Non-Discrimination Statement
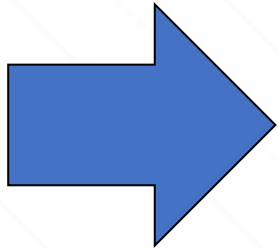
https://www.usda.gov/non-discrimination-statement

- In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs, are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

- Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

- To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

- USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Goals of the Webinar

- Provide clarification

- **Answers to most questions are in the RFA**
- **Please, please read the RFA!**

Sustainable Agricultural Systems – FY2022

- Letter of Intent deadline: April 27, 2022

- Application deadline: July 28, 2022

- Program funding: $80,000,000

- Award size: Up to $10,000,000

Sustainable Agricultural Systems

- The SAS program area priority solicits creative, visionary projects
  - developed by transdisciplinary teams
  - integrate research, education, and extension activities
  - effectively use a systems approach
  - promote convergence of science and technology
  - solve present and future challenges in food and agricultural systems

Sustainable Agricultural Systems - Definitions

- **Transdisciplinary teams**: A full integration of multiple disciplines to address complex challenges that cannot be solved using single-disciplinary approaches

- **Systems Approach**: When tackling an issue, examining and understanding its complex and interacting parts as a whole rather than just a specific part in isolation.

Sustainable Agricultural Systems

- **Agricultural systems** are inclusive of value chains from production to consumption of food and other agricultural products,
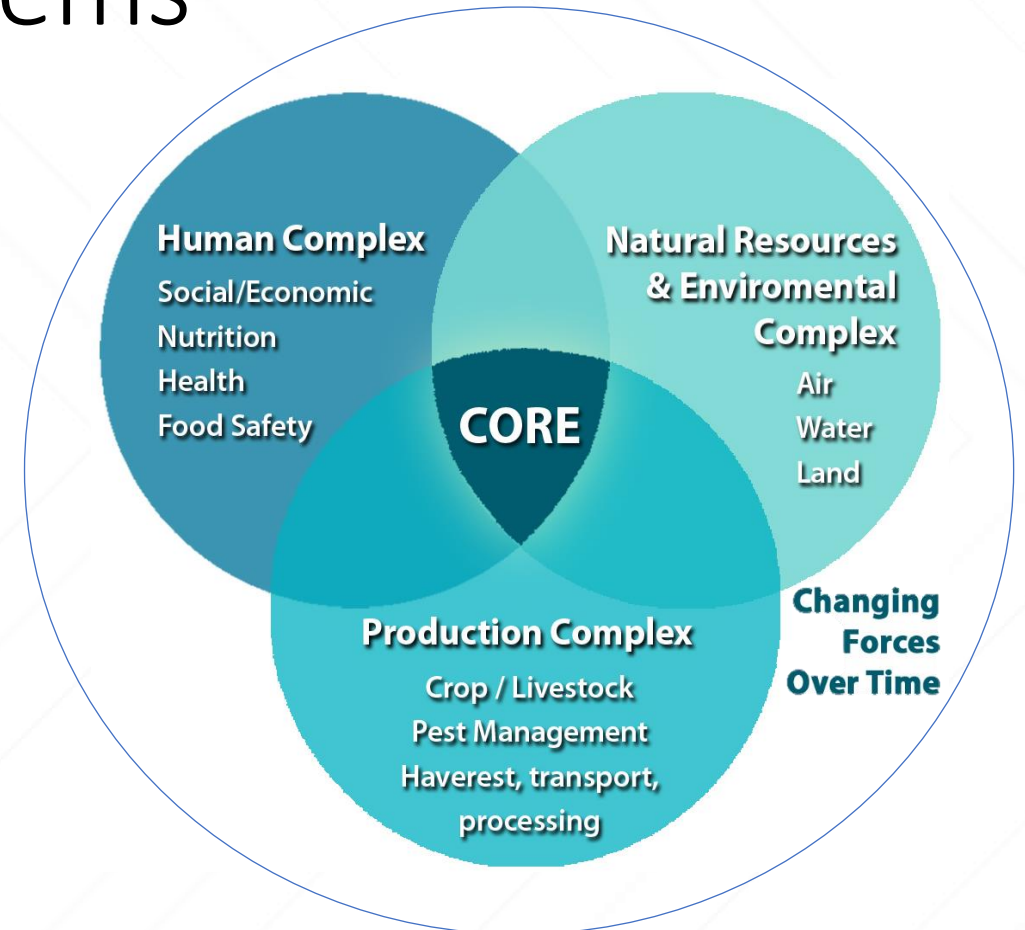
- **Each application should clearly define the system under investigation.**

Sustainable Agricultural Systems

Applicants should describe what system their project is addressing, and what problems they are pursuing.

