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## USAID Awards \$34 Million to Enhance Food Security

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is investing \$34 million over five years in enhancing food security and achieving sustainable agricultural programs in developing countries. The announcement comes in an October 7 press release from the institution conducting the work for USAID, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech).

Receiving two USAID grants, Virginia Tech will lead and manage agricultural research and assistance programs designed to improve crop yields through ecologically sound practices for people in developing nations.

One \$17 million grant provides for Phase III in the USAID Integrated Pest Management Collaborative Research Support Program (IPM CRSP), during which Virginia Tech will initiate new activities through competitive grants for regional pest management programs and pest management problems of global concern.

The second \$17 million award is for the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program (SANREM CRSP). The ecologically based programs help those in developing countries use the latest knowledge to manage natural resources and agriculture, emphasizing ecologically based pest management and land-use methods to enhance productivity, food security and preserve natural resources.

S.K. De Datta, associate provost for international affairs and director of the Virginia Tech Office of International Research, Education, and Development said the IPM Collaborative Research Support Program goal is to develop and implement a replicable, integrated approach to pest management that reduces agricultural losses, mitigates damage to natural ecosystems and prevents contamination of food and water supplies.