

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2010 UNITED SORGHUM CHECKOFF PROGRAM SORGHUM BIOENERGY RESEARCH GRANTS

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program (USCP) is soliciting proposals for targeted research and education proposals.

The Goal of this Sorghum BioEnergy RFP Call is to “**Continue to increase yields and demand for all types of sorghum in the area of renewable fuels**”

Targeted topic areas are, but are not limited to:

1. Develop software tools to quickly compare ROI, within 10 years, of using grain sorghum to other starch/sugar feedstocks, or for comparing sorghum biomass types to other lignocellulosic biomass sources. The software model should also highlight and publish the key restraining factors for sorghum in each comparative case
2. Develop a comprehensive greenhouse gas (GHG, including water vapor, CO₂, CH₄, N_xO_x, FluorCs, etc.) lifecycle analysis for grain, sweet and biomass sorghum. The analytical model should contain easy access to the major assumptions, the sources and the numerical values used for each, and a sensitivity analysis of the variables
3. Research bioenergy production techniques that capitalize on specific traits of non-grain sorghum that will provide increased ROI for industry stakeholders
4. Research the benefits and limiting issues for sugar conversion and storage in sweet sorghum
5. Research use of ensiled sorghum as a pretreated biomass feedstock for lignocellulosic or thermochemical conversion technologies

Total Funds Available for this Call: \$200,000

PROPOSALS DUE: November 1, 2009

USCP's Mission Statement

USCP commits to efficiently investing checkoff dollars to increase producer profitability and enhance the sorghum industry (Please review the USCP's Strategic Plan as posted at www.sorghumcheckoff.com).

WHO MAY APPLY

Eligible applicants include researchers affiliated with sorghum, non-profit, tax exempt organizations affiliated with sorghum, United States public and private institutions of higher education, and private industry entities with a known history of working with sorghum. Members of the USCP and Technical Advisory Board (TAB) voting members are **not** eligible to participate as an investigator or cooperator on any project. **Proposals will be rejected if they**

include investigators or cooperators who are USCP Board members or voting members of the TAB.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

We are interested in funding a variety of projects and larger budgets will be considered if well justified and multi-disciplinary and multi-state. **USCP request for proposals will limit projects to one year timeframes, with the possibility to extend projects in future years. The USCP STRONGLY encourages multi-disciplinary, multi-state, and multi public/private partnerships in evaluating proposals.**

PLEASE NOTE: It is the preference of the USCP Board to not pay salaries of university faculty members on tenured track.

PRIORITIES

The National Sorghum Checkoff is a new checkoff created to support sorghum in three main areas: Research, Information, and Promotion. We are soliciting these project proposals in the following targeted topic areas, but not limited to:

1. Develop software tools to quickly compare ROI, within 10 years, of using grain sorghum to other starch/sugar feedstocks, or for comparing sorghum biomass types to other lignocellulosic biomass sources. The software model should also highlight and publish the key restraining factors for sorghum in each comparative case
 2. Develop a comprehensive greenhouse gas (GHG, including water vapor, CO₂, CH₄, N_xO_x, FluorCs, etc.) lifecycle analysis for grain, sweet and biomass sorghum. The analytical model should contain easy access to the major assumptions, the sources and the numerical values used for each, and a sensitivity analysis of the variables
 3. Research bioenergy production techniques that capitalize on specific traits of non-grain sorghum that will provide increased ROI for industry stakeholders
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CRITERIA/REQUIREMENTS

All proposals within this RFP will be judged according to the following criteria:

A. Relevance to Mission

- ❖ Describe how your project helps achieve USCP's mission.
- ❖ Describe how information from your project will be widely applicable or adaptable with your locality, state, or region.

B. Relevance to Target Audience (Justification)

- ❖ Define the target audience for the project.
- ❖ Describe the importance of the proposed research or project to this audience, relative to their uses and needs.
- ❖ Describe how collaborators or target audience will be recruited and involved in the implementation of the project.
- ❖ Describe how the results/outcomes of the project will contribute to the sustainability of the targeted farming system or community.
- ❖ Cite results of other related projects or activities-either your own or that of other investigators and describe how your proposed project will build upon and extend this prior work.

C. Goals and Objectives

- ❖ Based on the needs of your targeted audience described in the justification section, state realistic goals for the project.
- ❖ Under each goal, state the measurable outcome-oriented objectives.

D. Methods/Activities/Timetable

- ❖ Provide a detailed plan that states how the project goals and objectives will be achieved.
- ❖ Include a detailed timetable linked to the various activities and phases of the project.
- ❖ For research projects, provide a short introduction, methods, scientific design, and plans for statistical analysis.
- ❖ For education and community outreach projects, justify the education/outreach methods.

E. Evaluation

- ❖ Describe how you plan to evaluate and measure progress toward meeting stated objectives.

F. Education/Outreach

- ❖ Describe how information and services from this project will be shared with the targeted audience/community.

G. Capabilities of Investigators and Cooperators

- ❖ Describe the specific roles and capabilities of each project participant including past experience with similar projects/activities.
- ❖ Provide single page CV/resume of major investigators.

- ❖ Provide letter of support from each cooperating individual, organization, agency, or business. Letter should indicate the amount of time, matching funds, and in-kind services that the cooperator expects to contribute to the project.

