

Contracted Work: International Consortium for Antimicrobial Stewardship in Agriculture (ICASA) Evaluation

Request For Proposals

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About FFAR

The Foundation for Food & Agriculture (FFAR)'s mission is to build collaborative partnerships to support audacious science addressing today's food and agriculture challenges. To do so, FFAR has built a research investment model to fill critical knowledge gaps, develop solutions with momentous impact and prepare the scientific workforce to tackle impending challenges head on. FFAR's work requires significant collaboration across the food and agriculture system to foster multidisciplinary expertise, input from stakeholders and support from a range of funding partners. FFAR's convening capabilities and agile approach leverage public funds by building public-private partnerships — resulting in an average of \$1.4 in match to every \$1 of FFAR funding.

About ICASA

FFAR consortia are comprised of several entities that co-design a vision, mission and governance framework to guide and fund research, foster collaboration and generate actionable results to overcome agriculture's most complex challenges. Established in 2019 as a FFAR consortium, with an initial commitment from FFAR of \$7.5 million, the [International Consortium for Antimicrobial Stewardship in Agriculture \(ICASA\)](#) funds antimicrobial research that promotes targeted antibiotic use, advances animal health and welfare and increases transparency in food production practices as a means to produce healthier livestock. ICASA participants matched FFAR funds, resulting in a total initial investment of approximately \$15 million. Unlike other working groups on antibiotic stewardship, ICASA participants represent multiple stages of the U.S. livestock supply chain from both beef and pork sectors. To date, FFAR has awarded 29 grants through ICASA, ranging from \$133,000 to \$2.4 million per award—13 have completed and submitted final reports.

Consortium Aims (relevant to evaluation)

- 1) Support the investigation and development of cross-disciplinary management practices, including animal housing and transport, feed and nutrition, disease, genetics and other approaches in order to enhance animal health and antimicrobial stewardship; and

- 2) Support the investigation and development of new diagnostic tools and technologies for improved animal health; and
- 3) Support improvements in understanding the biological function of antibiotic alternatives; and
- 4) Promote and encourage the advancement of agricultural science that benefits the public good by timely release of the knowledge and materials created from public-private partnerships.

Scope of Evaluation

FFAR seeks to evaluate the success of ICASA. The evaluator, in collaboration with FFAR, will define criteria and standards of success (i.e. metrics); FFAR has established relevant Stages of Research, Development and Deployment that the evaluator will use to track innovations and knowledge products across the value chain and compare projects. It is important for the evaluator to capture project outputs, outcomes and where available, impacts (including how project outputs have influenced the agriculture value chain and/or informed policy development). The evaluator will assist in capturing and complementing [FFAR's 14 standard indicators](#) to uncover project outputs, outcomes and impacts.

We desire a dual formative and summative program evaluation to **assess process and implementation** and to **assess outcomes and impacts**, as defined in the [FFAR Program Evaluation FAQs](#)—with outcomes and impact findings of vital importance. Through the evaluation, we want to better understand how efficiently and effectively the Consortium working groups are delivering on research aims and uncover whether and how project deliverables are being used to date and contributing to the U.S. food and agriculture system. We desire the evaluator to evaluate individual projects, and look across working groups, using an agreed-upon set of metrics. Finally, we desire the evaluator to create 3-5 exemplar cases (i.e. detailed case studies) using a mixed methods approach, which includes quantitative analyses and qualitative analyses to calculate and model cost-effectiveness using counterfactuals. These exemplar cases are important for capturing realized and prospective economic impacts. We expect all findings—and recommendations where applicable—to be evidence-based with references to supporting evaluation data (e.g., survey findings).

FFAR Will Provide

- Contact information for applicants, awardees, consortium participants (i.e. members) and project match partners, where applicable.
- Contact information for relevant FFAR staff
- High-level budget information for ICASA projects
- Annual and final reports submitted by grantees
- Project proposals for all grants (e.g., completed, still in progress and non-awarded applicants)

Evaluator Data Collection Expectations

- Desk review of all FFAR project related documents
- Survey and/or interviews of applicants, where appropriate, and project PIs/Co-PIs, consortium participants, match partners, value chain next- and end-users and other experts in the field of study
- Other data mining as deemed necessary (e.g., USDA NASS, literature synthesis, etc.)

Evaluation Questions

Process & Implementation Focused:

1. To what extent is ICASA's structure (e.g., working group design, type of research funded, funding amount, proposal turnaround time, match requirement, etc.) appropriate for meeting consortium aims?
2. To what extent did projects integrate industry, end-user, or other non-research team members and consult diverse stakeholders during project design, implementation or outreach?

