

Agenda Brief
ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee
Priority Setting Process

Presenters:

Action Requested: For discussion of priorities

The process begins for ESCOP with the Budget and Legislative (B&L) Committee determining funding priorities, which will be initiated via regional discussions followed by an on-line survey among the five regions. The process necessarily identifies priorities two years in advance of the federal fiscal year budget according to the BAA-Budget and Legislative Committee schedule.

For the last several years, The ESS has agreed that the top priorities are capacity funding including (Hatch, Evans Allen, and McIntire-Stennis) and AFRI. In addition, capacity programs and AFRI funding would be presented as a complementary package to Congress. B&L agrees to a voting survey for regions consisting of NIFA budget lines under the Research and Education Activities, those lines with system wide benefit (e.g. certain Integrated Activities) and on possible consolidation of lines where it make sense to do so. In addition, the survey will assist the B&L in:

- 1) Specifying a program topic that ESCOP B&L needs to advance to ESCOP and BAC, and
- 2) Identifying topics for potential budget collaboration with ECOP and ACOP
- 3) Identifying 2-3 emerging issues for future consideration by the B&L.

Timeline:

- March 1 – Survey sent to regional EDs from spring meeting discussions, Encourage discussion at each region's spring meetings.
- April 1 – Memo with link to on-line survey for regional distribution sent to EDs
- May 1 – Responses would be due from each region and tabulated by the ED supporting the B&L Committee.
- May B&L conference call – The survey summary would be discussed along with consideration of the responses to the open-ended questions. Following the discussion, the B&L would consult with Cornerstone about the feasibility of focusing attention on these budget lines. Recommendations forwarded to ESCOP Chair and CAC.
- June ESCOP CAC Call – The B&L presents priorities to ESCOP for initial discussion.
- July ESCOP meeting during Joint COPs – B&L presents priority recommendations to ESCOP for approval
- Sept. B&L presents priorities to ESS
- Nov. ESCOP priorities presented at BAC meeting

2015 Priorities Process:

Discussions occur at regional spring meetings on topics developed by the committee (See below). This would be followed by a national survey deployed via the regional EDs as above. The survey would appear as follows:

- I. Please indicate your priority 1- highest, 2 lowest, Both could be ranked 1
 - Capacity Funds: Hatch, Evans Allen, McIntire Stennis
 - AFRI
- II. Please select the top 5 priorities from the USDA-NIFA lines below and rank them from one to five with one being the highest priority.
 - Animal Health and Disease
 - Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative (FADI)
 - Ag and food system educational grants (e.g. Higher Ed Challenge and Fellowship grants programs)
 - Pest Management
 - Region Pest Management Centers
 - Regional Rural Development Centers
 - Sustainable Agriculture Programs including SARE
 - Sustainable Agriculture Federal-State Matching Grants
 - Water Quality Programs
 - Other _____
- III. Specify one program or topic the B&L and ESCOP needs to advance that is not necessarily associated with the USDA-NIFA budget.
- IV. Please identify one budget issue on which ESCOP and ECOP should work together.
- V. Please identify one budget issue on which ESCOP and ACOP should work together
- VI. Please identify an emerging issue for future consideration by the B&L.
- VII. Please offer any suggestions you might have to strengthen ESCOP partnership with Extension and ACOP
- VIII. The Pest Management Working Group consisting of more than 40 professionals representing AES, Extension, IR-4 as well as industry stakeholders recommended a number of budget lines relating to pest management be combined into a larger budget line. This action is consistent with efforts to simplify the budget and also allows for increased flexibility in program management.
 - With this in mind are there other budget lines that could be considered for consolidation?

- IX. Please indicate your regional affiliation
 - ARD
 - NERA
 - NCRA
 - SAAESD
 - WAAESD