

# Final Selection Panel Review

0070

A socio-economic and behavioral analysis of farmers' decisions to adopt or reject the CALFED conservation initiatives Sonoma State University

***Applicant amount requested: \$175,228***

***Fund This Amount: \$175,228***

The Selection Panel found this to be a fascinating proposal because it seeks answers to the questions "what is likely to change farmers' mindset about a project; how to carry a project to success; and how to be an advocate for the project"? The Panel recognizes that it is important for the program to invest in research of this nature and recommends funding this proposal with conditions. In particular, the applicant should strengthen the methodology, develop a broader sampling base; consider the use of a focus group to gather information (vs. phone survey); use students experienced with farmers and knowledgeable of the farming industry; and work closely with a well established entity within the agricultural community to ensure acceptability from farmers (and a reliable sampling). In addition, there may be the opportunity to coordinate questions for the survey tool with other projects in this PSP. The Panel recommends that if possible, the applicant work with other projects to develop and implement it.

The Selection Panel further recommends that the following conditions be met: 1) Use local farm bureaus and resource conservation districts and perhaps conduct town hall meetings or forums as a part of the Task 2 and Task 3 activities; 2) Identify survey respondents who did not adopt conservation innovations; 3) Identify survey respondents who applied for and won grant awards to conduct conservation innovations but subsequently opted to not perform the innovation(s); 4) Clarify that survey respondents targeted are not selected solely based upon PSP grants, but also are based on conservation innovations funded by other sources; and 5) Provide more clarity on sampling strategies for both baseline (single region or multiple region) and subsequent targeted sampling. Describe what criteria will be used to ensure the survey is not biased, by only interviewing easy to reach participants.