Pig Genome Update
No. 45 November 1, 2000

New opportunities exist for competitive grants for 2001. The announcement of the 2001 USDA NRI Competitive Grants Program has been posted at www.reeusda.gov/nri and the deadline for the Animal Genome and Genetic Mechanisms and Animal Genome Basic Reagents and Tools programs is Feb. 15, 2001. Swine geneticists are strongly encouraged to apply! The NRI budget is still undecided at this writing. It will likely be approved via last minute Congressional action at somewhere between the $97M presently authorized by the House (approximately a 20% cut from last year's NRI funding levels) and the $118.7M level authorized by the Senate (slightly below last year; FYI, the President recommended $150M for NRI in 2001). Note that both standard grants (usually no more than $300,000 total costs) and tools/reagents grants (up to a maximum of $1M per award) are available again this year (kindly provided by Jerry Dodgson).

Funds have also been awarded for animal genome research through this year's Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS) program. Unfortunately, total IFAFS genome funding was less than initially expected, ending up at about $7.5M for plant genomics, $4.7M for animal genomics, and $5M for microbial genomics with $2.6M for bioinformatics (most of which went to a single comparative grass genome database project). Included in the animal genome portion of IFAFS were funds for mapping growth genes in broiler chickens (Delaware-led, with Maryland, Georgia and INRA as cooperators), marker-assisted improvement of pork quality (Iowa State-led along with Illinois), functional genomics of bovine T-cells (Montana State-led, with Washington State and Minnesota), and genetic resistance to bovine paratuberculosis (Wisconsin). As noted previously, future IFAFS funding is likely to be blocked by Congress, so don't expect to see this program again, any time soon. More details on IFAFS 2000 awards can be found at www.reeusda.gov/1700/programs/IFAFS/ifafsawards.htm (kindly provided by Jerry Dodgson).

Are you one of many seeking information? Recent statistics show that the ANGENMAP@iastate.edu discussion list has now 760 current subscribers from over 40 countries (on average the subscriber number has been increasing by 15-20% each year for the past 5 years). Approximately 300 emails are posted annually, and the mail archives are revisited over 700 times each year. The Animal Gene Mapping Community Directory (http://www.genome.iastate.edu/community/mappers.html) is growing and has added 335 entries since 1999. Be sure to add you name if you haven't already. Finally our WWW server receives many thousands of requests monthly from more than 4,000 users worldwide. If you have information that would be of value to the community, please share it and we will add the link to our web pages or host the material on our server.

New projects or ideas for projects that can be supported by the Pig Genome Coordinator funds are always being considered. If you have an idea that will benefit the pig genome community, then drop me an email (mfrothsc@iastate.edu) to discuss your proposal.   These can include support of conferences, preparation of mapping or genomics materials or funds to support worthwhile travel.

Where are we headed?? This is one of the questions often asked by scientists and administrators in the field of genomics. Certainly a lot has happened in the past year with interesting gene discoveries and advances in human genomics and bioinformatics. This newsletter has tried to keep up with many of these developments. If you have interesting ideas to add in the field of animal genetics and want some "press" please let me know. There is always room to add your topics.

The Plant & Animal Genome IX (PAG-IX) and the NRSP-8 meetings are now less than 3 months away. PAG-IX will be at the Town & Country Convention Center in San Diego, CA (www.towncountry.com) on Jan. 14-17, 2001. The meeting program is really shaping up to be an exciting one. Sunday will be the swine genome workshop and Dr. Cathy Ernst is planning an interesting program. Early registration deadline is November 3, 2000 and the related information can be found at http://www.intl-pag.org . Some funds may exist to support travel of qualified US pig genome participants so please contact me at mfrothsc@iastate.edu if you are in need of some support. All questions on the conference can be directed towards Scherago International at pag@schherago.com.

Need a roommate for PAGIX? We have helped to set up a room sharing board on the web. For information please go to http://www.genome.iastate.edu/community/service/roomshare.html.

Upcoming meetings (for more details see: http://www.genome.iastate.edu/community/meetings.html)

Cambridge Healthtech Institute's 2nd Annual Application of Genomics to Animal Models for Pharmaceutical Studies, November 15-16, 2000, Boston, Massachusetts, Contact Jennifer Laakso at jlaakso@healthtech.com.

National Swine Improvement Federation, December 7-8, 2000 in Nashville, TN. For details please contact Dr. Ken Stalder at Stalder@utk.edu.

Plant and Animal Genome IX, joint with the NAGRP annual meetings, January 14-17, 2001, Town & Country Convention Center, San Diego, CA. See: http://www.intl-pag.org/.

Gordon Research Conference on Quantitative Genetics and Genomics, February 18-23, Ventura, California. Contact for general information on attending a Gordon Conference: http://www.grc.uri.edu/attend.htm or for online conference application: http://www.grc.uri.edu/apply1.htm .

Additional items can be found at: http://www.agbiotechnet.com/calendar/index.asp.

Items for *Pig Genome Update 46* can be sent to me by no later than December 10 please.

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