H. Budget and Other Grant Support

It is the policy of the USCP Board not to fund overhead or in-direct costs. All funding is to be directed towards the project.

- ❖ Provide a complete budget in the indicated format; show how line items are calculated. Funds requested must be realistic given the objectives of the project.
- ❖ For projects with larger budgets, it is desirable (though not required) to show leveraging of other resources by providing matching funds or in-kind contributions.
- ❖ Prepare a budget table in the following format. Matching funds are not required, but projects that show substantial matching funds (including in-kind contributions) are desirable. Projects may begin on May 2009; funds must be used by April 2010.
- ❖ **Budgets should be outlined for 1 year, since multi-year projects will have to be reviewed and approved by the USCP Board after completion of the first year!**

	Requested funds	Matching Funds
<u>Personnel:</u> Name and/or payroll title and % time		
Employee Benefits		
Supplies & Expenses¹		
Permanent Equipment²		
Travel³		
TOTALS		

¹List by major categories, with costs, and justification for categories over \$500.00. Reimbursement of growers for potential crop loss is not allowed.

²List specific items, their cost, and justification for each item. Equipment requests are scrutinized carefully, and are generally not approved unless the equipment is crucial to the project and access is not available by means other than purchase. Large equipment will be the property of the USCP and equipment will have USCP logo.

³Indicate destination(s), estimate number of trips and cost of each.

I. Reporting

A mid-year and year-end progress report and a final report are required for each funded program to be submitted to the offices of the USCP. Fifty percent (50%) of funding will be award at the time of the grant approval, with the additional twenty-five percent (25%) due with mid-term report, and the final twenty five percent (25%) due on the submission of the final report. Deadlines will be determined based on grant approval dates.

FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be typewritten using a font size of 10 pt. or larger. Please observe the word and page limits stated below. Refer to CRITERIA/REQUIREMENTS section for description of what should be in each part of section II and III. Missing sections from the required format will have negative impact the author's probability of obtaining a grant.

Section I. Introduction

- A. Cover Page—Use the cover page provided below, or a duplicate of it, for the requested information. The proposal must be approved and cosigned by the principal investigator and an official representative of the investigator's organization.
[If you have problems downloading these files, e-mail: jeff@sorghumcheckoff.com]
- B. Summary (500 words or less)—The summary and goals/objective section together should stand alone as a definitive description of your project in lay language. The summary should include a statement of the critical problem(s) to be addressed, a summary of the research or education approach, and a statement of the potential benefits/impacts expected in addressing the goals of the USCP. (If your project is funded, the summary and objectives sections will be posted on the USCP Projects Database on the Web.)
- C. Budget—(see above: "H")

Files in various formats may be retrieved at www.sorghumcheckoff.com.

- Microsoft Word Document
- PDF File

Section II. Body of Proposal—must not exceed seven single-spaced typewritten pages (10 pt. font or larger; 1" margins)

- A. Relevance to USCP's Mission
- B. Relevance to Target Audience (Justification)
- C. Goals and Objectives
- D. Methods/Activities/Timetable
- E. Evaluation
- F. Education/Outreach
- G. Capabilities of Investigators and Cooperators

Section III. Required Appendices

- A. Literature Cited
- B. Resumés/CV
- C. Letters of support

SUBMITTAL AND REVIEW SCHEDULE

Proposal packets **must be received by 5:00 PM, Monday, November 2, 2009**. Proposals received after the deadline will not be reviewed. Proposals will not be accepted via Fax or e-mail. Proposal packets must include:

Signed original and **9 copies** (double-sided preferred) of the full proposal
9 copies of **Section I** of the proposal

Copy of full proposal on CD or Flash Drive, labeled with P.I. name and word processing program used (MS Word or rich text format (RTF)) **OR** send a copy of the file via e-mail to jeff@sorghumcheckoff.com. Please contact USCP if requirements presents any issues or questions.

Proposal packets should be sent to:

United Sorghum Checkoff Program Management Unit
c/o Dr. Jeff Dahlberg
4201 N. Interstate 27
Lubbock, TX 79403
E-mail: jeff@sorghumcheckoff.com

Members of the USCP Technical Advisory Board will review all proposals. If necessary, additional peer review for scientific merit will be sought. Recommendation will be made to the Research Committee of USCP, with final approval being made by the full Board of the USCP. Successful applicants will be notified of awards by **December 31, 2009**.

DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The United Sorghum Checkoff Program prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

Cover Page—United Sorghum Checkoff Program 2010 Research and Education Proposals
(This should be the top page of each copy of your proposal)

Project Title: _____

Project Topic Area:

Principal Investigator (main contact):

Name: _____

College/University or non-profit org.: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____ Fax: _____

Other Investigators:

Name & Affiliation	_____	Mailing Address	_____	Telephone	_____	E-mail
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Cooperators:

Name & Affiliation	_____	Mailing Address	_____	Telephone	_____	E-mail
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Budget Total: (Total requested from USCP) _____

State(s) project would be conducted in: _____

Approval Signatures:

Principal Investigator _____

For University P.I.s: **Department Chair** _____

Regional Director _____