



The Northeast Center for Risk Management Education

Extension Risk Management Education Competitive Grants Program

2008 Request for Applications

Opening Date: November 1, 2007
Pre-Proposal Closing Date: December 13, 2007

OVERVIEW

Program Purpose

The Northeast Center for Risk Management Education (Northeast Center), in conjunction with the North Central, Southern and Western regional Centers, announces a funding opportunity for projects that help farm and ranch families succeed through targeted risk management strategies. The return sought on the investment of the grant awards is the improved ability of farm and ranch families to manage the risks associated with farming and ranching businesses. In addition to crop insurance, effective risk management involves selecting tools and approaches that reduce the financial effects of the uncertainties of weather, yields, prices, government policies, global markets and other factors that can cause wide swings in farm income or threaten economic viability. Alternative production and management strategies may create a different set of business risks, and may sometimes increase risk. Effective risk management education should help producers make a comparative risk assessment of alternative production or management practices.

The Northeast Center will announce awards by April 17, 2008 for risk management education projects to begin on July 1, 2008 and to be completed on or before June 30, 2009. If your project is funded, we will offer whatever help we can give you to make the project a success. Our goal is to partner with you to create improved risk management education results for agricultural producers and their families.

Size of Awards

Grant awards will normally not exceed \$50,000 per project. The range of awards will generally be from \$5000 to \$50,000, however there is no absolute upper or lower limit on the funds provided to a project. The awards will reflect a mix of project sizes to meet our investment goal of a balanced portfolio.

Eligibility

Organizations eligible and encouraged to apply for grants are private and public groups, organizations and institutions including land grant colleges and universities, cooperative extension, other colleges and universities, and other qualified public and private entities in the region with a demonstrated capacity to develop and deliver educational programs for agricultural producers and their families. These entities include farm organizations, commodity groups, lenders, consultants, marketers, and risk management service providers such as crop insurance agents. Collaboration between the public and private sectors is strongly encouraged.

This program encourages applications that help socially disadvantaged farmers learn about risk management strategies and tools that can be applied to their farm businesses. Organizations that provide risk management education and assistance to underserved producers are eligible and encouraged to submit applications.

The Northeast Center serves the region which includes Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The Northeast Center for Risk Management Education welcomes comments, suggestions and/or recommendations regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the Extension Risk Management Education Grants Program. Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Dr. H. Don Tilmon, Northeast Center for Risk Management Education, University of Delaware, 112 Townsend Hall, Newark, DE 19716-2130; or via e-mail to: htilmon@udel.edu.

RISK MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES and PROJECT TYPES

While the ultimate clientele for this program is producers and their families, within that context regional needs have been identified which require additional emphasis. Therefore, this RFA solicits proposals which address the following:

Risk Management Priorities

The mission of the Northeast Center is to *improve the risk management decision-making processes of agricultural producers in the Northeast Region through a comprehensive educational program*. It has been determined by the Advisory Council of the Northeast Center that the full range of risk management categories, including **production, price/market, financial, institutional/legal, and human/personal risk** may be addressed by applicants seeking 2008 risk management education funds. Please note that

projects focusing on the agricultural labor force, which has become a high profile issue nationally, would fall under the “human/personal” risk category (definitions follow on page 5).

Risk Management Project Types

Applications will be accepted in the following three categories:

1. **County/Regional Level Program Grants (\$1,000 maximum):** This category is for grants that are designed to deliver risk management education programs at the local level to some specific audience. More than one proposal may be entered from an individual county, however the meeting topics must be unique and funding for multiple grants from the same county is not guaranteed. *Applications must be made by the County Educator where the program is to be delivered. If two or more counties submit identical proposals, they may be asked to combine them into a single Full Proposal for consideration in the next stage of the funding process.* It is anticipated that these grants will range from \$500 to \$1,000 per year depending upon the size of the audience being served and the means of delivery of the educational program. Successful applicants in this category will have funds available for use beginning February 1, 2008, for programming to be delivered any time from February 1, 2008 through January 31, 2009. Reporting will be required for these grants, but will be less extensive than that expected for the other categories. These grants are intended to fund individual meetings and will require only the Pre-Proposal application.
2. **Small and Limited-Resource Producer Grants:** This category of grants is for programs that target the particular risk management requirements of small and limited-resource producers. Applications should address the relevant risk management education needs of this group of producers which includes, but is not limited to, beginning farmers.
3. **Unrestricted Risk Management Education Grants:** This general category is intended to include all other proposed risk management education projects which address needs of producers that are consistent with the areas of risk previously identified.

