

NATIONAL ALFALFA & FORAGE ALLIANCE

2017 Alfalfa Checkoff Request for Proposals

National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance (NAFA) announces the U.S. Alfalfa Farmer Research Initiative (**USAFRI**) request for proposals. All USAFRI checkoff funds will be used to support public research into alfalfa and alfalfa forage systems. USAFRI is a farmer-funded investment in alfalfa-related research to help drive innovation and profitability in the alfalfa industry.

This RFP is being released prior to the initial checkoff submission. Actual checkoff received may affect the availability of funds for this round of proposals. There is no commitment by NAFA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

1. **Deadline/Where to Send.**

Proposals **must be received** by NAFA office no later than **June 26, 2017**. Send electronic proposals to: nafa@alfalfa.org.

2. **Eligibility.**

All University, Extension, ARS, and non-profit (e.g., Noble Research Institute) researchers are eligible to apply for USAFRI funding.

3. **Project Funding.**

Project funding requests are capped at \$50,000 and only one year of funding may be requested (additional funding will need to be applied for each year). Fifty percent of the awarded funding is payable upon contract execution with the other 50% payable following the submission and acceptance of a final report and an itemized invoice of expenses.

All expenses shown to be directly required by project specific activities will be considered eligible for funding. These can include salaries/fringe for technicians, graduate students, summer help, etc. (not principal investigators); materials and supplies; and travel (monitored closely). Purchase of new equipment is generally not an allowable expense, but may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Please include a summary of in-kind contributions and other matching funds associated with the research project. **Note: USAFRI funds shall not be used for indirect costs.**

4. **Proposal Content.**

Proposals should not exceed 5 single-side pages (not including vitae) and must include:

- A. Justification (*need for project and potential impact*)
- B. Objectives
- C. Methodology
- D. Timeline (*including start and end dates*)
- E. Budget/budget justification
- F. Contact information for PI and co-PIs
- G. Key personnel vitae (not included in page limit)

5. **Project Duration and Final Report.**

Proposals must include expected start and end dates. Only one year of funding will be considered. Requests for continued funding of multi-year projects will be considered as new submissions (a progress report for the previous project must be included). **A final project report must be submitted to NAFA at the end of the project period.**

6. **Proposal Review Process.**

Proposals will be reviewed and selected by the NAFA board of directors or their designees. Criteria for determining which projects will be funded include, but are not limited to:

➤ **Industry Need**

- alignment with **USAFRI Research Priorities** (*which are*):
 - Yield Improvement
 - Cutting Management Strategies
 - Fertility, Soil Management, Soil Health, Macro/Micro Nutrients
 - Forage Quality Improvements
 - Weed Management Strategies
 - Insect Management Strategies
- ability to transfer research findings or technology for use on livestock or forage operations;
- scientific merit, implementation feasibility, and methodology for objectively measuring results;
- ability to accomplish project goals.

➤ **Cost Effectiveness**

- direct or indirect savings and/or benefit to farmers;
- ability of research outcomes to impact farm profitability;
- feasibility of proposed budget and timeline.

➤ **Partnerships**

- multi-environment and/or geographic representation;
- collaboration with NAFA-affiliated associations encouraged.

7. Matching Opportunities

Due to limited USAFRI funds, we encourage applicants to seek funding from additional sources.

Funded researchers are required to complete final reports and present findings at a NAFA meeting(s) without additional compensation. Researchers are expected to disseminate their findings as widely as possible to relevant audiences (i.e., conferences, meetings, newsletters); **NAFA and USAFRI must be credited in all reports and presentations.**

Please share this RFP with any other alfalfa researchers or forage extension agronomists who may be interested in submitting proposals. If you have questions, please contact the NAFA office at (651) 484-3888 or nafa@alfalfa.org.