

USDA: National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Version 1.0

Sub-primer of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

I. Background Information:

The [National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#) (NIFA) is a relatively new agency established by the 2008 Congressional Farm Bill. NIFA replaced a long-standing service, the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), that had a long history of partnering with land-grant university systems, farmers and other land stakeholders, forest landowners, and researchers to produce science focusing on biosecurity, public policy and natural resources, water quality, nutrition, and other issues that pose larger societal challenges, including climate change. Its central grant scheme is the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), which includes both foundational science funding and a fellowships program. Among its other funding programs is the Agricultural Science for Climate Variability and Change Program, an initiative focusing on research contributing to forecasting and evaluating climate change and its effects.¹ As its roots in CSREES would suggest, NIFA retains a dedication to science integrated with the education and participation of local communities who aim to benefit from applied discoveries. A summary of its priorities (see "[NIFA Factsheet](#)") lists the agency's primary research areas as food security, climate variability and change, water, sustainable bioenergy, childhood obesity prevention, and food safety.

II. Data, Documents, and Other Information: Storage and Importance

The NIFA website focuses largely on grant administration and impact, though given the type of science being funded (assessing climate change, food security, etc.), there would be a risk for the presentation of this content. Most likely the richest areas for documentation will be the blog, report, news release, webinar, and videos section. The AFRI and CFPCGP schemes may be of particular interest and are separately linked below. The most common uncrawlable and embedded data (e.g. [Current Research Information System \(CRIS\)](#)) provide searchable grantee information.

1. [Grant-Funded Topics Overviews](#) - JP
 - a. Overviews of key research topics supported by agency, including brief information on subjects that may be at risk in current political environment.

¹ Michael Bowers, Nancy Cavallaro, and Sonny Ramaswamy, "The National Institute of Food and Agriculture: Addressing the Agricultural Impacts of and Vulnerabilities to Climate Change," *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* 69:6 (1 November 2014):167A-168A. DOI: 10.2489/jswc.69.6.167A.

2. [Grant reporting and administration tools](#) - AR
3. [Grant subject taxonomies, grantee search interfaces, and project impact measuring tools](#) - KO
Taxonomies and grant search tools, though with a focus on grantee information rather than hosted data or reports.
4. [Agriculture and Food Research Initiative \(AFRI\)](#) - Charles
Focuses on climate change, food safety, bioenergy. This section provides grant RFA details.
5. [Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program \(CFPCGP\)](#) - Karen
Focuses on food security. This section provides grant RFA details.
6. [Newsroom: Blogs, Announcements, and Press Releases](#) Claire
Original content dedicated to many of the grant-support areas and research findings of the agency's grantees. This should be a section given significant attention in seeding any archiving.
7. [Resources: Videos, webinars, and reports](#) - Ny
As with the newsroom, this is a content-rich section with reports and updates on grant-supported research and educational efforts.

III. Link Summary

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