INVESTMENT CRITERIA

Please read the following information carefully. This RFA gives clear instructions on results-based grant awards. Additional information on the results-based process is provided on the www.agrisk.umn.edu website. Closely following the principles and directions of results-based grant making will improve your chances for success. Proposals that fail to follow these principles and directions will be excluded from consideration.

Projects Must Be Results-Based

Awards will be made to projects that clearly identify risk management results for the participants and that have a well thought out approach for achieving those results. Risk Management Targets (explained in the following section) are the risk management results you believe the participants in your project will achieve. It is important to understand this concept because our application selection process focuses on the probability that the participants in your project will learn, achieve and apply the targeted results you propose. The context and principles of our

results-based process are described in detail in this RFA. Other Proposal Resources, found on the www.agrisk.umn.edu website, include an educational video stream on results-based grant making, a step-by-step full application tutorial, and a PowerPoint presentation on what producers gain through a results-based approach. Applicants who take the time to understand results-based grant making have a far greater chance of success in receiving funds from the Northeast Center.

Risk Management Targets

Targeted Results for your participants are the key focus of project selection. Targets are specific, measurable and verifiable risk management results that participants will learn, achieve and apply immediately after, and within 6 months to a year after completion of your project. The terms “target” and “result” can be thought of as interchangeable. Examples of targeted results are: (1) A producer completed a business plan as a result of participating in a your project; (2) A producer identified a new market as a result of participating in your project; and (3) An extended family developed a succession plan as a result of participating in your project. The RME RFA requires that you identify how many of your project participants will achieve the targeted results that you have proposed. Do not confuse the actions your project team takes or materials they develop with targeted results for producers.

Risk Management Areas

There are a number of different risk management areas covered by this program. The targeted results must fall within one or more of the Risk Management Areas listed below. Our application for pre-proposals and full proposals asks you to select from the list of risk management areas that your Targeted Results will fit into. It is important to be specific and realistic when selecting your risk management areas. If you are unable to identify one of these areas addressed by your proposed project, please contact Dr. Don Tilmon (302-831-1325 or htilmon@udel.edu) at the Northeast Center. You may also wish to recommend as a stakeholder that the particular risk management area you are interested in be added to the existing list in future RFAs (see previous Stakeholder section). The following Risk Management Areas help define projects that will be successful in the Northeast Center’s results-based grant making process.

Improved understanding and use of:

- Insurance products
- Product and enterprise diversification
- Market analysis and outlook
- Cash and futures pricing tools
- Marketing strategies, plans, and clubs
- Direct, wholesale, and processing markets
- Contract production, branded or certified marketing, and value-added enterprises
- Financial records, analysis, and bench marking
- Capital and financial assets
- Credit
- Tools for managing legal liability
- Leases, contracts, and negotiating skills
- Plans and tools to address succession, estate planning, health, and well-being

Improvement in:

- Business and strategic planning
- Employee recruitment/management/retention
- Interpersonal/family/professional/landlord relationship skills
- Ability to manage changes in policy and regulation
- Understanding of the economic risks associated with new production technologies

Risk Management Education Defined:

To put the investment criteria in context, you should understand our definition of Risk Management Education. Risk is an important aspect of the farming business. Risk management involves choosing among alternatives that reduce the financial effects of the uncertainties of weather, yields, prices, government policies, global markets, and other factors that can cause wide swings in farm income. Risk Management Education, within the context of the enabling legislation for the Extension Risk Management Education Program, is defined as training that improves the ability of agricultural producers and their families to effectively manage risks. Five general risk categories associated with farm and ranch businesses are described below. These are more broadly defined than the Risk Management Areas explained in the section above. All of our Risk Management Areas would fall within one of these five risk categories.

