

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Request for Applications (RFA) -- Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program
OMB NUMBER: 0563-0066

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is for approval of a revised Information Collection Burden package submitted by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), operating through the Risk Management Agency (RMA). The package concerns specific information that interested parties are to provide RMA when responding to a Request for Applications (RFA) for Risk Management and Crop Insurance Education and Information. The RFA announces the availability of funding to parties willing to assist RMA in evaluating the performance capacity and plans of organizations that are applying for funds for cooperative agreements that will be used to provide outreach and assistance to under-served agricultural producers. The information collected from applicants would be used to review, evaluate, and select those applications for funding that would best support the objectives of RMA's community outreach and assistance partnership program.

1. **Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary, identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.**

Section 522(d) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act of 2002 authorizes the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation to enter into partnerships with public and private entities for the purpose of increasing the availability of risk management tools for producers of agricultural commodities. To implement this authority, the Risk Management Agency has further defined its purpose and has developed procedures for the preparation, submission and evaluation of applications submitted in response to a Request for Application (RFA) for partnership agreements. This collaborative outreach and assistance programs are for limited resources, socially disadvantaged and other traditionally under-served farmers and ranchers, who produce priority commodities.

2. **Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

As a basis for evaluating applications and awarding partnership agreements, applicants are required to submit materials and information necessary to evaluate and rate the merit of proposed projects and evaluate the capacity and qualification of the organization to complete the project. RFA includes: 1) An application which includes a Project Summary and Narrative, a Statement of Work, a Budget Narrative, 2) OMB Grant Forms SF 424, 424A, 424B and AD-1047, 1049).

The information collection will be used by RMA and a diverse review panel of independent reviewers to determine applicant eligibility and to evaluate, rate and rank proposals submitted by applicants. This collaborative outreach and assistance program are for limited resources, socially disadvantaged and other traditionally under-served farmers and ranchers, who produce priority commodities.

3. **Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decisions for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any**

consideration of using information technology to reduce the burden.

The RFA and the application package is available for the public to view and download on line at All required OMB grant forms must be completed on line. RMA's website at will be used for the solicitation of applications, collection and submission of information.

4. **Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use purposes described in Item 2 above.**

There is no duplication. There are no other forms currently in use that collect similar information. The requested information is unique to each respondent.

5. **If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-1), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

The information collection does not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. Steps have been taken to minimize the burden on all applicants, especially smaller organizations by utilizing OMB standard forms, required by regulation.

6. **Describe the circumstances to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

Without this information collection, RMA would not be able to request and accept proposals for grants for community outreach and assistance. Therefore, without the information requested in the RFA and the grant forms, would be impossible to equitably evaluate and rate the proposals submitted for funding.

The impact of not collecting this information will preclude RMA from competitively awarding funds to organizations to provide outreach and technical assistance to limited resources and other socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

7. **Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines:**

There are no special circumstances that would require this information to be collected in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

8. **If applicable, provide a copy and identify the data and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), .**

A notice for the request for public comment on information collections was published in the Federal Register on Tuesday, August 30, 2011, at 76 FR 53879. No comments regarding this notice were received.

9. **Decision to provide payment or gift to respondents:**

There are no plans to provide any payments or gifts to respondents.

10. **Confidentiality provided to respondents:**

RMA is requesting the information pursuant to its statutory authority to award cooperative agreements. Submission of applications is entirely voluntary. The collection of information is for the purpose of aiding in the review of applications prior to the awarding of cooperative agreements. This information will be used within RMA and may also be disclosed outside of RMA as permitted by the Privacy Act under certain situations, including disclosures to the public as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

- 11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

No sensitive questions about the reporting by individuals are asked. The reports are not part of a Privacy Act system of records.

- 12. Provide estimates of the Estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information:**

RMA estimates that there will be approximately 120 applications submitted in response to the RFA. Therefore, we are requesting 1,216 total hours. See spreadsheet for breakout of burden.

Total annual cost of burden to respondent

In estimating the annual cost burden to applicants, hourly rate estimates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics National Compensation Survey have been used. A blended rate for level 11 economists (\$47.77/hour) and level 9 social scientists (\$38.68/hour) has been used with a weight of 0.5 applied to each category. For a blended rate of \$43.23/hour. Applying this hourly rate to the burden hour estimate yields a total annual cost of \$90,221.

- 13. Estimates of total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information:**

There are no capital/start-up or ongoing operation/maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

- 14. Estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government:**

These estimates are based solely on an estimate of cost incurred by RMA staff to review, rate and evaluate applications submitted by applicants. RMA estimates that it will take approximately 4 hours to review rate and evaluate one application with supporting grant documents.

Application Reviews Narrative Summary Statement of Work Grant Forms	120 applications <u>x4 hrs per application</u> 480hrs <u>x 6 staff members</u> 2880hrs Total <u>x 42 average salary (GS-13)</u> \$120,960	<u>Total \$120,960</u>
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15. Reasons for program changes or adjustments:

There were no program changes or adjustments to this collection.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulations, and publications. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication date, and other actions.

There will be no tabulation, analysis, or publication of the information collected.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

Not Applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB Form 83-1.

There are no certifications exceptions identified with this information collection.

The Agency is able to certify compliance with all provisions under item 19 of OMB form 83-i.