

ATTACHMENT I

Overview of National Institute for Agricultural Security

Vision for the National Institute for Agricultural Security (NIAS):

To be efficient, effective, relevant, proactive and responsive in carrying out its responsibilities for coordinating and promoting agro-security assurances for agricultural production and food systems.

Recommendations approved by ESCOP

- The creation of the proposed Institute and the exploration of options for establishing its legal status;
- The development of relationships with the law enforcement and intelligence communities in these matters; and,
- An emphasis on the “logical framework” of activities that are described in the Task Force report.

Proposed Approach

Projects and Other Activities: We plan to work collaboratively within the SAES/ARD system. The envisioned portfolio will be made up of many different types of activities. These might include newly created Multistate Research Project(s), Multistate Research and Extension Coordinating Committee(s), Multiple Activity Programs (MAPs), National Research Support Project(s) (NRSPs), and individual state or Hatch-supported research projects, as appropriate. Each activity would be managed at the local level by the Directors of the respective SAES/ARD institutions. The Institute will facilitate the development of this portfolio, and look for participants from other institutions and agencies, as appropriate to the objectives of the individual projects.

Services and Support to be Provided by the Institute

- National advisory service for research site security;
- Background checks on employees and students;
- Facilitation of security clearances to be done by federal authorities;
- Certification of site security measures;
- Recruitment of new partners;
- Data and document management services;
- Facilitation of access to overseas research facilities;
- Convening of meetings;
- Facilitating research-project-outcome reporting;
- Information security;
- Confidentiality assurances;
- Links to institutions for rapid responses to information requests; and,
- Education and training programs for, *inter alia*,:
 - Policy makers
 - Program managers
 - Analysts and operations specialists

- First responders;
- Incident monitoring system specialists;
- Diagnostic services providers; and,
- Vulnerability and threat assessment resources personnel.

Support for Law Enforcement and Intelligence Community

It is proposed that the Land Grant Universities would draw upon security-cleared experts to provide law enforcement and intelligence agencies with specific scientific support. It is also recognized that certain data collection and monitoring activities, threat assessments; interventions, and related training activities must necessarily be held as classified information. The Institute would facilitate these services.

The Institute would also:

- Foster the establishment and functioning of an effective national network for agro-security assurance;
- Organize, as appropriate, meetings of experts to gather and organize scientifically sound information on agro-security issues;
- Nurture best management practices in agro-security assurances across the nation without intruding into the authority of government agencies or the autonomy of institutions;
- Upon request, support the President's Office of Homeland Security in its efforts to address domestic and foreign terrorist threats;
- Support the optimum exchange of information on all major agro-security trends and developments, especially on agricultural and food issues; and,
- Produce targeted information material (print and electronic) on agro-security issues.