Production Risk – Production risk derives from the uncertain natural growth processes of crops and livestock. Weather, disease, pests, and other factors affect both the quantity and quality of commodities produced.

Price or Market Risk – Price or market risk refers to uncertainty about the prices producers will receive for commodities or the prices they must pay for inputs. The nature of price risk varies significantly from commodity to commodity.

Financial Risk – Financial risk results when the farm business borrows money and creates an obligation to repay debt. Rising interest rates, the prospect of loans being called by lenders, and restricted credit availability are also aspects of financial risk.

Institutional/Legal Risk – Institutional or legal risk results from uncertainties surrounding government actions. Tax laws, regulations for chemical use, rules for animal waste disposal, and the level of price or income support payments are examples of government decisions that can have a major impact on the farm business.

Human/Personal Risk – Human or personal risk refers to factors such as succession, disability, estate problems, wellness, or human relationships that impact the viability of the farm (i.e., divorce, sibling rivalry, and intergenerational issues). Labor relations or labor supply are another area of human risk that can impact the financial well-being of the farm or ranch business.

Portfolio Approach

In selecting projects for funding, the Northeast Center seeks to invest in a balanced portfolio of Risk Management Education projects that represent:

- Diversity in terms of different types of producers to be served
- Diversity in terms of risk management tools and strategies to be taught
- Diversity in terms of the organizations that receive support
- An array of public-private partnerships that will strengthen project results and continuity

- An approach that recognizes the importance of the family to farm/ranch businesses
- A geographical balance of funded projects in the region

PROJECT DIRECTOR DESIGNATION

The designated Project Director must be actively involved at all stages of the proposal process, from the Pre-Proposal through to the Full Proposal (if invited to submit a Full Proposal), and is responsible for completing the project. This includes project management, subcontracting, funds oversight, meeting project time schedules, reporting progress and submitting the final report. The Review Panel's assessment of the capacity of the proposed project to reach the specified targets will be based on the capacity of the Project Director and team to deliver results-based risk management programs to the farm and ranch families being served.

Change in Project Director Designation

The Project Director will be responsible for the entire project. Change in project director designation requires approval from the Center Director (Dr. H. Don Tilmon, Northeast Center for Risk Management Education). The existing Project Director must send a letter to the Center Director requesting the change. In addition, the newly designated Project Director must also provide a letter which states his/her qualifications and experiences for assuming the responsibilities associated with the project. Failure to notify the Center of a change in project director designation could result in a Pre or Full Proposal being withdrawn from consideration or the withholding of funds if an award has been made.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Applicants must indicate the collaborators they will use to strengthen their project. A project will not be considered for funding unless it identifies meaningful collaborators. Collaborators are outside people and organizations from both the public and private sectors that will provide technical expertise and/or access to producers. Collaborators need only to be identified in the Pre-Proposal. Letters of commitment from Team Members and Collaborators or their organizations are required as part of the Full Proposal.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following evaluation criteria will guide our selection of projects. Because we believe the results producers achieve are the return on investment of our funds, the highest priority will be placed on Targeted Results for participants. The most weight will be placed upon whether a project can deliver the targeted results. An application that does not identify the risk management results that participants will achieve has a limited chance of success. Strong emphasis will also be placed on Results Verification, Producer Demand, and Collaborators. Although we are interested in the criteria that deal with innovative approaches and wide application, our primary focus will be on whether or not a project can deliver the targeted results.

Successful proposals will address the following criteria by showing the direct connection between what you propose to do and how these activities will lead to Targeted Results for

participants. The evaluation criteria are listed in the order of their importance, with the first one being the most important.

Targeted Results (40 percent weight). The identification and documentation of targeted results for producers related to their risk management needs. The Targeted Results are those the participants in the proposed project will learn, achieve and apply, not the production of materials, holding of workshops or other program activities.

