

# The Agricultural Telecommunications Program

FY 2000 Request: \$1 Million

## What Is the Program?

The Agricultural Telecommunications Program is a national grants program to develop an agricultural communications network using leading-edge technologies. It was originally authorized in Section 1673 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (Public Law 105-185). It provides financial assistance through the USDA for the production and delivery of educational programs in agricultural extension, research, and academic programs. U.S. institutions of higher education are eligible to receive the grants.

The act was amended in 1998 (Section 245) naming the ADEC Distance Education Consortium as program administrator. Applications to ADEC for funding must describe the telecommunications network and programming proposed. This year ADEC designed and rapidly deployed an efficient Internet-based proposal process, which could save millions of federal dollars.

## What Are the Program Objectives?

Encourage institutions of higher education to share resources in applying modern technologies such as the Internet and wireless delivery to:

1. assure that producers, processors, researchers, and the public have immediate access to knowledge.
2. improve the competitive position of U.S. agriculture in international markets.
3. respond to food safety and environmental concerns.
4. improve the training of students for careers in agriculture and food industries.
5. identify new uses for agricultural commodities and increase demand.

## What Does the Program Require?

In 1999 ADEC received 95 proposals from 42 institutions in 36 states requesting a total of nearly \$16 million. The importance of this program is growing as agricultural institutions seek to revamp existing education programs using new technologies. Because these new designs are expensive for one institution to implement, multi-institutional strategies and collaborative use of a comprehensive communications network including Internet and satellite transmission are essential.

## What Are the Results?

- Dollars provided by the Agricultural Telecommunications Program resulted in the Tri-State Agricultural Distance Delivery Alliance (TADDA), which includes Washington State University, Oregon State University, and the University of Idaho. Six courses reach learners at any location, and nearly fifty more are in the development stage.
- Texas A&M University collaborated with Utah State University and the University of Kentucky to develop a nationally recognized program in international agribusiness marketing. It reaches food marketing firms, food processors, and other extension audiences.
- New Mexico State University successfully implemented a multimedia program called "Marketing from a Rural Environment, which focuses on place-bound minority learners.

- The University of Arizona developed a comprehensive and dynamic Internet-based resource on rangeland management.
- Mississippi State University extended the reach of the Web to all state and county offices.
- Ohio State University developed an internationally recognized system for quickly targeting and accessing appropriate horticulture information.

## **What Is ADEC?**

The ADEC Distance Education Consortium includes 58 state universities and land-grant institutions. All member institutions benefit from this collaborative initiative begun in 1989. The consortium's coordinating office is located at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Through rapid program development and use of distance learning technology, ADEC is developing the knowledge marketplace for U.S. food and agricultural producers, processors, and consumers.

## **ADEC Members**

Alabama A&M University  
 Alcorn State University  
 University of Arizona  
 University of Arkansas  
 University of Arkansas at  
 Pine Bluff  
 University of California  
 Clemson University  
 Colorado State University  
 Cornell University  
 CSREES-USDA  
 University of Delaware  
 Delaware State University  
 Diné College  
 Dull Knife Memorial College  
 University of Florida  
 Florida A&M University  
 University of Georgia  
 Haskell Indian Nations  
 University  
 University of Idaho  
 University of Illinois  
 Iowa State University  
 Kansas State University  
 Kentucky State University

University of Kentucky  
 Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa  
 Community College  
 Langston University  
 Louisiana State University  
 University of Maryland-  
 College Park  
 University of Maryland-  
 Eastern Shore  
 College of the Menominee  
 Nation  
 Michigan State University  
 University of Minnesota  
 Mississippi State University  
 University of Missouri at  
 Columbia  
 University of Nebraska-  
 Lincoln  
 University of Nevada-Reno  
 University of New  
 Hampshire  
 New Mexico State  
 University  
 North Carolina A&T State  
 University

North Carolina State  
 University  
 The Ohio State University  
 Oklahoma State University  
 Oregon State University  
 The Pennsylvania State  
 University  
 Purdue University  
 Rutgers University  
 South Dakota State  
 University  
 The University of Tennessee  
 Tennessee State University  
 Texas A&M University  
 Texas Tech University  
 Tuskegee University  
 Utah State University  
 Virginia Tech University  
 West Virginia University  
 Washington State  
 University  
 University of Wisconsin-  
 Madison  
 University of Wyoming

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