



UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
SYSTEM

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

FOR FY2024, THE U OF I
SYSTEM REQUESTS **\$500
MILLION** FOR AFRI; WE
ALSO REQUEST **\$500
MILLION** FOR THE
RESEARCH FACILITIES ACT.

We also support [APLU's requests.](#)

AFRI
FY2024 PBR = \$550M
FY2023 = \$455M
FY2022 = \$445M
FY2021 = \$435M

Appropriations Bill: Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

Agency: National Institute of Food and Agriculture

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USDA ALLOCATIONS/AWARDS, FY 2022

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Account	Amount
Hatch Act (Research & Education Programs)	\$7.2M
Smith-Lever 3(b)-(c) (Extension Activities)	\$10.3M
Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) (Research & Education Programs)	\$6.4M
Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)	\$2.2M
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)(Extension + UIC)	\$18M

UIUC has an enduring and dynamic partnership with USDA. The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) at UIUC is home to the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station, which supports research capacity and education infrastructure in Illinois. Hatch and other related formula funds support capacity for applied science to benefit Illinois in areas such as plant photosynthesis and genetics, soil and water conservation, animal performance, and human nutrition and health strategies. USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) supports competitive research programs that are essential to the research portfolio of ACES and other units on the campus.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) supports University of Illinois Extension, whose network of educators reaches all 102 counties of Illinois with evidence-based outreach and engagement programs in five broad areas: energy and environmental stewardship; food safety and security; economic development financial security, and wellness; and youth and workforce preparedness; family health, development. NIFA provides capacity support to U of I Extension through Smith-Lever 3(b) & (c).



More than \$7M in competitive USDA funding to the College of Veterinary Medicine advances agricultural animal health through basic and applied research into disease prevention and through training programs that help producers and veterinarians improve biosecurity and productivity on farms.

USDA-SUPPORTED PROJECTS AT UIUC

Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture

The **\$20M USDA-funded** Artificial Intelligence for Future Agricultural Resilience, Management, and Sustainability Institute serves as a nexus for multidisciplinary research teams that advance foundational AI and use these advances to address important challenges facing world agriculture. Early accomplishments include advancements in computer vision, including applying technology developed for human dance to detect livestock movement; improvements in

small robot navigation in corn and soybean fields; as well as many developments in AI algorithms. The project continues to serve and receive input from diverse stakeholder groups.

Farmer Mental Health

Agricultural producers in the North Central region experience anxiety, depression, substance use, and death by suicide at disproportionately higher rates than the general population. Through a [\\$7.2M grant from USDA-NIFA](#), Illinois researchers and Extension specialists have formed the North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center to create and expand stress management and mental health resources and services. Early accomplishments include providing professional interventions, supporting farm telephone hotlines and websites, and providing training and resources for producers and those who support them.

Converting Biowaste Into Pavement

UIUC researchers received a [\\$2.5M USDA-NIFA grant](#) to convert food waste and swine manure into pavement binder and transportation fuels. Part of USDA-NIFA's Bioproduct Pilot Program, the researchers will use a hydrothermal liquefaction reactor system to produce biocrude oil. Wastewater from the process can be used as fertilizer.

Animal Health

UIUC's College of Veterinary Medicine has more than \$7M in competitive USDA funding to support animal health research. These projects are focused on vaccine development and understanding the pathogenesis and transmission of agricultural animal diseases. For instance:

- Supporting the beef, pork and poultry industries by developing vaccines to fight important viral diseases, developing new ways to detect and monitor for disease threats, and preparing producers and veterinarians to respond in case of a disease outbreak.
- Fighting global hunger with novel approaches to reduce the impact of key livestock parasites.
- Delivering high-quality online learning focused on animal-disease training and other needs of rural veterinary practitioners and students, so these professionals can partner with producers to ensure on-farm biosecurity and increase productivity and efficiency.



Harnessing Solar Power on the Farm

Investments in green energy are key to mitigating climate change, but major expansions of solar arrays could compete with farming for land use. A \$10 million NIFA grant explores agrivoltaics, the placement of solar panels in agricultural fields across diverse landscapes. The project addresses key knowledge gaps and will analyze system-wide effects on markets and climate systems. The technology could provide climate-smart solutions to improve total land productivity, crop water-use efficiency, profitability, and economic resilience of agriculture.



Regenerative "Farm of the Future"

UIUC received a [\\$3.9M USDA-NIFA grant](#) to establish an 80 acre farm testing regenerative approaches to corn, soybean, and livestock production. Researchers with the university's Center for Digital Agriculture, National Center for Supercomputing Applications, and Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment will leverage digital tools including precision farming, remote sensing, autonomous robotic management, and AI to accelerate new practices and management technologies that are more sustainable, profitable, affordable,

and scale-neutral.

IMPACTS OF THE ILLINOIS SNAP-ED AND EFNEP INVESTMENTS

University of Illinois Extension and UIC leveraged \$18M of total investment in Illinois' 2022 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) to improve food access, promote healthy food choices, and help Illinois families save money. Rebounding from the COVID-19 pandemic, Illinois SNAP-Ed worked in 535 cities across Illinois. SNAP-Ed partnered with 1,322 organizations to deliver nutrition education and support organizational changes that promoted health and improved food access for individuals and families having low-income. This year, SNAP-Ed has helped coalitions, partners, and communities acquire over \$1.2 million in grant and donor funds to expand food access and health in priority areas. Additionally, SNAP-Ed continues to host the [Find Food IL Map](#) helping Illinois residents easily identify local food resources. Since the launch, the map has helped more than 15,490 new users.

Using the \$2.2M Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) investment, University of Illinois Extension continues to deliver in-depth nutrition, physical activity, and food buying educational programming to diverse audiences having limited incomes. Through virtual and in-person programs, 96% of adults reported making healthier food choices after participating in the EFNEP program and 91% of youth improved their knowledge or abilities to choose foods according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.



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