How to be a PI: Reporting Scenario

You are the PI on a USDA grant that requires you submit a report every year. You are in your second year of the grant and, while analyzing the data from your first year with your graduate student, you realize that you need to change the direction of the project, adding a new goal and eliminating an existing one.

What do you do? When is your report due?

How do write the report?

Who do you talk to about the changes?

How do you handle any budget changes that might need to happen?
A NIFA competitively awarded/non-capacity project is any agricultural research, education, or extension project funded by a NIFA grant program that requires a grant application through grants.gov and has a peer review process. Once a competitive/non-capacity proposal has been recommended for award, the grantee is notified via email from the REEport system that their grant template is available for editing. PDs must submit their project initiation in REEport in order to receive their funds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form Type</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Initiation</td>
<td>Submit as soon as notification of award recommendation is received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Report</td>
<td>Submit within 90 days AFTER the anniversary of the start date; continuation awards must submit within 90 days BEFORE anniversary of the start date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Report</td>
<td>Not required in REEport. SF-425 must be submitted via email to <a href="mailto:awards@nifa.usda.gov">awards@nifa.usda.gov</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>Submit within 90 days after the termination (end date) of the project. It may be submitted at any time to terminate the project.</td>
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Detailed explanation of Requirements and Due Dates:

**Project Initiation**
Submit this form as soon as the email notifies the PD to log into the REEport system to complete project initiation. While there is no due date for submission of the project initiation, PDs should be aware that they will not be awarded any funds until NIFA has received the project initiation via REEport.

**Progress Report**
This report may be submitted up to 90 days prior but not later than 90 days after the anniversary of the start date. Progress reports for continuation awards must be submitted within 90 days BEFORE the anniversary date in order to ensure continuity of funding. The anniversary date is always one year from the start date of the project (this start date is imported onto the REEport form from NIFA’s grant system.

**Project Financial Report**
Beginning in FY14, any Project Director of a new non-capacity award or any current award receiving a continuation or renewal of funds must submit a project Financial Report in REEport. This report is due
• **Events** include: conferences, demonstration sites, field days, symposia, workshops, and trainings.
• **Services** include: consulting, counseling, and tutoring.
• **Products** include: audio or video products; curricula; data or databases; equipment or instruments; models; networks and/or collaborations fostered by the project or activity; physical collections or resources, new animal germplasm, or genetic maps or sequences; software; technology, methods, or techniques; train-the-trainer manuals; website(s) with the appropriate URL(s); information, skills, and technology for individuals, communities, and programs; or students graduated in agricultural sciences.

**Accomplishments**

Note that at the beginning of this page you will see a listing of the “major goals of this project.” This listing is non-editable because it is prepopulated with what you entered as goals for the project in project initiation. Keep in mind that referring back to this listing is helpful when filling in the various fields on the accomplishments page, as anything reported on those fields should relate directly back to the goals of the project.

For the following open text boxes, the data entry limit is 8,000 characters; pictures, graphs, or charts are not accepted.

**Box #1: What was accomplished under these goals?**
This accomplishment section should reflect the results and conclusion of your work that will provide benefits to broad audiences. It is imperative that this portion of your report be written in plain, non-technical language. Please use qualitative and quantitative metrics that will be meaningful to non-scientific audiences such as community leaders, politicians, taxpayers, and farmers. You will need to translate results of your work into lay terms – things that everyday people can relate to. Consider reporting things like changes in economics, community dynamics, environmental conditions, or agricultural norms.

This box should include the details on the work done towards each objective and a description of the impact this project has had during this reporting period. To help frame your accomplishments for this PROGRESS REPORT, work through the following questions. After doing so, you should be able to put your answers together to form a succinct IMPACT DESCRIPTION that describes your accomplishments during the reporting period.

1. In a few sentences, what is the issue or problem that your project addresses (i.e.; what are you trying to help solve, fix, mitigate, improve?)

2. Who or what will be most immediately helped by your work, and how? (Hint: What audience did you originally intend for your work to impact?)

3. For each goal and objective listed in your project initiation form (shown at the top of the screen), describe for this reporting period:
   a) Major activities completed / experiments conducted;
   b) Data collected; and
   c) Summary statistics and discussion of results.

4. In a few sentences, what did your project do about this issue/problem during this reporting period? (HINT: Revisit your logic model’s inputs, outputs and outcomes to describe accomplishments)

Outcomes such as publications are not entered here, but in the Products section of this report

Note: Most people who will read your PROGRESS REPORT are not technically trained or educated in your field of expertise, so write it in a manner that is meaningful to readers, stakeholders, USDA administration, and congress.
Changes/Problems

Describe major changes and/or problems in the project, including the plan, approach, methods, timeline, and objectives. Include a clear reason(s) for why these changes were made. If applicable, provide special and/or additional reporting requirements specified in the award Terms and Conditions.

Examples of major changes include:

- major problems or delays that may have a significant impact on the rate of expenditure;
- significant deviations from the research schedule or goals;
- unexpected outcomes; or
- changes in approved protocols for the use or care of animals, human subjects, and/or biohazards encountered during the reporting period.
Submit Financial Reports

For each active year of a project, there are two types of financial reports due for competitively awarded projects: the **REEport Project Financial Report** and the **SF-425 Federal Financial Report**. These reports collect some financial data that are similar and some data that are specific to only that report.

**Due Dates**

It’s important to note that the two financial reports follow different timelines and have different due dates for reporting.

- **SF-425 Federal Financial Report**: Annually, within (and no later than) 90 days after the anniversary of the project start date.

The REEport Project Financial Report requires that you report funds expended and staff time (Scientist Year, Professional Years, Full Time Equivalents, etc.) according to the Federal Fiscal Year. A **REEport Project Financial Report is due by February 1 each year if the project was active for any period of time in the previous federal fiscal year.**

Example 1: If a project started on July 1, 2015, then it was active in FY15 for three months (July 1 through Sept 30, 2015). A REEport Project Financial Report would be due for that project by February 1, 2016; it would be expected that three months’ worth of financial expenditures and staff support be reported on that report. Remember: zero is a valid number to report if the project was only active a short period of time and no funds were spent.

Example 2: If a project’s original end date was September 30, 2014 but was extended to December 31, 2014, then that means the project was active for three months in FY15 (October through December 2014). This means that a REEport Project Financial Report would be due by February 1, 2016 covering the three months at the beginning of FY15 that the project was active.

*The SF-425 Federal Financial Report follows an annual reporting timeline based on the project start date. These reports are due annually and are always due within (and no later than) 90 days after the anniversary of the project start date.*

**Submit a REEport Project Financial Report**

The **REEport Financial REEport Manual** has been updated as of March, 2016 to include summary instructions for submitting financial reports for competitive awards. Please [consult the manual](#) for further instructions.
Submit an SF-425 Federal Financial Report

For each active year of a project, the Federal Financial Report (SF-425) for any non-capacity/competitively awarded grant must be submitted to the Awards Management Division at NIFA. The details of this report are outlined in the Terms & Conditions of your award. The report form can be found at https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms and should be emailed to awards@nifa.usda.gov.