- A system should consist of more than a single disciplinary view of a problem.

- Integration of multiple components will require multiple disciplines to effectively examine the problem.

- The "Core" is the transdisciplinary component involving the full integration of disciplines yielding a new scientific approach to discovery.

Human Complex
Social/Economic
Nutrition
Health
Food Safety

Natural Resources & Enviromental Complex
Air
Water
Land

CORE

Production Complex
Crop / Livestock
Pest Management
Haverest, transport, processing

Changing Forces Over Time

SAS Priority Outcomes:

- Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry (CSAF)
- Strengthening the Bioeconomy
- Food and Nutrition Security

Long-Term Goal: Strengthening the Bioeconomy

- The development of a sustainable and resilient circular bioeconomy has been hampered by the lack of well-paid employment opportunities, infrastructure susceptibility to shocks, increasing costs for transportation, and access to economically-viable technologies.

- Strategies must be developed to:
  - create <u>cost-competitive</u> and <u>sustainable</u> biobased products and supply chains that strengthen the American rural economy using circular principles.

Long-Term Goal: Strengthening the Bioeconomy

Projects addressing this goal <u>must</u> develop the following

| 1. Sustainable Bioenergy and Biobased Products | 2. Resilience and Robustness of Food and Agricultural Systems | 3. Potential Sustainability Impacts |

Long-Term Goal: Climate Smart Agriculture & Forestry

- Agricultural and forestry systems are increasingly threatened by climate change and extreme weather events while being relied upon to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon.

- Sustainable CSAF must overcome

  - diminishing natural resources and community inequities

  - reduce loss of natural habitats and biodiversity,

  - support sustainable agricultural intensification, and

  - meet accelerating demands for food and agricultural products.

Long-Term Goal: Climate Smart Agriculture & Forestry

Projects addressing this goal must develop, implement, or enhance understanding of at least ONE of the following:

1. Greenhouse Gas Mitigation	2. Markets and Socioeconomics	3. Regionally Appropriate Climate Adaptation and Resilience

Long-Term Goal: Climate Smart Agriculture & Forestry

- This goal recognizes that inequitable impacts of climate change also coexist with food and nutrition insecurity and that addressing these insecurities is interrelated with challenges and opportunities with food production systems.

- Therefore, applications addressing this goal should be designed to challenge social determinants of health through integrated research, education, and extension/outreach activities to address food and nutrition security among the nation's most vulnerable populations.

Long-Term Goal: Food and Nutrition Security

Projects addressing this goal must develop, implement, or enhance understanding of at least ONE of the following:
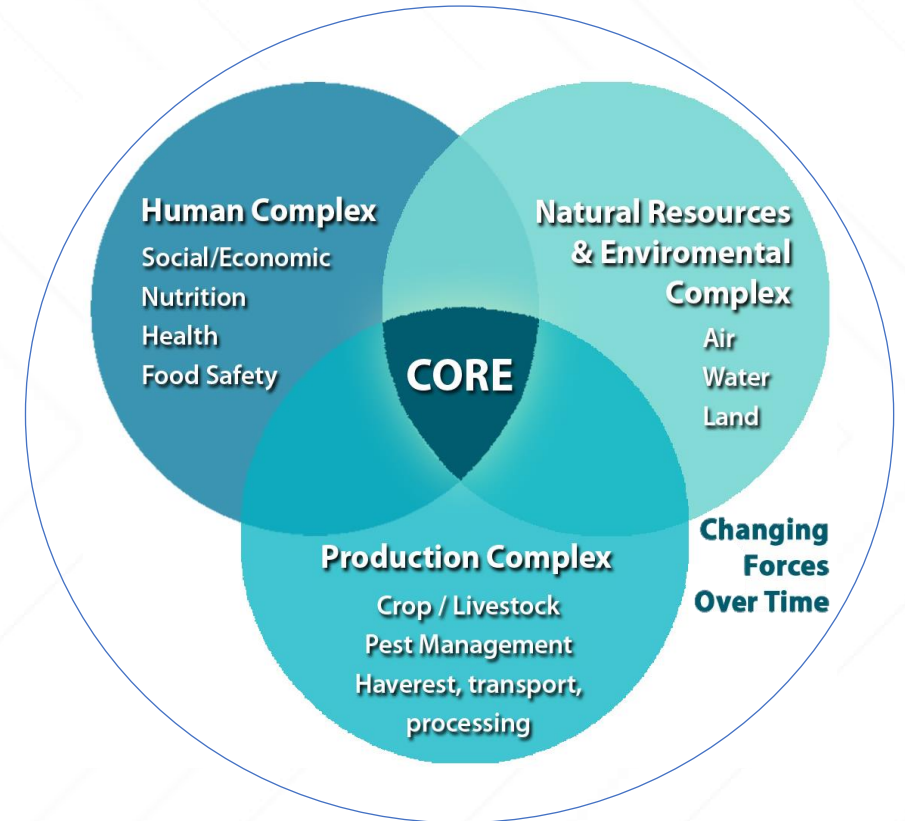
1. Local and Regional Food Systems	2. Nutrition-Sensitive Climate-Smart Agriculture	3. Nutrition Security and Diet Related Health Disparities