Results Verification (20 percent weight). Verification is simple yes or no evidence that producers will achieve the targeted results. Proposals must document how the project director and/or collaborators will verify whether or not the participants will have achieved their targeted results upon completion of the project. While a formal evaluation process is not required, reviewers will judge as to whether the proposal identifies how the project director will (a) know whether participants have learned, achieved and/or applied the risk management targets and (b) how and when they will measure or verify these results.

Producer Demand (20 percent weight). The reason(s) why producers will choose to participate in the proposed project is also key to receiving funding. One difference between the RME Program and other grants programs is that a reviewer must be convinced that there is a demand by producers for the risk management topic being proposed and a high probability that producers will participate in the project. The proposal must include clear evidence as to why producers or their families, depending on the nature of the project, will choose to participate. This evaluation criterion is based upon evidence that there is clearly a need, expressed by producers, for the project being proposed, and on the assumption that a producer must also want to participate if they are to learn, achieve and apply the risk management strategies or tools being taught.

Collaborators (10 percent weight). Collaborators are outside people or organizations that can provide either technical expertise or access to producers. This may include partners, either individuals or groups, in the public and/or private sectors, working through the joint efforts of existing networks or the formation of new educational networks. (This criterion will require reviewers to come to the conclusion that the proposal adequately indicates that the collaborators are really part of the project, and that their participation strengthens the project.)

Innovative Approaches (5 percent weight). Innovation may be of many types. For example, approaches and methods that further contribute to the existing knowledge base, materials and/or tools available are one. A key part of the selection process is based upon whether the reviewers believe the proposed project will reach the target audience that is defined within the proposal. Innovation may also deal with the lack of time producers have, the marketing and delivery of the proposed project to potential participants, and techniques or tactics to convince producers and/or their families to participate in the project.

Wide Application (5 percent weight). Demonstration or description of how the proposed project or its inherent techniques and strategies developed and delivered might have wide application. Descriptions of program techniques might include adapting materials to specialized audiences, marketing and promotion techniques, eliciting high interest in basic risk management principles with new methodologies or other ideas that might make the project have wide application if others were to pick up on the idea or processes involved. Will aspects of the

proposed project contribute to others who may wish to borrow or adopt the processes and procedures being proposed?

HOW TO APPLY

Online Application Website

The Pre-Proposal application (and later Full Proposal application, if requested) must be submitted online through the Northeast Center's website (<http://www.necrme.org>). Detailed information on the application process is also provided on the www.agrisk.umn.edu website. If you are unable to complete the application online, please call the Northeast Center at 302-831-6540 or e-mail us at sbolson@udel.edu.

Grant Application Process

There are **two stages** in the RME Program grant application process, which are described below.

STAGE ONE: Submit Pre-Proposal – Pre-Proposals are due by 5 p.m. EST on **Thursday, December 13, 2007.**

Pre-Proposal Defined - The Pre-Proposal is a short application that must be completed online. All questions in the online Pre-Proposal form must be addressed within the specified word counts. In your Pre-Proposal, clearly identify the Risk Management Targets you want your participants to learn, achieve and apply. Then clearly identify the participants, and why they will choose to participate in your project.

Targets - Targets are specific, measurable and verifiable risk management results that participants will learn, achieve and apply immediately after, and within 6 months to one year after completion of your project. While curriculum, materials, or the activities of your team or project are important, your strongest emphasis must be placed upon the targeted results for producers. You must also be able to identify how you will verify these targeted results, both during the project and within six months to a year after completion of the project.

Pre-Proposal Content - We are looking for Pre-Proposals that express clarity and conviction. Rhetoric or extraneous details should be avoided. The Pre-Proposal should provide a clear but brief description of how your project will work to produce specific targeted results for your participants. There needs to be a clear connection between what you propose to do and the targeted results for the participants. The Pre-Proposal is not graded on writing skill or complexity; however it does need to stay within the prescribed word limits. **IMPORTANT:** If you exceed the word count limitations as specified in the application instructions, those in excess will not be considered by the reviewers. The information in the Pre-Proposal becomes part of your Full Proposal application if you are selected to submit a Full Proposal.

