

Missouri Department of Agriculture
AGRICULTURE NEWS

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Department Partners to Enhance Rural Economic Development
Secures State Funding for Rural Biotechnology Initiative Planning
Grant

(Jefferson City, Mo.)--A partnership between the Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA), Missouri Biotechnology Association (MOBIO) and the University of Missouri (MU) is bringing new funds for the development of rural biotechnology enterprises to Missouri.

"Harnessing the potential of our rural communities, whether in agriculture, manufacturing or scientific innovation, is critical to the success of Missouri's effort in becoming a life-science hub," said Peter Hofherr, director of MDA. "Our state is at a critical point right now, and building strong, focused partnerships is the key to progress."

The grant, which includes \$60,000 of federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration, will be used to survey technology and the rural resource base to develop production and processing opportunities for life science-related enterprises. The initiative will be implemented in six major steps over a one-year period with the goal of enabling Missouri to emerge as a national leader in rural bio-enterprise.

Receipt of the grant was made possible through contributions from two state development boards: the Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority (MASBDA) which contributed \$20,000 and the Missouri Development Finance Board (MDFB) which contributed \$40,000 to the required fifty-percent match.

"We are very dedicated to the value-added movement in agriculture," said Tony Stafford, executive director of MASBDA. "This grant will be yet another valuable tool for Missouri's farmers and rural communities in the establishment of biotechnology ventures."

For more information, contact the Missouri Biotechnology Association at 314-444-1198 or info@mobio.org. To learn more about the organization, visit www.mobio.org.