

## Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: Impacts of USDA's Value-Added Producer Grants Program on Business Survival and Growth

Type of Report (ERR, EIB, EB, TB, SOR,) ERR

Agency: Economic Research Service [X] Influential Scientific Information  
USDA [ ] Highly Influential Scientific Assessment

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Subject of Review: The USDA's Rural Development Mission Area (RD) implements several loan and grant programs to address the shortage of capital to businesses in rural areas, including the Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) Program. The focus of this study is to study the impacts of the VAPG program on business survival and growth. The VAPG program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to processing and/or marketing of bio-based, value-added products. The study was conducted by combining data on the VAPG program obtained from RD with establishment level data from the National Establishment Time-Series (NETS) data, and comparing business survival and employment growth outcomes of VAPG recipients to the outcomes of businesses having similar observable characteristics and employment growth histories that did not receive VAPG grants.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review: [ ] Panel Review [X] Individual Reviewers  
[ ] Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 07/25/17 Completed: 10/23/18

Number of Reviewers: [ ] 3 or fewer [x] 4 to 10 [ ] More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

Reviewers selected by: [X] Agency [ ] Designated Outside Organization  
Organization's Name:

Opportunities for Public Comment? [ ] Yes [X] No

If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:

How:

When:

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Comments? [ ] Yes [X] No

Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel? [ ] Yes [X] No