

Request for Proposals in Organic & Sustainability Systems Research, Teaching & Outreach

Proposal Submission Deadline: Dec. 15, 2011

The Department of Horticulture at Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) requests proposals for innovative research, teaching and outreach projects involving organics and sustainability in farm and food systems, and managed landscapes. A gift from the Toward Sustainability Foundation (TSF) will provide support for successful proposals during calendar year 2012. Short proposals are requested (10-page maximum, single spaced, including an itemized budget) from Cornell staff and students, Cooperative Extension educators, and New York farmers. **All funded proposals must include someone on the CALs faculty as a principal investigator or co-PI**, in order for us to allocate TSF funds. Graduate student proposals are welcome, for regional or international research, but a Cornell faculty member must indicate his or her commitment to help guide and support the proposed research.

Project proposals will be reviewed and considered for funding at two levels: **1.** A few multidisciplinary systems research proposals may be considered for up to \$40,000 in funding, and **2.** More narrowly focused projects will be considered for a maximum \$10,000 for the calendar year 2012. Multiyear projects may be eligible for continued funding, but a renewal proposal and progress report will be required for each year of TSF support. Use of TSF funds is restricted to student or staff wages and salaries, materials and supplies, essential travel, and other essential expenses of the proposed research, teaching or outreach activities. A written summary of project outcomes and impacts must be submitted upon completion of each funded project, by e-mail as an MSWord document no later than **Feb. 1, 2013**. Final project reports will be made available to interested stakeholders via the Internet and in printed form, and should include figures, tables, photographs, and other appropriate documentation for each project, written in a style and form accessible to non-scientists.

Goals of the TSF Organics & Sustainability Grants Program for 2012:

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

Priorities for Funding in 2012:

- Projects that involve Cornell undergraduate or graduate students in major roles
- Projects that improve the sustainability of agriculture, gardening, and landscaping
- Projects that investigate key ecological processes and environmental impacts of organic and alternative farms, food systems, or managed landscapes

- Projects that promote carbon storage, soil and water resource conservation, human and wildlife habitat, and other 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 or student wages/salaries. The proposal budget must itemize sections for Direct Costs including wages (with 56% 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 or 40,000 per year (as noted above), **including** indirect costs of 10% on the total of all direct costs. Project funds remaining unspent on Feb. 1, 2013 will be reclaimed for use by other TSF-funded projects in future years.

Sample Budget	
Salary	\$5,000
56.0% Fringes	<u>2,800</u>
Total Salary & Fringes	7,800
Supplies & Materials	600
Travel	<u>200</u>
Total Direct Costs	8,600
Indirect Costs 10%	<u>860</u>
Total Direct & IDC	\$9,460

Completed proposals must be received on or before Dec. 15, 2011 to be considered eligible for 2012. (email submissions in PDF format are preferable). Please submit proposals to: Maxine Welcome (mw45@cornell.edu) Dept. of Horticulture, 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, organic farmers and other qualified experts. Project leaders of all successful proposals will be notified in late January of 2012. For additional information please contact Maxine Welcome (mw45@cornell.edu), Jenny Kao-Kniffin (jtk57@cornell.edu), or Ian Merwin (im13@cornell.edu).