Selection Process – Conceptually, it is important to keep in mind that the selection process centers first on whether the applicant has clearly identified the risk management results the participants will learn, achieve and apply. At the Pre-Proposal stage, the remainder of the application should provide a sense to the panel that project participants can achieve the targeted

results by participating in the project. At the Full Proposal stage the remainder of the application, with its additional detail, must provide sufficient information so that the Review Panel can make an informed decision as to whether or not the agricultural producers will achieve the risk management results proposed because they have participated in the project.

Project Director Designation – The Project Director must be actively involved at all stages of the proposal process, from the Pre-Proposal through to the Full Proposal (if invited to submit a Full Proposal). Carefully review the information on Project Director Designation on page 6 of the RFA.

Change in Project Director Designation – Change in project director designation requires approval from the Center Director (Dr. H. Don Tilmon, Northeast Center). Carefully review the information on Change in Project Director Designation on page 6 of the RFA.

*Please note that Collaborator/Team letters, the SF424 Research & Related Cover Page, and the SF424 Research & Related Budget form are **not** required for Pre-Proposals.*

Information Required for the Online Pre-Proposal:

- Review of Past Projects - One of the goals of Risk Management Education's integrated proposal and reporting system is to help projects continually improve by building upon good programs that facilitate collaboration in the delivery process. An applicant should search in the Ag Risk Education Library (www.agrisk.umn.edu) to review completed projects. This is an important step that often will result in an improved application. Please identify how you have used the Ag Risk Education Library and past project reviews in preparation of your pre-proposal.
- Risk Management Areas – Targets must fall within one or more of the identified Risk Management Areas. Risk Management Areas are listed in this RFA on pages 4 and 5. Risk management targets are the most important evaluation criteria.
- Targets – List the specific measurable and verifiable risk management targets that you want your participants in the project to learn, achieve and apply (Targeted Results). Make sure there is a logical connection between what you provide in the project summary and these Targets.
- Participant Description – Describe project participants (your target audience) and explain why they would want/choose to participate in your project. This is an important consideration in the evaluation of your proposal, and must be summarized in 400 words or less.
- Project Summary – This short summary (150 words or less) needs to convince the Review Panel that you have a well thought out project and should include your risk management subject area, method(s), target audience, number of workshops, classes, etc., and the results you expect your producers to achieve.

- Project Director, Team Members and Project Collaborators - List the Project Director (Team Leader), Team Members, and Project Collaborators by name and organization, including phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and each listed person's role in the project.
- Total Amount Requested - List total amount requested (detailed budgets are not required for the pre-proposal application).

Submitting Your Pre-Proposal:

1. Registration Information - To register, go to the Northeast Center's website (<http://www.necrme.org>), select *Grants* at the top of the page, and then *Available Grant Funding* from the drop-down menu.
2. Project Number and Password - After you submit the online registration information, you will be e-mailed a *Project Number* and the *Password* you previously selected.
3. Pre-Proposal Log In - Go back to the Verification System (via the Northeast Center's website) and log in using your new *Project Number* and *Password*. Then follow the instructions for completing the Pre-Proposal.

Attaining Help:

The Pre-Proposal online application contains Help (click on a question mark) that provides useful suggestions and explanations of terms. The Proposal Tutorial (<http://www.agrisk.umn.edu/verification/media.htm>) also contains expanded information and defines terms you will need to understand in order to complete the application.

STAGE TWO: Submit Full Proposal Application (if chosen). Full Proposals from finalists are due by 5 p.m. EST on, Thursday, February 28, 2008.

Invitation to Submit a Full Proposal – The Northeast Center will notify applicants by February 1, 2008 if they have been selected as finalists, and will request that they submit a Full Proposal. **Additional sections** must be filled out in the Full Proposal. Pre-Proposal information will automatically be included in the Full Proposal and will not have to be re-entered. You will be able to edit and make changes to your Pre-Proposal information in your Full Proposal.

