Standard Operating Procedure for CRIS Project Development and Reporting
Forest and Wildlife Research Center (FWRC)
and
Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES)

The USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture requires that all expenditures of USDA federal funds (Hatch, Hatch Multi-State, McIntire-Stennis, and Animal Health, NIFA-AFRI, NIFA-SRG) occur under an approved plan of work and that annual progress is reported through a standardized reporting framework (formerly CRIS, now REEport). The Current Research Information System (CRIS) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's documentation and reporting system for ongoing agricultural, food and nutrition, and forestry activities. In 2013 the CRIS webforms system was replaced with REEport.

Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station and the Forest and Wildlife Research Center receive USDA-NIFA federal funds in the form of Hatch, Hatch Multistate, Animal Health, McIntire-Stennis, NIFA-SRG (Special Research Grants), and NIFA-AFRI grants. As such, we are subject to the USDA-NIFA reporting requirements.

Scientists conducting research fiscally linked to MAFES (fund numbers 16, 32, 26, 82) and FWRC (fund numbers 17, 33, 27, 83) are required to operate under an approved and active Hatch, McIntire-Stennis, or Animal Health project. Funding expenditures and personnel years are reported by MAFES/FWRC Administration each federal fiscal year via the USDA NIFA Funding and Staff Support report (AD419). In state and federal reporting, CRIS project numbers and associated subjects of investigation (SOI) and knowledge areas (KA) are used to assign research expenditures among planned program areas. Within MSU accounting systems, MAFES and FWRC use CRIS project numbers as Banner activity codes to link account numbers with CRIS projects. Scientists and their department heads will assist departmental budget managers to ensure that research expenditures associated with specific research activities are attributed to the appropriate CRIS project number (Banner activity code).

Effective April 2013, CRIS project Initiation and annual reporting are accomplished through the REEport website. There are four modules, or report types, supported by the REEport software: Project Initiation, Progress Report, Financial Report, and Final Termination Report.

These modules/reports are based on the forms previously used in the CRIS Webforms collection, known as the AD-416, AD-417, AD-419 and AD-421:

- Project Initiation (combination of old AD-416/417)
- Progress Report (old AD-421)
- Financial Report (old AD-419)
- Project Change (new change form not previously used in Webforms)
- Final Termination Report (old AD-421)

A CRIS project documents a specific three to four year research/extension activity at a single location. The activity focuses on a clearly definable problem, a manageable phase of a larger problem, or a few closely related elements of a broad-based program. Information for each CRIS project includes:

- What is being done?
- Who is doing it?
- Where it is being conducted?
- When it is being performed?
- Accomplishments achieved annually.
- Impacts expected from the effort.
- Publications associated with the work.

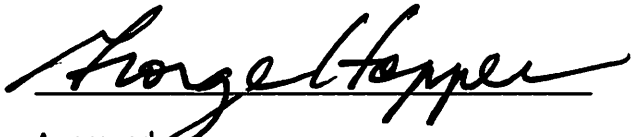
The MAFES/FWRC scientist is responsible for creating a Hatch, Hatch-Multistate, or McIntire-Stennis CRIS project through completion of the CRIS Project Proposal (Project Initiation, formerly AD 416, 417) that provides a basic abstract to describe a CRIS project. Annually scientists will complete the Progress Report (formerly AD 421) providing an annual update of outcomes, impacts, and publications associated with each project. Within 60 days of the end of the performance period scientists will complete a Project Termination Report.

MAFES/FWRC requires all research activities, regardless of funding source, to be conducted under an approved CRIS project and all research expenditures must be linked to a CRIS project number (Banner activity code). Development of and reporting on approved CRIS projects is required by USDA for NIFA competitive projects, NIFA Special Research Grants, Hatch projects, Hatch Multi-State projects, McIntire-Stennis projects, and Animal Health projects. Research activities supported by other sources of funds will be conducted under an approved State CRIS project.

Timeline for Development and Reporting of CRIS Projects

- Within 4 months of employment in a MAFES or FWRC Department, scientists must submit a CRIS proposal for approval, completed per the attached instructions.
- CRIS projects will span a 4-year period. A 1-year extension available upon request. During this extension the scientist should develop and submit for approval a new CRIS project. CRIS projects and associated spending authority will not be extended beyond 5-years in total. It is imperative that scientists have a new CRIS project approved upon expiration of the previous project.
- Proposals must be reviewed and approved at the Department, Director's office, and NIFA levels. The entire submission, review and approval process may take 3 months.

- Annual reports on each CRIS project are required. Scientists must report accomplishments including outputs, publications, project personnel years, degrees awarded, and outcomes/impacts on or before September 30 of each federal fiscal year.



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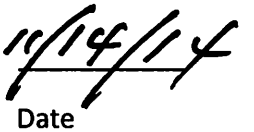

Date

George Hopper
Director, Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station
Director, Forest and Wildlife Research Center

APPENDICES

The following appended documents provide step-by-step instructions for developing and reporting on CRIS projects.

- REEPort Proposal Cover Sheet
- MAFES FWRC Reviewer Form
- Hatch Writing
- Hatch Reporting
- McIntire-Stennis Writing
- McIntire-Stennis Reporting

Additionally a complete NIFA REEport Project Directors Manual is available at the following website: http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/pdfs/fnl_reeport_pd.pdf