



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture



BIOENERGY, CLIMATE,  
AND ENVIRONMENT



FOOD PRODUCTION  
AND SUSTAINABILITY



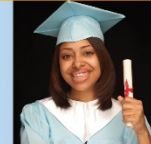
YOUTH, FAMILY,  
AND COMMUNITY



FOOD SAFETY  
AND NUTRITION



INTERNATIONAL  
PROGRAMS



# USDA NIFA

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

# ezFedGrants

Sessions 2 & 38

April 24 & 26

USDA NIFA

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



# Presenters

## **Elizabeth L. Ley**

NIFA's ezFedGrants Program Lead

National Institute of Food and Agriculture |

202-531-0630

[eley@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:eley@nifa.usda.gov)

## **Chris Coppenger**

Senior Grants System Advisor for ezFedGrants

Office of the Chief Financial Officer, USDA

202-306-2512

[christopher.k.coppenger@cfo.usda.gov](mailto:christopher.k.coppenger@cfo.usda.gov)



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

# ezFedGrants is Operational



[www.nfc.usda.gov/ezfedgrants](http://www.nfc.usda.gov/ezfedgrants)



# Agenda Themes

Understand the resources available to users

Understand the enterprise system

Understand the different ways agencies are using the system

What to expect as next steps



# **NERAOC Resources - people**

## **NIFA**

Elizabeth Ley

Jason Hitchcock

Preston Gillmore – for eAuthentication

## **APHIS**

Michael Peranio

## **OCFO**

Chris Coppenbarger

Lisa Taylor

Shama Bano

Kristin Beimel

DJ Hazlett



# **NERAOC Resources**

## **Training room – 12 computers**

Personal help

Videos

## **Table outside training room**

Personal help

eAuthentication registration

General questions



# Who is using ezFedGrants?

- Enterprise version of ezFedGrants
  - **NIFA**
  - **APHIS**
- Current USDA users of agency specific versions of ezFedGrants that are planning to convert to the Enterprise in summer 2017
  - Foreign Agricultural Service – FAS
  - Office of Advocacy and Outreach – OAO
  - Agricultural Marketing Service – AMS
  - Natural Resources Conservation Service - NRC<sub>8</sub>S





# NIFA Programs

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

Evans-Allen (Section 1445)

The Hatch Act of 1887 (Regular Research)

The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund)

Extension at 1890 Land-grant Colleges (Section 1444)

CES at 1862 Land-grant Institutions (Smith-Lever Special Needs)

Renewable Resources Extension Act Program

Joint Cooperative Extension Programs at 1862 Land-Grant Institutions and University of the District of Columbia

McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | [WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV](http://WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV)

# APHIS Programs

Animal Care

Biotechnology Regulatory Services

International Services

Marketing and Regulatory Programs Business Services

Plant Protection and Quarantine

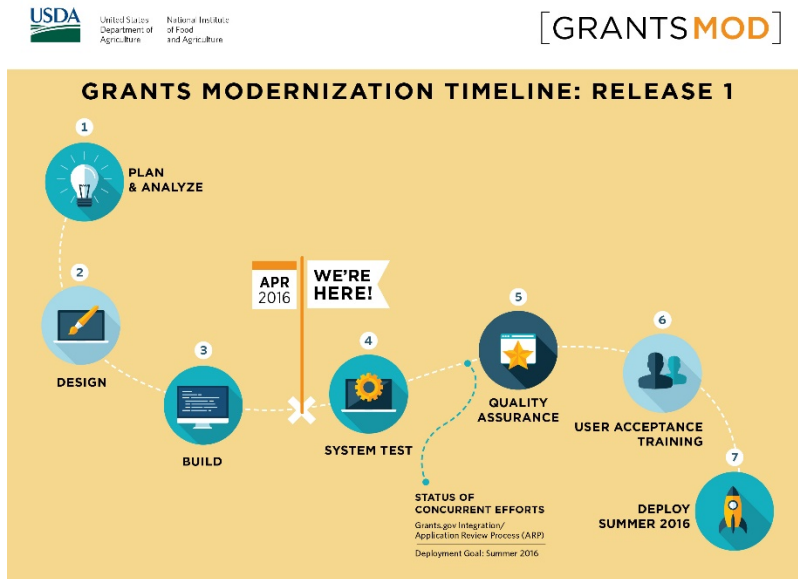
Veterinary Services

Wildlife Services



# How NIFA got to here

It is a journey



# Alignment with NIFA Strategic Plan (2014-2018)



## PROCESS

Institutionalize streamlined, effective technologies, policies, and processes

## KEY DELIVERABLES

- Modernized grants mgmt. system
- Streamlined & standardized processes for administering competitive/non-comp. programs
- Reduced number of days for the grant award process