Information Required for the Online Full Proposal:

- Producer Impact
- Project Steps
- Project Description
- Tools, Curriculum and Presenters (Project Team Section)
- Budget – SF424 Research & Related Budget Summary
- Budget Narrative
- Requested Documents (All other requested materials)
 - Budget – SF424 Research & Related Budget Form (Download from Final Checklist Section of the online application)

- Cover Page – SF424 Research & Related Cover Sheet (Download from Final Checklist Section of the online application)
- Letters of Commitment

Online Application Process – The Full Proposal document must be submitted online by Thursday, February 28, 2008 at 5 p.m. EST. All other requested materials (including the SF424 Research & Related Budget Form(s), and the Team and Collaborator commitment letters), must be submitted as uploaded documents within the Requested Documents section of the online application, or with permission as hard copies mailed to the Northeast Center in Newark, Delaware by the same closing time (Thursday, February 28, 2008 at 5 p.m. EST). You may either upload a copy of the SF424 R&R Cover Sheet as a PDF document or mail a copy of the Cover Sheet to your Regional Center. The SF424 forms are contained within the online application system.

Requested Documents:

SF424 Research & Related Cover Sheet – Refer to the online application Help and/or the Proposal Tutorial (live link) for specific instructions on how to fill out this form.

SF424 Research & Related Budget Form – Refer to the online application Help and/or the Proposal Tutorial (live link) for specific instructions on how to fill out this form. The amounts on this form must match what you have entered in the online Research & Related Budget Summary.

Subcontractors will be required to fill out a separate SF424 Research & Related Budget Form along with a Budget Narrative.

Letters of Commitment – Letters of commitment from Team Members and Collaborators or their organizations are required for projects chosen to submit a Full Proposal.

- Letters of commitment must identify the specific role and/or contributions of each of the team members and collaborators. Form letters and letters which only state general support for the project will not be considered.
- All team and collaborator letters of commitment must be sent to applicant; who will then submit them as uploaded documents through the Requested Documents section of the online application as PDF File Attachments. All letters must be received by the Northeast Center **on or before the date** on which Full Proposals are due.
- Permission may be obtained from the Northeast Center for the applicant to submit letters as hard copies.
- All letters must be submitted through the applicant. Individual letters submitted either electronically or via hard copy, directly to the Northeast Center will not be accepted.
- Signed and dated letters must be written on the letterhead of the team member's/collaborator's organization, addressed to Dr. H. Don Tilmon, The Northeast Center for Risk Management Education, 112 Townsend Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716-2130.

Additional Information:

Indirect/F&A Costs – The authorizing legislation does not allow for indirect costs to be restricted. Therefore indirect costs will be allowed up to your organization’s federally negotiated rate. If your organization does not have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate, you are allowed to include in your budget only those administrative costs that are directly related to the administration of your grant.

Salary Guidelines – Charges by academic institutions for work performed by faculty members during the summer months or other periods outside the base salary period are to be at a monthly rate not in excess of that which would be applicable under the base salary and other provisions of the applicable cost principles. All salaries requested must be consistent with the regular practices of the institution.

Subcontractors and Consultants – If a portion of your proposed project will be performed by outside sources and/or will use a consultant, additional budget detail will need to be submitted, along with the other requested budget materials. Refer to the instructions listed in the online application Help and/or the Proposal Tutorial (<http://www.agrisk.umn.edu/verification/media.htm>).

Purchasing of Curriculum – Note: Projects that propose to use a purchased curriculum must identify the title, cost, and source of the curriculum and identify specifically how the project proposes to pay for the curriculum. The budget narrative must identify if any Northeast Center funds will be used to pay for trainer certification fees. The applicant will need to identify how or whether participants will be asked to pay a fee to help offset the cost of that curriculum. If the applicant has used the curriculum previously, the applicant should be prepared to provide evidence, if asked, of the past success of the curriculum, including participant response.

FINAL REVIEW OF FULL PROPOSALS

Follow-up Telephone Call – A Possibility

After the Full Proposals are reviewed by the respective regional RME Center Advisory Councils, the Center Directors may contact proposal finalists to clarify any issues raised during the review process. In addition, the Center Directors, at the request of the Advisory Councils, may contact individuals who know about you and your past leadership experience to see if they think you are likely to be successful with your proposed project. It is possible that the Northeast Center staff may also contact your collaborators or team members. A collaborator whom you have identified and/or who is not familiar with your project will jeopardize your success in receiving funds. Remember that Project Team and Collaborator letters of commitment are due by the Thursday, February 28, 2008 at 5 p.m. EST deadline for the Full Proposals.

