



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE



California Department of Food and Agriculture FERTILIZER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

2014 REQUEST FOR CONCEPT PROPOSALS

The Fertilizer Research and Education Program (FREP) within the California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Division of Inspection Services is currently accepting concept proposals. Proposals may focus on research and/or education projects (see priority research areas listed below) to provide growers and industry with cost-effective practices to improve the efficient use of fertilizer and minimize environmental impacts. FREP does not support proprietary product development projects. Grant funding of \$75,000 per year for up to three years is typical for projects, but projects over \$75,000 and over three years will be considered on a case by case basis. Multiple concept proposals will be accepted. Concept proposals leveraging other sources of funding are strongly encouraged and are welcomed. Concept proposals may originate from outside California, but proposals must be relevant to California growing conditions.

Concept proposals are due by 5:00 p.m., January 15, 2014, NO EXCEPTIONS GRANTED.

WHO MAY APPLY

Any individual or group may submit a concept proposal.

PRIORITY RESEARCH AREAS

- **Demonstrating Agronomically Sound Uses of Fertilizing Materials at the Field Scale**
Demonstrate results from basic experimental research trials (prior FREP research, etc.) with organic or conventional fertilizers at the field scale.
- **Managing Agricultural Nitrogen**
Research the agronomically sound use of nitrogen fertilizing materials, including:
 - Minimizing nitrate movement below the root zone
 - Minimizing nitrous oxide emissions related to fertilizer use
 - Evaluating strategies to increase crop N use efficiency
- **Developing Best Management Practices (BMPs)**
Development of nutrient BMPs and educational materials for agriculture and urban landscapes.
- **Education and Outreach**
Development of educational materials to increase awareness of agronomically sound use of fertilizing materials. Extension efforts to implement best management practices.
- **Filling Gaps for Nitrogen Management in Specific Crops in the San Joaquin Valley**
 - **Corn:** Very little California information is available for corn.
 - **Pima cotton:** Anecdotal evidence indicates that Pima nutrient requirements differ from that of Acala types.
 - **Processing tomatoes:** Most research has been done on furrow irrigated tomatoes before the adoption of buried drip.
 - **Walnuts:** Determine temporal soil N status (quantity of additions and losses), validate leaf nutrient CV's for the most popular walnut cultivars, improve leaf sampling protocols, develop a monthly nutrient demand model for walnut and develop BMP's to share the findings.
 - **Citrus:** Determine temporal soil N status (quantity of additions and losses), validate leaf nutrient CV's for citrus, improve leaf sampling protocols, develop a monthly nutrient demand model for citrus and develop BMP's to share the findings.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants first submit a concept proposal to FREP. Concept proposals may not exceed two pages. Please include the following information:

- Project title, location, duration, and project leader(s) contact information (name, title, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address).
 - A simple and concise summary of the problem to be addressed.
 - Description of the target audience.
 - Region or County location where concept work would be performed.
 - Objectives of the proposed project, and a description of the general approach to be used.
- (Note: A budget is not required for concept proposals.)

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Proposals that are incomplete, late, or exceed two pages will be returned and eliminated from consideration. Concept proposals must be submitted via e-mail; mailed and faxed copies will not be accepted. Examples of successful concept proposals from previous years are available on the FREP website. FREP staff is available to answer questions about the proposal process; however, to ensure fair competition, we do not provide guidance on the development of proposals.

SEND CONCEPT PROPOSALS TO

Submit an electronic version of your proposal to: FREP@cdfa.ca.gov

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EVALUATION PROCESS

FREP has a Technical Advisory Subcommittee (TASC) consisting of subject matter experts who review submitted concept proposals. The TASC selects concept proposals to be developed into full proposals based on project concept, impact, methodology, feasibility, and alignment with the program's priority research areas. FREP staff notifies applicants of the TASC decision and provides a deadline for submission of full proposals. Full proposals go through a peer review process and are then evaluated by the TASC. The TASC then sends their recommendations to the Fertilizer Inspection Advisory Board (FIAB). The FIAB deliberates and discusses the TASC recommendations and decides in an up/down vote whether to accept the TASC recommendations of full proposals. The FIAB recommendations are forwarded to the Secretary for approval and award of FREP grant. FREP staff initiates the grant agreement for the project.

TIMELINE

Request for concept proposals announced	December 2, 2013
Concept proposals due	January 15, 2014
Advancement of concepts to full proposals announced	March 3, 2014
Full proposals due	May 1, 2014
Award notification	September 1, 2014
Project start date	January 1, 2015

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

FREP funds and facilitates research to advance the environmentally safe and agronomically sound use and handling of fertilizer materials. FREP serves growers, agricultural supply and service professionals, extension personnel, public agencies, consultants, and other interested parties. This solicitation as well as other information about FREP activities and sponsored projects is available by contacting FREP staff at FREP@cdfa.ca.gov or (916) 900-5022, and by visiting the FREP website at <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/frep.html>.