<http://nifa.usda.gov/strategic-plan>

# NIFA's Grant Modernization Initiative

NIFA is working towards a fully operational agency-wide grants management solution with:





**Primary Goal for Release 1:**  
**FY2017 CAPACITY AWARDS**  
processed through the USDA  
grants management system –  
**ezFedGrants.gov**

**The question for all of us**  
**How does this affect how we do business?**



# What is NOT changing for NIFA applicants

- Applicants apply through Grants.gov
- Grantees utilize Treasury's ASAP system to draw funds
- Capacity reporting will remain the same in REEport and in POW
- Competitive awards will not be managed in ezFedGrants until a later date

# What has changed

- Electronic workflow system
  - Need to get access established on the front end
  - Ties back to organizational SAM registration
- Not tracking by proposal number
  - Old example: 2016-03451
- Created new location code in ASAP (01)
- SF425 will be submitted directly in the system





# What has changed

- New system generated Federal Award Identification Number format (**FAIN**)

NI171444XXXXG003, AP17PPQH000C001

- NI, AP = agency
- 17 = fiscal year
- 1444XXXX, PPQH000 = program code (8 spaces)
- G = grant, C = Cooperative Agreement
- 003, 001 = three digit sequential number

# What has changed

- New system generated ASAP account number format

171444XXXXG003050201

- 17 = fiscal year
- 1444XXXX = program code (8 spaces)
- G = grant
- 003 = three digit sequential number
- 0502 = last 4 characters of Treasury Account Symbol
- 01 = 2 sequential numbers



# What has changed

Current	ezFedGrants
Award Number	Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN)
Proposal Number	N/A
Award Face Sheet / 2009	Notice of Award (NOA)
ASAP Location Code 00	ASAP Location Code 01
Send SF425 by email	Submit SF425 through portal
NPL	Program Manager



# Compare NIFA & APHIS

Functionality	NIFA	APHIS
View opportunities	Grants.gov	ezFedGrants portal
Apply	Grants.gov	ezFedGrants portal
View status / NOA	ezFedGrants portal	ezFedGrants portal
Draw funds	ASAP	ezFedGrants portal
Submit SF425	ezFedGrants portal	ezFedGrants portal
Submit Project reports	REEReport & WebNEERS	ezFedGrants portal



# Access to the Portal for External Users

- One role per individual
- Only associated with one organization at this time
- Role is valid for all USDA agreements managed in ezFedGrants for that organization
- APHIS provided trainings to partners and has been onboarding since fall

# External Roles

- Grants Administrative Officer (GAO)
- Grants Processor
- Signatory Official
- Reviewer (NIFA hasn't enabled this option)

No current equivalent

- Project Director (PD)



# EzFedGrants Client Page

## Access for EXTERNAL USERS

ezFedGrants / Client Services

### ezFedGrants (eFG) Grants and Agreements System

ezFedGrants is the USDA solution that will let you apply for and manage USDA grants and agreements online. It's USDA's OMB Circular A-123 system of record for processing Federal financial assistance transactions.



Client Services



Training



I Want to ...

#### General Information

[External Portal FAQ - Access, Permissions, and Roles](#)

[External Portal FAQ - Understanding and Using the External Portal](#)

[External Portal Overview and Navigation](#)

[External Portal Search Functionality](#)

#### Using ezFedGrants

[Access and User Roles - Job Aid Library](#)

[The Grants Process - Job Aid Library](#)

Close Menu

#### ezFedGrants Application



Get started with a new grant application, check a pending status, and more by logging into ezFedGrants.

Launch ezFedGrants

#### About ezFedGrants



DR. SMITH

GRANT



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

# NIFA Questions / Comments



## NIFA Website

<https://nifa.usda.gov/grants-modernization-and-new-efedgrants-system>

## Technical Assistance

[electronic@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:electronic@nifa.usda.gov)





United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

INVESTING IN SCIENCE | SECURING OUR FUTURE | WWW.NIFA.USDA.GOV

# APHIS Questions / Comments

Access to EzFedGrants (eFG) & JOB Aids(Click on Training)

[www.nfc.usda.gov/ezfedgrants](http://www.nfc.usda.gov/ezfedgrants)

APHIS Webinars and Training Material for ezFedGrants

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/business-services/financial-management-](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/business-services/financial-management-division/financial_services_branch/agreements_service_center/ezfedgrants)

[division/financial\\_services\\_branch/agreements\\_service\\_center/ezfedgrants](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/business-services/financial-management-division/financial_services_branch/agreements_service_center/ezfedgrants)

**APHIS Help Desk**

[ezFedGrants.helpdesk@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:ezFedGrants.helpdesk@aphis.usda.gov) to ask questions about ezFedGrants



