

AREERA LEGISLATION

The Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) amended the Hatch Act of 1887, the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, and sections 1444 and 1445 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1979 (NARETPA).

For complete text of the AREERA of 1998 see:

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/reporting/planrept/pdf/areeraact.pdf>

Overview of the AREERA requirements and its effects on the SAES:

- USDA-approved five-year Plans of Work are required.
- Cooperative research employing multidisciplinary approaches with another SAES, ARS or a college or university, to solve problems that concern more than one State.

Overview of requirements and other effects of the AREERA relating to the SAES:

- Renamed the Regional Research Fund to the Multistate Research Fund (MRF)
- Requires integrated research and extension activities
- All Hatch formula-funded research must undergo scientific peer review
- Requires all Hatch formula-funds to be matched, including multistate research funds

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Secretary of Agriculture is responsible for administration of the Multistate Research program. This responsibility is delegated to the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (NIFA). The SAES Directors are responsible for the Multistate Research program in their respective states.

NIFA:

- Promulgates rules and regulations for carrying out the program
- Responsible for providing leadership for the program at the national level
- Provides administrative oversight and authorization for the individual and collective, federally supported activities of the SAES
- Approves allocation of multistate research funds based on recommendations of the regional associations

SAES Directors:

- Determine the most effective use of federal and non-federal funds in support of Multistate Research.
- Are responsible for peer reviews of all proposed projects. [Peer review of MRF projects is delegated to the regional associations of SAES directors.]
- Authorize their Station's representatives to Multistate Research activities.
- Determine the human resources to be committed to MRF projects and other Multistate Research activities.

- Document participation in, and contributions to, multistate research projects.

Regional SAES Directors' Associations:

- Obtain (either directly or indirectly) information from stakeholder listening activities.
- Establish the region's research priorities.
- Manage their region's research portfolio.
- Facilitate the development of research efforts that utilize the resources of individual and collective SAES toward regional and national goals
- Identify appropriate outcomes that highlight research accomplishments
- Establish partnerships with appropriate entities.
- Assure through peer reviews, the quality of the science conducted, and the relevance of Multistate Research activities to stakeholder needs.
- Delegate responsibilities to administrative advisors who ensure the efficient and effective conduct of Multistate Research and other regional activities.

Administrative Advisors (AA) are appointed for each MRF project, coordinating committee, information exchange group, and advisory committee. Responsibilities include:

- Facilitates communication.
- Arranges for peer reviews of proposals.
- Assures the quality of the governance of activities.
- Authorizes annual and other meetings.
- Fulfills the reporting requirements of activities.
- Facilitates the conduct of an activity's business.

NIFA Representative

A national program leader (NPL) is assigned by the Administrator of NIFA as the Agency's representative to each MRF project, coordinating committee, or other activity for involvement beginning with the earliest stages of organization. The nature and extent of involvement by NIFA representatives greatly facilitates the process for the development of, review and approval of projects, accomplishment of project objectives and other activities that insure the overall success of the project. The role of this person is to:

- Provide a national perspective to individual projects or other activities and to the regional associations by assisting in reviews of their Multistate Research portfolios.
- Assist in assuring that a Multistate Research activity does not represent duplication of effort.
- Provide communication from and to the federal partner and provide administrative reviews of projects or activity proposals.
- Monitor, in conjunction with the AA, the progress and accomplishments of projects.