Successful NIFA/AFRI Grant(s)
What it takes to be Successful!

Synopsis

Title	**An Integrated Approach to Improving Dairy Cow Fertility**
Team	**Cabrera, V.E., Fricke, P., Ruegg, P., Shaver, R., Weigel, M., Wiltbank, M.**
Term	**48 months January 2010 - January 2014**
Amount	**$1,000,000**
Ranking	**1 out of 25 (65 Letters of Intent)**
Funded Projects	**4 or 5 ($4,000,000 available)**
Sponsor	**Integrated Solutions for Animal Agriculture Agriculture Food and Research Initiative National Institute of Food and Agriculture**
More info	**http://dairymgt.uwex.edu/projects/repro.php**

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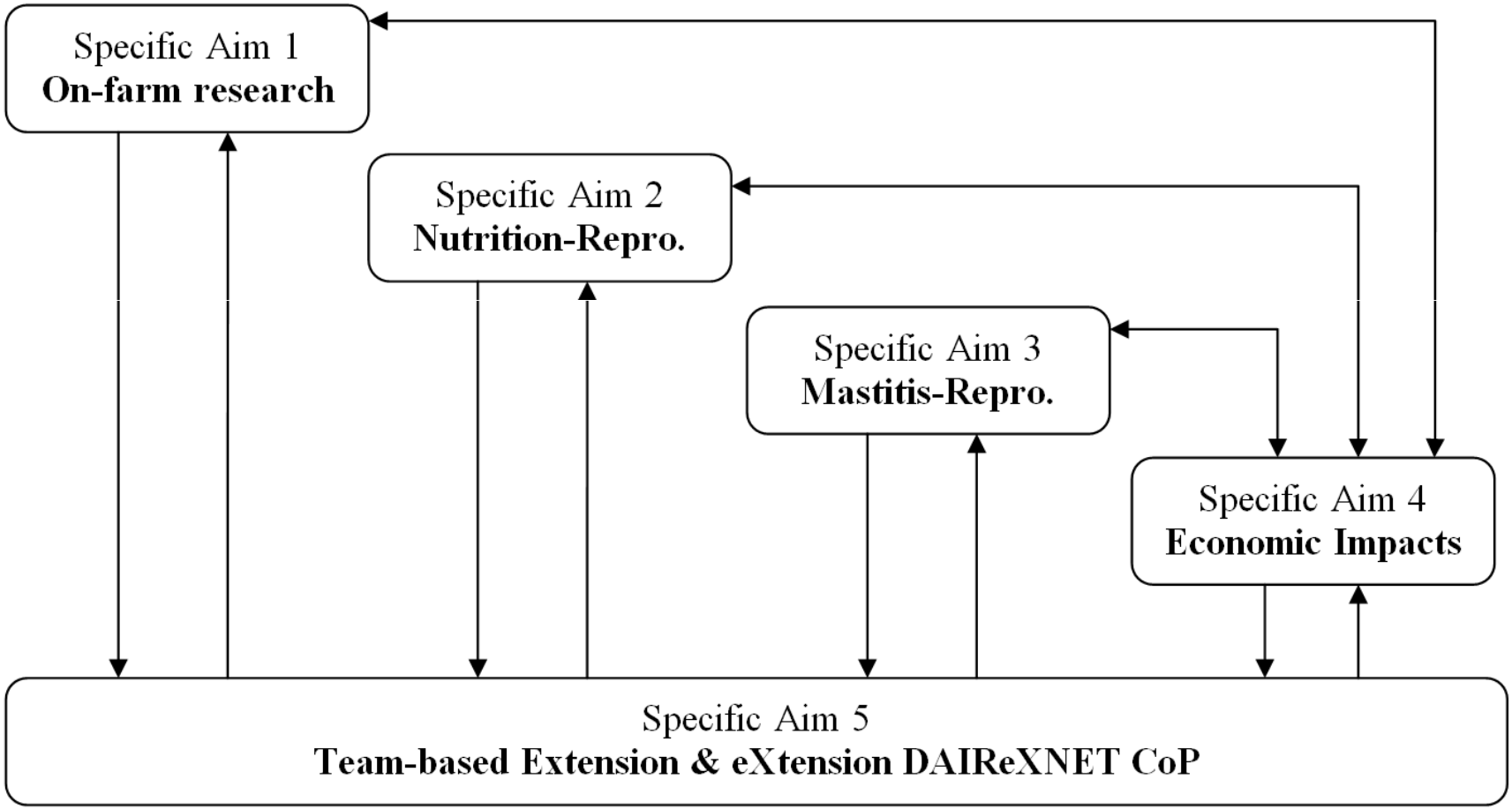
What's the Project About?

