

Request for Proposals in Organic Agriculture Research, Teaching & Outreach

Proposal Submission Deadline: Dec. 15, 2010

The Department of Horticulture at Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) requests proposals for innovative research, teaching and outreach projects in organic farming and food system sustainability. A gift from the Toward Sustainability Foundation (TSF) will provide support for successful proposals during calendar year 2011. Short proposals are requested (10-page maximum, single spaced, including an itemized budget) from Cornell staff and students, Cooperative Extension educators, and New York organic farmers. **All funded proposals must include someone on the CALs faculty as a principal investigator or co-PI**, in order for us to allocate these funds. Projects will be funded up to a maximum \$10,000 for a one-year period (2011). Multiyear projects may be considered for continued funding if TSF funds are available in future years, but a renewal proposal will be required for each subsequent year. Use of TSF funds is restricted to student or staff wages and salaries, materials and supplies, essential travel, and other direct essential expenses of the proposed research, teaching or outreach activities. A written summary of project impacts and outcomes will be required on completion of each funded project, to be submitted by e-mail as an MSWord document no later than **Feb. 1, 2012**. Final project reports will be made available to organic farmers and other interested stakeholders via the Internet, and in printed form. Reports should include figures, tables, photographs, and other appropriate documentation for each project, written in a style and form that are accessible to non-scientists.

Goals of the TSF Organic Grants Program for 2011:

- Develop, evaluate, strengthen, and disseminate knowledge about organic gardening and farming.
- Encourage and support systems-level studies on environmental and economic impacts, energy efficiency, social equality, and local or regional sustainability of organic farms and food systems.
- Improve and expand organic systems knowledge and information through the Cornell Cooperative Extension and Master Gardener networks, within Cornell's teaching programs, and at farms, agricultural and food processing facilities, and family gardens throughout NY and the Northeast.
- Promote novel approaches for research, extension, and teaching programs that enhance the sustainability and knowledge foundation for organic farming and gardening.

Priorities for Funding in 2011:

- Projects involving Cornell undergraduate and graduate students, and organic farmers in lead roles
- Projects that improve energy efficiency and sustainability of agriculture and gardening
- Projects that investigate key ecological processes and environmental impacts of organic and alternative farms or food systems.
- Projects that promote carbon sequestration, soil and water resources, human and wildlife habitat, and other vital ecosystem services in farms, gardens, natural areas, and managed landscapes

Format for Proposals

Project / Program Title: Brief, clear, specific description of the proposed work.

Principal Investigators and Cooperators: Names, titles, and contact addresses for those who will lead and participate in the proposed work.

Background/Justification: Describe the importance of the proposed research to stated goals and priorities of this grants program. Include reasons for doing the work, important problems or opportunities your proposal will address, needs your project will fulfill, and its intended beneficiaries.

Specific Objectives: Provide clear, complete, logically arranged statements of the specific objectives and testable hypotheses for your project, and its measurable outcomes.

Approach/Methods: Briefly describe the overall strategy and methods to be used to achieve your objectives, the site(s) where research will be located, and innovative features of your approach relative to previous efforts, and demonstrable needs.

Intended Outcomes and Impacts: Describe expected outcomes and ways in which your project could enhance knowledge or improve energy efficiency, environmental or economic impacts, and other important attributes in organic farming and food systems.

Budget: Funding is allowed for direct costs, staff wages or student salaries. The proposal budget must itemize sections for Direct Costs including wages (with 59% fringe benefits for non-students paid with project funds), materials and supplies, analytic costs, and essential travel to conduct the proposed work. Total funding requests are limited to \$10,000 per year, including indirect costs of 10% on the total of all direct costs. Project funds remaining unspent on Feb. 1, 2012 will be reclaimed for use by other TSF-funded projects in future years.

<u>Sample Budget</u>	
Salary	\$5,000
59.0% Fringes	<u>2,950</u>
Total Salary & Fringes	7,950
Supplies & Materials	600
Travel	<u>200</u>
Total Direct Costs	8,750
Indirect Costs 10%	<u>875</u>
Total Direct & IDC	\$9,625

Completed proposals must be received by us on or before Dec. 15, 2010 to be considered eligible (e-mail submissions in PDF format are preferable). Please submit proposals to: Dolores Higareda (dh29@cornell.edu) and Wendy Wirth (waw3@cornell.edu), Dept. of Horticulture, 134A Plant Science Bldg., Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. Proposals will be evaluated and prioritized for funding by a review panel of Cornell faculty, staff, students, and organic farmers. Project leaders of all successful proposals will be notified in late January, 2011.

For additional information on this request for proposals please contact Wendy Wirth (607-255-4568; waw3@cornell.edu), Dolores Higareda (607-255-1789; dh29@cornell.edu); or Ian Merwin (607-255-1777; im13@cornell.edu).