Sustainable Agricultural Systems

Applicants should describe their system, and what problems they are pursuing.

- A system should consist of more than a single disciplinary view of a problem.

- Integration of multiple components will require multiple disciplines.

- The "Core" is the transdisciplinary component involving the full integration yielding a new scientific approaches.

Application Details

Sustainable Agricultural Systems

Grant Types

Only Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP) and Strengthening CAP Grants

Eligibility for Strengthening CAPs

- **Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) States**
- **Minority-serving institutions**
  >50% single or combination of minority groups
  (not among the most successful)
- **Small or mid-sized institutions**
  17,500 enrollment or less
  (not among the most successful)

What is Considered Education for SAS?

- Education means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food and agricultural sciences and other related matters such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies.

- Routine use of graduate and postdoctoral students as personnel on research projects is not considered education for the purposes of this program. Only active engagement of students in the scholarship of research/extension projects is considered education.

What is Considered Extension for SAS?

- Extension activity means an act or process that delivers science-based knowledge and informal educational programs to people, enabling them to make practical decisions.

- A high degree of engagement among researchers, extension or other engagement personnel and relevant stakeholders is required from inception through implementation of the project.

International Partnerships

- Applications may include collaborations with international partners but may only be submitted by eligible U.S. institutions.

- Such applications must clearly **demonstrate benefits to the United States**.

SAS Eligibility

- Eligible applicants for Integrated Projects include:
  - Colleges and Universities
  - 1994 Land-Grant Institutions
  - Hispanic-Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities
- See RFA

SAS Submissions

- Submit LOIs to: afri-sas@nifa.usda.gov
  - *AFRI Letter of Intent Instructions* have specific information for CAP grant LOIs as well as info on additional requirements for AFRI SAS LOIs.
  - https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/AFRI-Letter-of-Intent-Instructions.pdf
    - 3 pages
      - Cover page
      - Descriptive title
      - Rationale
      - Overall hypothesis or goal
      - Specific objectives
      - Approach and system
      - Potential impact and expected outcomes

SAS Submissions

- Submit full applications on Grants.gov
- Your application will be rejected or not reviewed if you
  - are not an eligible applicant
  - did not submit an LOI
  - are missing required items or they are in the wrong format
  - used the wrong application package
  - submit even 1 second after the deadline

SAS Deadline Reminders

- Letter of Intent deadline: April 27, 2022 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)

- Application deadline: July 28, 2022 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time)
    - Don't wait until the last minute to submit!
    - It is not easy to troubleshoot error messages from Grants.gov.
    - **The critical time stamp on your application is when it actually goes through without an error**, not when the submission process is initiated.

Additional Resources

- SAS Web Page: nifa.usda.gov/program/afri-sas

- SAS FAQs: nifa.usda.gov/resource/afri-sas-faq

- SAS Glossary: nifa.usda.gov/resource/afri-sas-glossary

- Summaries of previously funded SAS projects: https://nifa.usda.gov/data (advanced search by program code A9201)

Summary

- AFRI-SAS contact info:
  - AFRI-SAS@nifa.usda.gov

**Read the RFA
Read the RFA
Read the RFA
Read the RFA
Finally, read the RFA!**

Submit your questions to AFRI-SAS@nifa.usda.gov