# Customer Support

*What do you do when you have an issue with ezFedGrants?*

## Contact Information

- › APHIS: [ezFedGrants.helpdesk@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:ezFedGrants.helpdesk@aphis.usda.gov)
- › FAS: [GrantorHelpDesk@fas.usda.gov](mailto:GrantorHelpDesk@fas.usda.gov)
- › NIFA: [electronic@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:electronic@nifa.usda.gov)

If you don't see your agency above and need assistance, please email us at [ezFedGrants@cfo.usda.gov](mailto:ezFedGrants@cfo.usda.gov)

[Email ezFedGrants](#)

[www.nfc.usda.gov/ezfedgrants](http://www.nfc.usda.gov/ezfedgrants)



# Chris Coppenger

- Senior Grants System Advisor for ezFedGrants
- Leads overall strategy and direction of Grants Management Line of Business for USDA's Office of the Chief Financial Officer
- 15 years experience with federal grants and agreements (systems, policy, and operations)
- Background in grants management, law, and international development





# ezFedGrants Overview

- Comprehensive grants and agreements management solution that gives agencies and recipients the ability to manage awards throughout the agreement lifecycle
  - Pre-Award: Solicitation, Application, and Evaluation
  - Award: Execution
  - Post Award: Claims, Financial/Performance Reporting, Amendments
  - Closeout
- Integrated with the USDA financial system for accurate, real-time information
- Since 2013, more than \$261 billion has been distributed using the ezFedGrants application





# ezFedGrants Vision

- All USDA grants to be administered within the system by 2022, which would include:
  - Approximately 253 CFDA programs across 17 grant making agencies
  - Approximately \$100 billion per year transaction volume
- Continuous Process Improvement and Enhancements
  - Adding new transaction types and functionality as more agencies come into the system
- Overall Goals
  - Meets stakeholder expectations
  - Ensures all financial data is reliable, complete, and timely
  - Compliance with applicable laws/regulations
  - Operates in a secure environment for maximum integrity
  - Bolsters internal controls and efficient program activities/operations



# ezFedGrants Development Approach

- ezFedGrants is developed using an Agile-like approach
- Functionality is incrementally improved
- Additional capabilities are added as time goes on
  - This model is used for development of many products we all use every day such as Facebook, Gmail, smartphone apps, etc.
- **User feedback is essential to continuous improvement!**
  - Improvements to workflows and processes for more efficient operation



# What to Expect

- More empathetic to end user needs
  - Listening to users about their needs and concerns
  - Walking in the agencies/customers shoes
  - Establishing a centralized help desk for system-based inquiries
- Upcoming this summer
  - Bug fixes to existing functionality
  - AMS, FAS, NRCS, and OAO converge to the enterprise version of ezFedGrants
  - Enhancements added to the enterprise solution, including repayments and new transaction types

# What to Expect

- New enterprise enhancements, such as:
  - Recipient users can be associated to multiple DUNS/Cage codes
  - Recipient role configuration improvements
  - Repayments
  - Ad-hoc advance payments
  - Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs)
  - Collection Agreements







# Commonly Encountered Issues

- Contact Us/System Help
  - Working on creation of a centralized helpdesk run by OCFO
- Gaining Access to ezFedGrants
  - Level 2 eAuthentication issues
- How users are treated in the system
  - Roles administration (assigning/managing correct user roles)
  - Communication between recipients and agencies
- Internal work arounds
  - If external portal is causing an issue (technology-wise), agencies can still accomplish items using the internal portal



# Applicant/Recipient Training

- Training Materials
  - Library of job aids, FAQs, external user guides offered on our website at [www.nfc.usda.gov/ezfedgrants](http://www.nfc.usda.gov/ezfedgrants)
  - Continuously updated with more information and help guides
- Live Training
  - We offer periodic training to customers via webinar
  - Check our website for upcoming training sessions





# What Do We Need from Users?

- Talk to Us
  - ezFedGrants is about you and your organization being better served by USDA grant agencies
  - Give critical feedback which helps us to know how you are experiencing the system and what can be improved upon
- Be Patient
  - Using the agile development methodology, we will be delivering items on a quarterly basis (excluding emergency fixes)
  - Improvements are delivered in increments





# Issues Affecting User Access

Issue	Status	Expected Delivery of Fix
Overwrite Issue	Emergency fix is being developed	First week of May
Data Quality/Duplicate Vendor Records	Filter capability is being configured to eliminate duplicate records/records with no DUNS from being loaded	May
Organization Search	Organization search capability will be fixed as soon as possible	July release (or sooner)
SOAP Error	More than 10 characters entered for "house number" causes data error	July release
Web browser issues	Pages are being analyzed for improvements to be browser agnostic	Improvements will be delivered over time
eAuthentication	Confusion over the online identity verification offered by eAuth during registration	1) Alternative to visiting an LRA 2) Credit check is <b>not</b> run