

USDA Hatch and Smith-Lever Funds

Future agricultural productivity is an imperative national issue. Sustainable plant and animal agriculture systems ensure society a secure, healthy, economical food and fiber supply. Farms and rural communities benefit directly from new knowledge and technologies generated and disseminated by land-grant universities like the University of Idaho.

Hatch and Smith-Lever funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture provide basic capacity for agricultural research and extension programs at the University of Idaho, including funding Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension operational expenses and faculty and staff salaries.

Funding in Federal FY13 totaled more than \$5.5 million, including nearly \$2.7 million in Hatch funds, and nearly \$2.9 million Smith-Lever 3b-c funds. U-Idaho Experiment Station and Extension faculty supported by Hatch and Smith-Lever funds generated more than \$11.7 million in additional non-institutional funds in 2012.



Accomplishments

University of Idaho's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) faculty contribute to the health of Idaho's people, crops and economy with projects such as:

- CALS research and extension faculty helped manage potato diseases including insect-caused zebra chip disease and potato virus Y. CALS faculty worked to identify potato samples and educate the potato industry on managing zebra chip, which reduces yield and causes discoloration. Potato virus Y threatens potato yield and quality by damaging seed potatoes and causing potato tuber necrotic ringspot disease. CALS faculty are developing new methods to monitor and eradicate the most dangerous strain of the virus and are seeking new virus-resistant genes for future potato breeding.
- The U-Idaho Extension Horizons program, with funding from the Northwest Area Foundation, brought leadership training and expertise to 49 small towns in Idaho between 2003 and 2011. Horizons spawned a fountain of community development projects including Kelly's Whitewater Park in Cascade. In 2011, Kelly's generated approximately \$600,000 of new economic activity in Valley County, including 7.6 new seasonal jobs and about \$83,000 in new tax receipts.
- Eat Smart Idaho includes UI Extension's grant-funded programs that bring nutrition education to low-income families. During 2012, Eat Smart Idaho reached more than 20,000 low-income adults and children. Approximately 2,000 of the low-income learners were able to complete a series of four or more classes, causing a documented change in their diets that reduced their risk for diet-related diseases and reduced future health-related expenses by \$13 for each dollar spent to deliver the program.

Other important projects include developing new varieties of soft white winter wheat, connecting Idaho food companies with a food processing specialist, developing crop varieties and management systems designed to adapt to the changing climate, and investigating the use of compost from dairies to replace nitrogen fertilizer.

Consequences of Reduced Funding

The University of Idaho's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences has faced severe budget cuts in recent years. The college received a 17-percent reduction in federal funding from FY10 to FY13, adding up to more than \$1.1 million. The state of Idaho reduced the agriculture research and extension appropriation by \$6 million between FY2009 and FY2011. This cut contributed to a loss of 80 research scientist, staff, extension faculty, graduate assistant and undergraduate employee positions and a loss of \$2 million in maintenance and operations funding.

Strategic budget reduction decisions were not possible because of the short time period available to respond to the cutbacks. Research and extension positions and operational funds were lost across college programs, including beef, dairy, wheat and potato – industries important Idaho's economic health.

Additional budget decreases will further hinder the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences' ability to respond to research and extension needs of Idaho's agriculture, such as pest management and environmental quality issues, resulting in a diminished quality of life, especially in Idaho's rural communities.

For more information, please contact:

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