

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATIVES STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE
AND THE
AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM CONSORTIUM

Whereas the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a longstanding responsibility to ensure that future generations are agriculturally literate and that young Americans are encouraged to pursue higher education and career opportunities in the food and agricultural sciences;

Whereas Congress has appropriated funds to the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES) with a directive to carry out an Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) Program;

Whereas the AITC Program encourages K-12 educators to integrate information about the food and agricultural system across their curriculums to assist students in understanding the pivotal role of agriculture in the U.S. and world economy, to introduce students to environmental and social issues impacting agriculture, and to expose them to higher education and career opportunities in the food and agricultural sciences;

Whereas USDA administers and oversees the expenditure of Federal funds for the AITC Program in conformance with Federal laws and regulations and maintains a national program leader and staff to provide national leadership for the AITC Program;

Whereas, since the inception of the AITC Program in 1981, USDA has sought to develop a network of partners to carry out the program at the State and local levels, and USDA has worked to foster the development of active and effective AITC programs in each of the fifty States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands of the United States, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau;

Whereas USDA encourages the selection of State, District and other official AITC Contacts, recognizes newly designated Contacts, and maintains the official list of AITC Contacts;

Whereas USDA recognizes AITC Contacts as partners in carrying out the AITC Program at the State and local levels;

Whereas this network has matured and officially formed the AITC Consortium, which plays a strong role in addressing nationwide issues and needs of the AITC Program;

Whereas the Consortium maintains a role in promoting agricultural literacy programs, provides leadership and a professional network for State AITC Programs, and works to ensure continuity of the AITC Program;

Whereas the Consortium coordinates national interests of the State members, recognizes

outstanding State programs, and encourages all States to have membership, representation and voting rights; and

Whereas the USDA and the AITC Consortium share mutual interests in providing leadership, communication links, and educational efforts to leverage resources, complement national agendas, and avoid unnecessary duplication;

Therefore, with the intent of maximizing the effectiveness of the AITC Program, USDA/CSREES and the AITC Consortium hereby execute the following memorandum of understanding (MOD) with respect to their cooperative efforts in support of the AITC Program.

1. USDA/CSREES will:

Recognize the AITC Consortium and its Executive Committee as representatives of USDA's State and local partners.

Keep the AITC Consortium informed of the development of initiatives to maintain and strengthen the AITC Program.

Foster public input from all sources regarding initiatives to maintain and strengthen the AITC Program.

Work with the Consortium to plan an annual AITC national conference.

Ensure that AITC Program activities are planned and evaluated in an output and impact framework consistent with the Government Performance and Results Act.

Encourage involvement of the AITC Program with other USDA agencies, other Federal agencies and public and private organizations that have an interest in promoting agricultural literacy programs.

Help identify and encourage collaborations with other agencies and organizations that will advance an understanding of the science of agriculture and career choices in the food and agricultural sciences.

II. The AITC Consortium will:

Recognize USDAJCSREES as its primary Federal partner in conducting the AITC Program.

Draw its membership from USDA recognized AITC Contacts and/or their designated alternates. Plan and host an annual AITC national conference in cooperation with *USDNCSREES*.

Identify educational materials at the State and local levels for use in carrying out AITC initiatives mutually agreed to by USDAJCSREES and the AITC Consortium.

III. USDA/CSREES and the AITC Consortium mutually agree that:

The AITC Consortium's Executive Committee and senior USDA/CSREES staff administering the AITC Program will meet at least annually to coordinate activities to sustain and strengthen the AITC Program, and review the previous year's accomplishments under this MOD.

The AITC Consortium's Executive Committee and appropriate USDA/CSREES staff administering the AITC program will participate bi-monthly or as needed in conference calls to coordinate activities between meetings.

Nothing in this MOU shall obligate either the Department of Agriculture or the AITC to obligate or transfer any funds. The capacity of USDA to carry out activities under this MOD is subject to the availability of funds and resources.

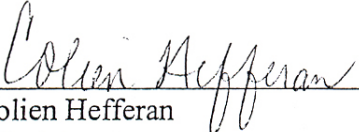
Specific projects or activities that involve the obligation or transfer of funds or resources among the parties to this MOD will require the execution of separate agreements or other instruments which must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations. This MOU does not provide such authority. This MOD becomes effective when signed by the CSREES Administrator and the AITC Consortium President, and will remain in effect for five years unless superseded by a new agreement or terminated by either party with 90 days written notice.

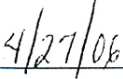
This MOD is not intended to, and does not create, any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity, by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.

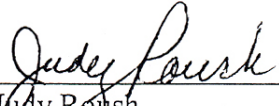
State AITC programs will remain autonomous in their administration and program priorities and initiatives in their respective States.

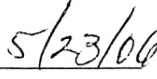
State AITC programs are not party to this agreement as individual States.

USDA's recognition and working relationship with each AITC State Program will not be affected regardless of the State Program affiliation within the AITC Consortium. This agreement does not restrict any party's participation in USDA sponsored activities.


Colien Hefferan
Administrator
Cooperative State Research, Education,
and Extension Service


Date


Judy Roush
President
AITC Consortium


Date