



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Research,  
Education, and  
Economics

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

1400 Independence  
Avenue SW  
Washington, DC  
20250

August 25, 2011

Dr. David B. Neale  
Professor  
University of California  
Plant Sciences  
Davis, CA 95616

Dear Dr. Neale:

Congratulations! The **Conifer Translational Genomics Network Coordinated Agricultural Project** has been selected to receive a 2011 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary's Honor Award in the category of *Helping American promote sustainable agricultural production and biotechnology exports as America works to increase food security*. These awards are the most prestigious Departmental awards presented by the Secretary of Agriculture and recognize exceptional leadership, contributions, or public service by individuals or groups who support the mission/goals of USDA.

You and the Conifer Translational Genomics Network Coordinated Agricultural Project team are invited to participate in the festivities that will begin with a Research, Education, and Economics (REE) Mission Area ceremony at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 14, 2011, at the U.S. Department of Education Potomac Center Plaza Auditorium, 550 12th Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20202. During this ceremony each team member will receive individual award certificates.

That afternoon, the USDA 64<sup>th</sup> Secretary's Honor Awards Ceremony will be held at 2:00 p.m., in the Jefferson Auditorium, in the USDA South Building, located at 1400 Independence Avenue, SW. After this event, teams will go to the Jamie L. Whitten Building Patio for photographs with Secretary Vilsack and then to the Jefferson Auditorium for seating by 1:30 p.m. for the ceremony. There will be reserved seating for team members. Seating for guests is limited in the auditorium but additional seating will be available in the South Building cafeteria. All team members are invited to attend this ceremony in which only the group leader, David Neale, will receive the group award from Secretary Vilsack. Following the Awards Ceremony, a reception to which all team members and guests are invited will be held in the Jamie L. Whitten Building Patio.

I do hope that you, your team and one guest each will be able to join us for these festivities on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Please communicate this information to your team members (enclosure) and notify Kimberly Whittet (202-720-8291 or [kwhittet@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:kwhittet@nifa.usda.gov)) if you and the members of your team will be attending the ceremony and the name of your guest(s) by September 7<sup>th</sup>. If you have questions, you also may contact Chevon Gibson in ARS-AFM-HRD at 301-504-1552 or at [chevon.gibson@ars.usda.gov](mailto:chevon.gibson@ars.usda.gov).

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As our honoree, NIFA will provide travel for the group leader and will reimburse your lodging, meals, and miscellaneous expenses for a maximum of two nights and three days. We regret that we are unable to cover expenses for additional team members or guests, but they are welcome to attend the festivities at their own expense. Shirley Slaughter, (202-720-4423 or [sslaughter@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:sslaughter@nifa.usda.gov)), will help you with your travel arrangements. Please let her know your flight preferences but she must make your plane and hotel reservations.

I am very pleased that you have been selected to receive a 2011 Secretary's Honor Award in recognition of your efforts to create the Conifer Translational Genomics Network Coordinated Agricultural Project. On September 14<sup>th</sup>, I look forward to recognizing you for your contributions.

Sincerely,

Chavonda Jacobs-Young  
Acting Director

Enclosure

## Conifer Translational Genomics Network Coordinated Agricultural Project team

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