Outcome & Impact Focused:

3. To what extent has ICASA-funded research achieved the aims of the consortium?
 - a. Has funded research developed cross-disciplinary management practices and approaches (including, but not limited to animal housing, transport, feed and nutrition) aimed at enhancing animal health and antimicrobial stewardship?
 - b. Has funded research developed new diagnostic tools and technologies for improved animal health?
 - c. Has funded research improved understanding of the biological function of antibiotic alternatives?
 - d. Has funded research benefitted the public good (e.g., through the timely release of knowledge and materials)?

4. To what extent did ICASA-funded research create and sustain new or novel partnerships?
5. To what extent has ICASA-funded research improved animal health, welfare and/or antimicrobial stewardship?
6. To what extent has ICASA-funded research contributed unique or comparatively greater socio-economic outcomes relative to other public or private antimicrobial stewardship in agriculture research efforts?

Evaluation Timeline & Products

Expected Products & Deliverables

1. Standalone external-facing executive summary of findings (2-5 pages)
2. Cross-project master spreadsheet with all compiled data
 - Built for easy data analysis via Pivot-tables
3. Slide deck presentation of preliminary findings for both formative and summative evaluations
4. Process and Implementation Final Report (10 page maximum) describing:
 - Methodology (as appendix item),
 - Strengths and weaknesses of the current structure, governance and management of ICASA working groups
 - Assessment-related, evidence-based recommendations for modifications for ICASA working groups
5. Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts Final report (30 page maximum) describing:
 - Evaluation background,
 - Methodology (as appendix item),
 - Findings including data visualization, interpretations of findings,
 - i. final report findings and recommendations should be evidence-based with references to supporting evaluation data (e.g., survey findings, cross-project comparison table).
 - Conclusions.
6. Exemplar cases (15 page maximum each)
 - 3-5 in-depth exemplar case studies that illustrate meaningful outcomes. Each featuring economic impact modeling, including quantitative cost-effectiveness analysis and use of counterfactuals.

Estimated Project Timeline

- Anticipated contract execution date: Late October 2025
- Presentation of preliminary process and implementation findings: March 2026
- Presentation of preliminary outcomes and impacts findings: March 2026
- Draft Exemplars: April 2026
- Draft final reports: August 2026
- Final reports and all deliverables: September 2026

Project Maximum Bid

- \$200,000 - \$250,000

Proposal Guidelines

All proposals are to be submitted by September 19, 2025, 5:00 p.m. PT deadline. Proposals should be submitted as a Portable Document Format (PDF) via email to cgambino@foundationfar.org with the subject line "ICASA Evaluation Proposal".

FFAR welcomes individuals or teams with animal agriculture production systems, veterinary medicine, microbiology, livestock processing and food systems, agribusiness and evaluative methods expertise to apply. If beneficial to the success of the evaluation process, FFAR may match one or more individuals into a team. A successful team will include individuals with evaluative methods experience (especially in evaluating research investments) as well as individuals with sufficient technical depth and breadth in antimicrobial stewardship research and/or practice across the animal agriculture value chain to evaluate the success of projects across a range of species focus.

Proposal Process Timeline

- Submission deadline: September 19, 2025
- Finalist presentations and panel discussions: Late October 2025
- Client reference checks: Late October 2025

Proposals Should Contain the Following Sections

1. Applicant background/overview (1 page maximum), including an indication of relevant expertise

2. Previous experience(s) of research program evaluation work with a similar or related scope (2 pages maximum)
3. Description approach and evaluation plan (5 pages maximum)
 - a. Including relevant, illustrative measures you plan collect that assess the proposed evaluation questions
4. Project budget and budget justification (this evaluation does not require matching funds)
5. Evaluation timeline
6. Project key personnel including roles and responsibilities
7. Team members' CVs
8. Links to deliverables from past evaluation projects of a similar scope
9. Client references

Finalist Presentation Preparation

FFAR will hold a 60-minute meeting (20-minutes presentation and 40-minute panel interview) with finalists via video conference. The presentation should highlight the applicant's approach, including the criteria and standards they envision being used to measure the success of projects and ICASA as a whole. Additionally, the presentation should include a brief explanation of methods, followed by a showcase of how collected data may be visualized.

The panel discussion may be used to clarify the methods used for collection and analysis of data. Additionally, the panel may inquire about past projects and previous client relations to ensure the applicant and FFAR are a good fit.