

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension

BACKGROUND

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 establishes the Cooperative Extension Service and provides federal funds for cooperative extension activities. The act requires that states provide a 100% match from non-federal resources (many states provide a greater match).

Funding under Smith-Lever 3(b) and 3(c) are distributed to cooperative extension units at eligible land-grant institutions under a statutory formula.

Congress has provided modest increases in the last two fiscal years, but this has barely slowed the steady erosion of this vital program in recent decades.

The land-grant system strongly supports funding for Smith-Lever 3(b)-(c) at \$350 million in FY 2011.

CONTACT

Elbert C. Dickey
Dean & Director
UNL Extension
402-472-2966
edickey1@unl.edu

VALUE OF SMITH-LEVER FUNDS

In Nebraska, each dollar we receive under the Smith-Lever 3 (b)-(c) appropriation is leveraged by over \$4.80 in state funding. This, in turn, leverages another \$1.50 in local funds.

Funds Leveraged by Our Pro Rata Share of Smith-Lever 3(b)-(c) Appropriation

	FY2009 ¹	FY2010 ²	FY2011 ³
Federal	4,764,447	4,960,662	5,909,516
State	23,061,734	23,316,743	23,316,743
Local/County	7,286,932	7,505,540	7,505,540
Total	35,113,113	35,782,945	36,731,799

NOTES: (1) FY2009 funds are actual budget; (2) FY2010 funds are estimated budget; (3) FY2011 assumes a \$350 million appropriation (as requested by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities).

Additional Program Data

- Extension has 83 offices across Nebraska serving all 93 counties in the state.
- We employ the full time equivalent of approximately 322 people.
- Extension employees made 1,595,885 face-to-face educational contacts in the past year.
- Nebraska 4-H reaches 135,000 young people, one out of three who are age eligible.

BENEFITS OF SMITH-LEVER FUNDS

As shown above, if Congress increases the FY 2011 Smith-Lever 3(b)-(c) appropriation to \$350 million, our pro rata share would be ≈\$ 948,854. We would use the increase to:

- Provide more educational and technical support to agricultural producers, businesses, entrepreneurs, and 4-H youth in the areas of beef systems; child and youth development; crops of the future; nutrition and health; and water, climate and environment.
- Support the continued growth and development of eXtension.
- Create opportunities for youth in science, engineering, and technology to explore 21st Century careers.
- Facilitating Land Owner Associations for wind development such as 63,000-acre association in southeast Nebraska negotiating with two wind energy developers.

OTHER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- According to producer participants in extension's Republican River Basin demonstration project, extension education helped them save at least 2 inches of irrigation water, 2.5 gallons of diesel fuel, and 55 lbs. Of CO₂ emissions per acre.
- More than 70 percent of participants in an extension entrepreneurship program increased their business volume and 33 percent added employees.
- Extension's crop management and diagnostic clinics drew 527 participants in 2008 who influenced management and decisions on 3.7 million acres of Nebraska farm ground. Participants value knowledge gained at these clinics at an average of \$8.27 per acre, a total of \$31 million.
- Since 2004, Extension educated over 5,247 Nebraskans about the Medicare Prescription Drug Program, saving them an estimated \$2,198,870.
- An independent study found that UNL Extension provides a 15-1 return on the state tax dollars Nebraska invests in it.