
- Disapprove/terminate at termination time (provide specific reasons).

Signature:

(Determined by regional associations) Date

APPENDIX K
(Optional)
Critical Midterm Review of Coordinating Committees

Activity Number: _____

Title: _____

Administrative Advisor: _____

Proposed Termination Date: _____

1. Progress Report. Describe accomplishments since the committee was last approved; compare actual accomplishments with the objectives in the project outline; reasons should be given if any objectives were not met. Rate this project on accomplishment of stated objectives.

_____ Excellent **Comments:** _____
_____ Good _____
_____ Fair _____
_____ Unacceptable _____

2. Coordination/linkages. Provide evidence of the interaction among committee participants and with other projects/agencies. How well is the committee working together? Has the committee moved beyond individual activities and ideas to some collective, integrated activity? Provide evidence of synergy, collaborative output via joint publicity, specific coordinated activity, etc. Rate this project on linkages.

_____ Excellent **Comments:** _____
_____ Good _____
_____ Fair _____
_____ Unacceptable _____

3. Information exchange. Document information exchange and technology transfer. Rate this project on plans or accomplishments for delivering the results to users.

_____ Excellent **Comments:** _____
_____ Good _____
_____ Fair _____
_____ Unacceptable _____

4. **Attendance/participation.** Attendance and participation at committee meetings are imperative for the committee to be successful. Rate this committee for attendance/participation.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	Comments: _____ _____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Good	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	
<input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable	

Recommendation:

- Approve/continue committee with normal revision.
- Approve/continue committee with revision (provide specific recommendations).
- Disapprove/terminate committee at termination time (provide specific reasons).

Signature:

(Determined by regional associations) **Date**

APPENDIX L

GUIDELINES

For Home Pages of Multistate Research Projects, Coordinating Committees, and Information Exchange Groups

Note: The intention of this recommendation is to have an easily accessible system and common repository for information such as membership lists, abbreviated history, project objectives, minutes, annual reports, and publications associated with multistate research projects, information exchange groups, coordinating committees, and advisory groups.

Each administrative advisor should encourage the development of a home page for each multistate research project, coordinating committee, information exchange group, or advisory group with which he or she serves.

The page should be based at the location of the person who maintains the home page or the administrative advisor, and linked to the respective regional association page in which the project or activity resides.

Home pages should be concise and contain the following information:

- a. Title and number of multistate research project or activity.
- b. Project/group objectives.
- c. Abbreviated history, background, and justification. (1-3 paragraphs).
- d. Membership list including telephone, fax, and e-mail addresses, and identification of officers and any representatives from SAES, Cooperative Extension, and CSREES.
- e. Announcements of meeting dates and sites.
- f. Significant changes and accomplishments listed in bullet format.
- g. Minutes of meetings. (In initial page construction, five years of minutes should be included if available.)
- h. Publications related to the multistate research project, information exchange group, or coordinating committee should be listed and linked to the page.
- i. The respective regional association header should be included at the top of the page to identify the effort as a particular regional activity.
- j. A link back to the regional association's home page should be provided to create a "loop" between the regional association and projects' home pages.
- k. An indication of last update and the person responsible for the page should be included.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The administrative advisor should encourage all home page-related activity to be developed by the secretary, other officer, or appointed member of the multistate research project or activity, which can be transmitted electronically to the base location for posting on the web.

Several URL sites for exchange groups and multistate projects are already posted on several of the regional associations' home pages. These pages should be updated to reflect the respective regional association activities.

Development of a list server, which provides the opportunity for a discussion group, is encouraged.

Appendix M

Suggested Proposal Transmission Letter

Date: [Add transmission date.]
To: Deputy Administrator, Partnership Office, CSREES/USDA
From: [Add name of Regional Association Chair.]
Subject: Multistate Research Proposal Transmission

Reference:

Project/Activity Number: [Add regional accession number here.]

Project/Activity Title: [Add title here.]

Via e-mail

Dear _____:

Attached please find a signed copy (as an electronic signature) of an association-approved multistate project/activity, which can also be found at the following URL:

[Add URL here.]

