Volume IV Issue 7

July, 2012

ARD UPDATES

Message from the Chair

Dear Colleagues:

June has been a very busy month. My update to you this month is in pictorial form which conveys much more than words. Hope you are staying out of the heat and still enjoying the treasures of summer. See you next month for our summer meeting. Please watch your emails for updated information.

Sincerely,

Dyremple Marsh, ARD Chair

Drs. Marsh, Brooks & Kairo visit with NIFA Director, Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy—>

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

White House/Council of 1890 Universities MOU Signing Ceremony with USDA Secretary Vilsack and EPA Administrator Jackson on ***Friday, June 29, 2012.***

Smithsonian 2012 Folklife Festival

1890 Displays at the Festival

1890 Universities' Demonstrations of High Tunnel Gardening

Please visit the ARD website-
www.umes.edu/ard

or contact us using cbbrooks@umes.edu

Congratulations!!!!! to Dr. Lorenzo Esters, formerly APLU VP for Access and Advancement of Public Black Universities, who has accepted the position at ***Kentucky State University*** as Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Management.

ARD UPDATES

Prairie View A&M University Scientist's New Technology Recommended for Publication in Top NASA Report

Dr. Raul Cuero, research scientist and microbiologist in the College of Ag. and Human Sciences at PVAM is receiving recognition from NASA for his new technology and invention under the patenting and licensing process, "Effective Anti-UV Proteins to Protect Fruits Blistering, and to Increase Sugar, Carotene, and Lycopene Content." This study was funded by NASA, SynBERC-NSF and PVAM. His research for this technology stemmed from studies that he initiated to help local watermelon producers in Waller County, TX protect their crops, which were being lost to harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun's extreme heat.

The radiation caused blistering, which allowed pathogens to enter the fruit. Vitamin A is also diminished with long periods of UV radiation, which also increases with global warming. Cuero uses an organic natural compound product to coat the fruit and prevent it from losing vitamins. He also found that this process resulted in increases in carotene, lycopene and sugar content of the fruit. Findings also revealed an increased crop yield due to the compound's effect. According to Dr. Cuero, "Once I proved the efficacy of the compound, the next step was to identify the anti UV gene and proteins responsible for controlling the effects of the UV radiation. Those genes and proteins have now been identified." This compound can potentially be "used for protecting aircraft for space travel and opens up great possibilities for doing research on other planets that are abundant in UV radiation." Cuero also said *in vivo* and *in vitro* tests have proven the anti-UV compound to be safe.

New RFAs

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Dual Purpose with Dual Benefit: Research in Biomedicine and Agriculture Using Agriculturally Important Domestic Species

This interagency program will fund grant proposals that utilize agriculturally important domestic species to improve human health and animal agriculture through the advancement of basic and translational research deemed highly relevant to both agricultural and biomedical research. This initiative is designed to facilitate and encourage comparative medicine research studies through the careful selection and refinement of farm animal models that mimic human developmental, physiological, and etiological processes to better understand disease origins and improve assisted reproduction efficiencies. The anticipated outcomes include both the elucidation of fundamental information relevant for the improvement of human health and an increase in food animal production and improvement in animal health and product quality.

Letter of Intent Due Date: August 20, 2012
Due Date (Closing): September 20, 2012
Estimated Total Program Funding: $5,000,000.00
Cost Sharing Requirements: see RFA for details
For More Information Contact: Mark Mirando (202) 401-4336 mmirando@nifa.usda.gov
Funding Opportunity Number: PAR-10-276
CFDA Number: 10.310—Agriculture and Food Research Initiative

The AFRI Food Safety Challenge Area RFA is open.

The overall aim of this challenge area is to protect consumers from microbial and chemical contaminants that may occur during the production to consumption stages. FASE Grants are a part of this initiative.

Letter of Intent Due Date: August 20, 2012
Due Date (Closing): November 14, 2012
Range of Awards: up to $800,000.00

Cost Sharing: See RFA
Contact: Jeanette Thurston; jthurston@nifa.usda.gov
Funding Opportunity #: USDA-NIFA-AFRI-003850

CFDA Number: 10:310—AFRI