

## NIFA AFRP FUNDING GOES TO SEVEN ALFALFA RESEARCH PROJECTS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has awarded funding to seven projects in the Alfalfa Seed and Alfalfa Forage Systems Research Program (AFRP).

Now in its fifth year, the AFRP was created to support integrated, collaborative research and technology transfer to improve the efficiency and sustainability of alfalfa forage and seed production systems. It encourages projects that establish multi-disciplinary networks to address priority national or regional science needs of the alfalfa industry.

The National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance (NAFA) was successful in working with Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) and others to secure program funding. Thanks to Senator Moran, the AFRP was appropriated \$2.25 million in both 2018 and 2017, \$2 million in 2016, and \$1.35 million in both 2014 and 2015.

NIFA awarded funding to the following 2018 recipients:

AFRP Project Title	Principal Investigator	Collaborators	Award
<a href="#">Developing Alfalfa Varieties for High Salinity Production Systems</a>	Dan Putnam, Univ. of California-Davis	Utah State University	\$300,000
<a href="#">Precision Agriculture Tools for Optimizing Alfalfa Production and Marketing</a>	Kim Cassida, Michigan State University	University of Wisconsin-River Falls	\$299,977
<a href="#">Evaluating Alfalfa Winter Survival</a>	Craig Sheaffer, University of Minnesota	South Dakota State Univ. University of Wisconsin-Madison	\$297,557
<a href="#">Protecting Alfalfa Yield from Weevil Damage in the Intermountain West Region</a>	Kevin Wanner, Montana State University	Utah State University University of Wyoming	\$294,200
<a href="#">Genomics Enabled Purging Selection to Develop 200 Alfalfa Inbred Lines Toward High Yield Hybrid Production</a>	Zhiwi Zhang, Washington State Univ.	USDA-ARS (Prosser, WA) USDA-ARS (Pullman, WA) USDA-ARS (Logan, UT)	\$295,000
<a href="#">Quantifying, Predicting, and Modeling the Effects of Machinery Traffic on Alfalfa Yield and Forage Quality</a>	Brian Luck, University of Wisconsin	University of Georgia	\$299,917
<a href="#">Resilience of Alfalfa Cultivars to Variable Environments</a>	Valentin Picasso Risso, Univ. of Wisconsin	University of Florida University of Calif.-Davis University of Minnesota	\$299,980

AFRP funds are collaborative in nature, meaning each project submission must include a collaboration among organizations in at least two states as a requirement of funding. Researchers from 11 states will share in this funding. AFRP supports the development of improved alfalfa forage and seed production systems. Its focus areas include: 1) Increasing alfalfa forage and seed yields and forage quality through improved management practices, plant breeding, and other strategies to reduce biotic and abiotic stresses and costs of production; 2) Improving alfalfa forage and seed harvest and storage systems to optimize economic returns to alfalfa producers as well as end-users, including milk producers; 3) Developing methods to estimate alfalfa forage yield and quality to support marketing as a livestock feed as well as instruments to reduce producer risks; 4) Exploring new uses for alfalfa such as in fish feeds, nutritive supplements, high-value chemical manufacturing, or other novel uses; and 5) Conducting life cycle analysis for all or a part of an alfalfa production system for enhancing field to market opportunities.

To keep tabs on the progress of these projects, be sure to check out [NAFA's research database](#) to find comprehensive information regarding three of the alfalfa industry's most important research programs – the Alfalfa Seed and Alfalfa Forage Research Program (AFRP), the Alfalfa Pollinator Research Initiative (APRI), and the U.S. Alfalfa Farmer Research Initiative (USAFRI), better known as the Alfalfa Checkoff. The information available includes individual project objectives, program priorities, and details regarding each program's request for applications.

Also available is a search tool which allows users to search for projects based on keywords, researcher, university/entity, year of project, category, or research program.

As these projects reach completion, results and conclusions will be posted to the site as they become available. Please take a moment to visit the site (<http://alfalfa.org/research.php>) for more information.