

# WASHINGTON REPORT

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## FY 2012 Ag Appropriations Bill Signed into Law

Three of the twelve federal appropriations bills, were passed by both the House and Senate and signed into law on the Friday before Thanksgiving. The agriculture appropriations bill was one of them (H.R. 2112 – H. Report 112-284). Its only the second time in 10 years that USDA will know its fiscal year appropriations before Thanksgiving, meaning Congress was only 2 months late. The remaining nine appropriations bills were signed into law on Dec. 23, 2011.

Given the current fiscal climate, federal programs were facing double digit reductions in many areas. It was considered a victory to get the same amount appropriated in 2012 as in 2011 (i.e. 0% change), and this was the case for three of our highest priority programs: the AFRI competitive grants program, Hatch Act, and Smith-Lever Act. The Regional IPM Centers, which were on the chopping block in FY 2011, got their funding almost back to where it was in FY 2010 at \$4.1 million. The IR-4 program, which is vital for researching minor crop weed control, took a 2% cut from FY 2011. We will work to make sure that number does not decrease any further. Other program areas that support weed science that took big cuts for FY 2012 are APHIS and ARS. We will need to provide stronger support for those programs as well.

<u>USDA Program Description</u>	<u>FY 2011</u>	<u>FY 2012</u>	<u>% Change</u>
	(in thousands of dollars)		
APHIS	863,270	816,534	-5.4
ARS	1,133,230	1,094,647	-3.4
ERS	81,814	77,723	-5.0
NASS	156,447	158,616	1.4
NIFA	1,214,798	1,202,264	-1.0
RESEARCH & EDUCATION ACTIVITIES	698,740	705,599	1.0
- Hatch Act	236,334	236,334	0.0
- Cooperative Forestry Research	32,934	32,934	0.0
- Improved Pest Mang't & Biocontrol	16,153	15,830	-2.0
Expert IPM Decision Support System	156	153	-2.0
IPM	2,410	2362	-2.0
IR-4	12,156	11,913	-2.0
Pest Mang't Alternatives (PMAP)	1,431	1402	-2.0
- AFRI	264,470	264,470	0.0
- Sustainable Ag Res. and Ed. (SARE)	14,970	14,471	-3.3
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES	479,132	475,183	-0.8
- Smith Lever	293,911	294,000	0.0
INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES	36,926	21,482	-41.8
- Section 406	29,000	14,496	-50.0
- Regional IPM Centers	3,000	4,000	33.3
- FQPA Risk Mitigation (RAMP)	\$0	\$0	n/a
- Crops affected by FQPA (CAR)	\$0	\$0	n/a
- Methyl Bromide Transition	2,000	1,996	-0.2
- Organic Transitions	4,000	4,000	0.0

### **NPDES Permits now Required for Aquatic Applications**

Despite having a 2/3's majority support in both the House and Senate, Sen. Barbara Boxer (CA) managed to block H.R. 872 from coming to the Senate floor for a vote. H.R. 872 ensures that pesticide applications over or near water are regulated through the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and fixes some misguided court decisions that have resulted in a duplicative and costly National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

On October 31, 2011, NPDES permits are now required for point source discharges from applications of pesticides. Some examples of pesticide applications that now require NPDES permit coverage are applications made to control aquatic weeds or fish, flying insects above U.S. waters, or pests present near these waters, such that it is unavoidable that pesticides will be deposited to these waters during application. NPDES permits establish conditions under which discharges may legally occur. Provided that an operator meets the conditions of their permit, the operator may be shielded from Clean Water Act-related citizen lawsuits.

Agricultural water runoff and irrigation return flow, both of which may contain pesticides, are exempt from NPDES permit requirements. Also, pesticide applications to land that do not result in point source discharges of pesticides to waters of the U.S., such as for controlling pests on agricultural crops, forest floors, or range lands, do not require NPDES permit coverage.

EPA is the NPDES permitting authority for six states (Alaska, Idaho, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Mexico, and Oklahoma), Washington, D.C., all U.S. territories except the Virgin Islands, most Indian Country lands, and federal facilities in Colorado, Delaware, Vermont, and Washington. The remaining 44 states and the Virgin Islands are authorized to develop and issue their own NPDES pesticide permits.

Please check the [WSSA website](#) or [contact me](#) for the most recent information about each state's requirements for obtaining an NPDES permit.

### **The Corps' Aquatic Plant Control Research Program Gets \$3 million**

The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Jo-Ellen Darcy, made the poorly informed decision to eliminate funding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Aquatic Plant Control Research Program (APCRP) in the FY 2012 budget. This is the nation's only federally authorized program for research and development of science-based management strategies for invasive aquatic weeds. There is no question that the work conducted by APCRP's 18 research staff has been effective, efficient, and invaluable in our nation's fight against foreign aquatic invaders. It would be a grave mistake by the Corps' to eliminate the expertise and institutional knowledge encompassed by APCRP.

We asked the Army Corps of Engineers and Congress to restore funding to \$4 million for FY 2012. While our efforts to get the funding restored by the House fell on deaf ears, the Senate Appropriations Committee included that amount in their mark-up of the FY 2012 Energy and Water appropriations bill. I am happy to report that the final conference agreement on the FY 2012 Energy and Water Appropriations bill provided \$3 million for APCRP.



National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW) will be held February 26 to March 3, 2012 in Washington, DC. The week of activities will focus on strategizing solutions to address invasive species prevention, detection, monitoring, control and management issues at all levels of government from local to international scales.

WSSA is among the many public and private stakeholders working with the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) to organize education and awareness events. WSSA will host a seminar at the House Agriculture Committee featuring Dr. Rod Lym from North Dakota State University. Dr. Lym will present research data on the success of the TEAM Leafy Spurge Project in a talk titled “INVASION PERSUASION” TEAM Leafy Spurge: the successful program for defeating a wide-spread invader”. TEAM Leafy Spurge was a USDA-ARS 6-year research and demonstration program that was highly effective at developing and demonstrating ecologically based integrated pest management (IPM) strategies that landowners and land managers could use to achieve effective, affordable and sustainable leafy spurge control.

#### EVENTS DURING NISAW INCLUDE:

- 2/26: Kid’s Day at the U.S. Botanic Garden
- 2/28: Kickoff Session & NISC meeting: Department of Interior
- 2/28: Invasive Species & the Green Economy: Department of Interior
- 2/29: Prevention Day: Hamilton Crowne Plaza Hotel
- 2/29: FWS Invasive Species Branch Strategic Direction Listening Session: Hamilton Crowne Plaza Hotel
- 2/29: Capitol Hill Reception: Rayburn House Office Building
- 3/1: National Invasive Species Award Ceremony: USDA
- 3/1: State & Local Issues Session: Hamilton Crowne Plaza Hotel
- 3/1: Urban Invasive Species Workshop: Hamilton Crowne Plaza Hotel
- 3/2: Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Strategic Direction: NISC office

For information about registration and hotel reservations, please check the NISAW website at [www.nisaw.org](http://www.nisaw.org)

#### **NATIONAL SUMMIT ON STRATEGIES TO MANAGE HERBICIDE RESISTANCE WEEDS**

Presented by the National Academy of Sciences.

**Save the Date:** May 10, 2012 at the Jack Morton Auditorium, George Washington University, Washington, DC. For more information, visit: [nas-sites.org/hr-weeds-summit/](http://nas-sites.org/hr-weeds-summit/)

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