- **Improve the reproductive efficiency of dairy cattle using an interdisciplinary team approach that will identify and remove barriers to reproductive success by linking outcomes of basic and applied research with an innovative producer responsive extension program**
  - **Characterize the contributions of specific management factors to cow fertility in commercial farms**
  - **Determine the impact of specific nutritional components on reproductive performance of lactating dairy cows**
  - **Identify the impact of mastitis on fertility and pregnancy loss in lactating dairy cows**
  - **Evaluate the economic impact of reproductive management strategies on overall farm sustainability**
  - **Generate measurable improvement in the reproductive performance of dairy herds by developing and implementing an integrated team-based extension program**

How it connects?

Figure A: interdependence and flow among the 5 Specific Aims proposed in the project



Why Successful?

- **Extension-Research Integration**
  - **Panel: "…extremely well-integrated…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…with most of the investigators having extension appointments, the relationship with county extension personnel and ability to conduct applied research is evident…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…combination of internationally recognized, research-based state specialists, effective county-based extension agents, modern dairy research units, diverse commercial operations, and state-of-the-art laboratories…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…bridge between research (modeling) and applied use (decision-making tools) is novel and much-needed…"**

Why Successful?

- **High Scientific Merit**
  - **Panel: "…well-designed by leaders in the field…"**
  - **Panel: "…application is well-written…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…approach, procedures and methodologies are aggressive and novel…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…results are measurable and possibly from the largest data set to date…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…sufficient evidence of institutional capacity and competence in proposed areas of work…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…high merit as the objectives for all 3 components of the program are addressed…"**
  - **Reviewer: "… innovative and multidisciplinary approach to a very difficult problem …"**

Why Successful?

- **Interdisciplinary Team**
  - **Reviewer: "…collectively an outstanding collection of scientific abilities…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…evidence of previous collaboration among team members…"**
  - **Clear flow of activities between objectives and team members**
  - **High collaborative effort**
  - **PIs have built a strong track of research and extension work on the subject area**

Why Successful?

- **Innovative and Proven Extension Model**
  - **Panel: "…Reproductive Management Teams is a particular strength…"**
  - **Panel: "…extensive collaboration with county Extension faculty is also a significant strength…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…the concept of using farmer directed reproductive management teams of advisers for 200 herds is of merit…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…the concept of management teams is an extraordinary utilization of extension resources between the field and the university…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…integration of a novel extension program that will be transferred throughout the US…"**

Why Successful?

- **High Probability of Positive Impacts**
  - **Panel: "…expected to result in significant impacts and improvements…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…translation of information into user-friendly decision making tools is critical to the long-term success…"**
  - **Reviewer: "…plans to disseminate the models, their accuracy, and effectiveness are excellent…"**
  - **It would be difficult and intimidating to review it negatively**

Why Successful?

- **Additional Elements**
  - **Well thought Logic Model**
  - **Subcontract with eXtension DAIReXNET CoP**
  - **Well designed Management Plan**
  - **Strong and numerous letters of support (24)**

Concerns?

- **Over-ambitious?**
  - **Looking for ways to leverage salary of proposed personnel**