This is to certify that the proposal is in compliance with all requirements of AREERA and CSREES as follows:

- _____ Multistate
- _____ Multidisciplinary
- _____ Peer-reviewed
- _____ Clearly defined objectives
- _____ Identified outcomes and impacts
- _____ Addresses CSREES goals

This project will be directly addressing the needs of stakeholders, which have been identified as priorities in the (plans of work of the participating states) (regional strategic plan). In addition, please note the planned participation by Extension Specialists thereby allowing certification as an integrated, multifunctional project.

I am requesting your certification of this activity as a component of our region's multistate research portfolio.

Sincerely,

[ADD ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE HERE]

Chair, Regional Association of SAES Directors

Appendix N

—Steps in the Development of Multistate Research Activities—

Multistate Research Project

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Approval of an ad hoc writing or development committee	Regional Association
Notify Multistate Research Office	Executive Director
Assignment of Administrative Adviser	Chair, Regional Association
Assignment of CSREES Representative	Multistate Research Office, CSREES
Identification of writing committee	Administrative Adviser
Authorization of first meeting of writing committee	Administrative Adviser
Inform writing committee of all requirements (Supply copies of <u>Appendices A, E, G, H and L</u>)	Administrative Adviser
Invitation to participate in the project; completion of table of resources (<u>Appendix E</u>)	Administrative Adviser; Station Directors
Review of draft proposal with comments to writing committee	Administrative Adviser
Transmit proposal to each peer reviewer with review form (<u>Appendix G</u>)	Administrative Adviser
Response to peer reviewers' comments	Writing Committee
Proposal with peer reviewers' comments forwarded electronically to Chair, Multistate Research Committee	Administrative Adviser
Proposal and review form (<u>Appendix H</u>) forwarded electronically to Multistate Research Committee	Chair, Multistate Research Committee
Respond to recommendations of Multistate Research Committee	Administrative Adviser; Writing Committee
Final draft of proposal forwarded electronically to Chair, Multistate Research Committee	Administrative Adviser

Final review of proposal and preparation of cover correspondence (<u>Appendix M</u>) addressed to the Multistate Research Office, CSREES	Chair, Multistate Research Committee
Finished proposal with cover correspondence forwarded electronically to the Executive Director with notice regarding proposal status to the Administrative Adviser	Chair, Multistate Research Committee
Assignment of project series number	Executive Director
Finished proposal and cover correspondence forwarded electronically to Multistate Research Office, CSREES	Executive Director
Notification of writing committee regarding disposition of the project	Administrative Adviser
Project approval and notification to Directors of participating Stations and Executive Director	Multistate Research Office, CSREES
Preparation and submission of CRIS Forms (AD-416, -417, etc.)	Directors of participating Experiment Stations

Multistate Research CC, IEG or NRSP

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Preparation of proposal (Appendix B) and a Table of Resources (<u>Appendix E</u>)	Sponsoring Director and Selected Participants; Directors
Approval of proposal to create the Activity —CC or IEG —NRSP	Regional Association Regional Associations
Notify Multistate Research Office, CSREES	Executive Director
Assignment of Administrative Adviser(s) --- CC or IEG --- NRSP	Chair, Regional Association Chairs, Regional Associations
Assignment of CSREES Representative	Multistate Research Office, CSREES
Authorization of first meeting and invitation to participate —CC or IEG —NRSP	Administrative Adviser Lead, Administrative Adviser

Rapid Response Research Activity

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Preparation of proposal (Appendix F) with a Table of Resources (Appendix E)	Two or more Sponsoring Directors
Electronic submission of proposal to the Chair of the Regional Association (through the Executive Director)	Sponsoring Directors
Approval of the activity	Chair, Regional Association
Proposal is forwarded electronically to the Multistate Research Office, CSREES	Executive Director
Assignment of Administrative Adviser	Chair, Regional Association
Assignment of CSREES Representative	Multistate Research Office, CSREES
Invitation to participate Amendment of Table of Resources (as needed)	Administrative Adviser
Interim review of the activity	Multistate Research Committee
Decision during second year regarding continuation and development of proposal for an Association-sanctioned activity	Technical Committee