

■ What's New?

The newly created Fund for Rural America provides a competitive research grant program for a variety of projects such as developing new crops and new crop uses, conserving and enhancing natural resources, and expanding locally owned value-added processing. The research will help agricultural producers manage the risk associated with market-driven provisions of new U.S. farm legislation.

REE's newly created National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board advises the Secretary and land-grant colleges and universities on agricultural research, extension, education, and economics policy and priorities. In addition, a task force has been created to develop a 10-year strategic plan for federally funded agricultural research facilities. REE's strategic plan, mandated by the Government Performance and Results Act, will measure the effectiveness of Federal Government activities and will use the annual budget process to link all Agency activities with Agency missions.

Information about the REE mission and its respective agencies—Agricultural Research Service; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; Economic Research Service; and National Agricultural Statistics Service—is available on the REE World Wide Web home page at *www.reeusda.gov/ree/*