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Request for Research Proposals

Public and Private Sectors Partner to make available \$2 Million

Davis, Calif., May 13, 2009 – The Center for Produce Safety at UC Davis (CPS) today announced a request for research proposals (RFP) to address both general and commodity-specific research questions related to fresh produce safety.

The new RFP –CPS’s largest to date– is the product of collaboration among public agencies and private industry to streamline research questions and maximize the impact of individual research budgets.

Both the scope of the RFP and the robust budget of \$2 million reflect CPS’s ongoing mission to leverage public and private expertise and research dollars to address critical risk management issues in the growth, harvest, processing and distribution of fresh produce.

Based on enthusiastic response to its recent “Partners in Research” RFP, CPS identified industry partners with overlapping research needs and offered them the opportunity to collectively match funds provided by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) - Specialty Crop Block Grant and the University of California Agricultural and Natural Resources (UC-ANR).

The RFP seeks to fund research projects that address critical safety questions affecting the fresh produce industry generally, while at the same time asking researchers to study knowledge gaps specific to commodities that have been associated with illness outbreaks over the past 48 months, including tomatoes, melons and pistachios.

“We created CPS to streamline and accelerate research into this industry’s most vexing questions,” said Tim York, Chairman of CPS and President of Markon Cooperative. “This RFP speaks volumes about our progress—and that of our industry partners.”

In addition to CDFA - SCBG and UC-ANR, partners in the RFP include:

- Almond Board of California, www.almondboard.org
- California Melon Research Board/California Cantaloupe Advisory Board, www.cmrbb.org
- California Pistachio Research Board, www.calpistachioresearch.org
- California Walnut Commission, www.walnuts.org
- Florida Tomato Committee, www.floridatomatoes.org
- Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission, www.treefruitresearch.com

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The RFP's general research priorities were developed and refined by the CPS Technical Committee, an independent advisory board including experts from industry, academia, government and NGOs. The targeted research priorities were co-developed with the industry partners.

The full RFP is available at the Center for Produce Safety Web site at www.cps.ucdavis.edu.

All qualified research professionals are eligible to apply for CPS funding.

Proposals should be submitted by July 1, 2009 through the CPS Grant System Web site at <https://ucanr.org/cpsgrants/>. (The grant system is also accessible from the CPS Web site.)

Awards will be announced on or before October 1, 2009. Projects will be funded from October 1, 2009 to December 31, 2011.

About CPS

The Center for Produce Safety is the first global research and training facility focused exclusively on providing the produce industry and government with open access to the actionable information required to continually enhance the safety of produce. Established by public and private partnership at UC Davis, California, CPS funds original research; is creating a searchable database of global produce safety research; and will develop industry training and outreach programs. Initial funding for CPS was provided by the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the University of California, the Produce Marketing Association and Taylor Farms. For more information, visit www.cps.ucdavis.edu.

About CDFA

The California Department of Food and Agriculture protects and promotes California's agricultural industry. California's farmers and ranchers produce a safe, secure supply of food, fiber and shelter; marketed fairly for all Californians; and produced with responsible environmental stewardship. For more information, visit www.cdfa.gov.ca.

About UC-ANR

University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources is a statewide network of University of California researchers and educators dedicated to the creation, development and application of knowledge in agricultural, natural and human resources. For more information, visit <http://ucanr.org/>.

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