Notification of Awards

Awardees will be notified by April 17, 2008. All grants will be finalized by July 1, 2008. However, there may arise situations over which the RME Center has no control which could possibly delay this date.

Reporting Requirements and Other Information for Grant Awardees

Reporting System – All reporting is online and is submitted through the Risk Management Education Results Verification System, the same system where Pre-Proposal and Full Proposal applications are entered. It is a simple and straight-forward system, with sections of the Full Proposal already available online for project managers to report against. The final report on each project is a public document and will be made available for viewing through the Ag Risk Education Library.

Progress Reports – Grantees will be contractually required to submit three progress reports on their project — by October 1, February 1, and May 1 of the project year. If desired, additional progress reports may be submitted. If a project is given 18 months or 2 years to complete program delivery, the same number of reports is required each year.

Final Report – Upon project completion, awardees must also make a final report on the achievement of participants reaching the Risk Management Targets identified in the application. The final report is due within the time frame directed by each Regional Center.

Provision of Materials Developed as a Result of the Project – Digital copies of all project marketing and program materials will be uploaded to the Risk Management Education Results Verification System website for posting in the Ag Risk Education Library.

Final Payment – Final payment (or up to 15 percent of project costs) will be withheld until all reporting requirements are met.

APPLICANT ASSISTANCE

Contact Us for Help

It is strongly recommended that applicants download and carefully read all Proposal Resources (<http://www.agrisk.umn.edu/verification/media.htm>). We encourage you to contact us if you have questions. If you would like more information about any of our concepts, principles, or directions for the grant application process, or if you have questions regarding your specific Pre-Proposal or Full Proposal, please contact:

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<http://www.necrme.org>

Key Deadline and Announcement Dates

Closing date for Pre-Proposal submission:	Thursday, December 13, 2007, 5 p.m. EST
Finalists are selected and invited to submit a Full Proposal application:	Friday, February 1, 2008
Finalists' Full Proposals with required materials are due:	Thursday, February 28, 2008, 5 p.m. EST
Award decisions are announced:	Thursday, April 17, 2008
Award contracts are finalized:	July 1, 2008

IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Do Not Miss the Deadline

Applications received after the posted deadlines will not be accepted for review and will be returned to the applicant. However, in the event of an extraordinary circumstance not under the control of the applicant (such as a blizzard, hurricane, tornado, or other natural or man-made disaster) that results in the shutdown of the submitting organization, or results in courier or mail service delays, on a case-by-case basis a determination will be made by each respective RME Center as to whether to accept a late proposal for review. The provision of supporting evidence is the responsibility of the applicant organization and/or Project Director.

Definitions

Definitions for terms used in this RFA, and in the supporting documents required for Full Proposal applications, are available on the Risk Management Education Results Verification System website (<http://www.agrisk.umn.edu/Verification/Pubs/Definitions.pdf>).

Risk Management Education Reference Materials

Applicants seeking additional information on risk management for agricultural producers can find a wide range of materials at the Ag Risk Education Library website (<http://www.agrisk.umn.edu>).

Another useful resource in the General Risk section of the library is the USDA-RMA/CSREES publication, *An Introduction to Risk in Agriculture* by Alan Baquet, Ruth Hambleton and Doug Jose (<http://act.fcic.usda.gov/pubs/1997/riskmgmt.pdf>).

Legislative Background

Section 133 of the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000, Pub. L.106-224 requires USDA CSREES to establish a program under which competitive grants are made to qualified public and private entities for the purpose of educating agricultural producers about the full range of risk management activities. USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) established four Regional Centers to address the educational needs within their regions. University of Delaware Extension was selected on a competitive basis to host the Northeast Center for the Northeast Region, and serves Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia.

It is the policy of the Delaware Cooperative Extension System that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex, disability, age, or national origin.