



Animal and Plant
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Service

Plant Protection and
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Mr. Joe Collins
President, National Plant Board
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University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY 40546-0091

JAN - 4 2016

Dear Mr. Collins:

Subject: National Plant Board (NPB) Resolution for Streamlining Reporting on Cooperative Agreements.

Thank you for the NPB resolution that requests streamlining of reporting on cooperative agreements. We understand the reasoning that underlies this NPB resolution and hope to address some of the specific concern of the Board.

Current agency policy allows for a choice of annual, semi-annual, or quarterly reporting as outlined in the Notice of Award. The cooperator, working in conjunction with its authorized departmental officer's designated representative (ADODR), should discuss the available options and should determine mutually acceptable reporting requirements for the work being performed. When the ADODR and cooperator determine a reporting schedule, the cooperator needs to ensure it can clearly relate the financial data needed by the agency to project performance and milestones. The reporting requirements built into our reporting system have the flexibility to satisfy this request.

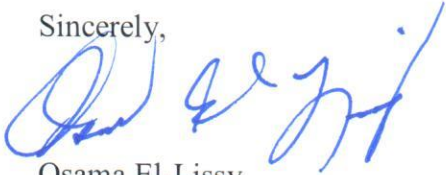
With respect to electronic reporting, the agency is assessing and pursuing a new online agreements system called Grantor. The agency has recognized the need for such an online system, and the use of Grantor is scheduled to begin during summer 2016. One of the many attributes within the Grantor system is electronic reporting capacity. Grantor will greatly reduce the required reporting time for both cooperator and ADODR. When this system is deployed, Grantor will streamline the agreements process and improve efficiency.

The agency has previously assessed the multi-year agreements process. Our ability to alter our reporting requirements on multi-year agreements is dictated by Congressional appropriations. The nature of these appropriations dictate whether or not the dollars used to fund a cooperative agreement may cross fiscal years. Most APHIS funding is appropriated as single-year funds and agreements administered under this type of funding may only be funded during the year in which the funds were appropriated. APHIS does receive some multi-year funding. In these instances APHIS has the authority to approve projects and cooperative agreements for more than one year. The agency's ability to alter the nature of reporting for many cooperative agreements is thus limited.

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We appreciate the National Plant Board's concerns about the reporting process on cooperative agreements. We hope that the information in this response gives at least partial relief to some of the Board's concerns about the burden imposed by our reporting process. If you have further questions for APHIS, please contact us for further communications.

Sincerely,



Osama El-Lissy
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine

pm/kaz