

Land Grant

Report

2024-2025

Pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated Section 49-7-210(d), the Tennessee Higher Education Commission shall produce, as part of the Factbook each year, a report to the General Assembly detailing, the amount of any federal appropriations made to, and the amount of any matching funds received by, each federal land-grant institution of higher education in this state for each of the agricultural research, extension, education, and related programs established under:

- (1)** Section 1444 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. § 3221);
- (2)** Section 1445 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. § 3222);
- (3)** Sections 3(b) and (c) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. § 343); and
- (4)** The Hatch Act of 1887 (7 U.S.C. § 361a et seq.).

The commission's report:

- (1)** Must include the amount of any state appropriations made to each federal land-grant institution of higher education in this state for agriculture education; and
- (2)** May include any additional information that may assist the general assembly in providing equitable funding to each of the federal land-grant institutions of higher education in this state.

For the purposes of this report, THEC publishes the most recent five years of data available.

Tennessee Higher Education Commission

2024-25 Commission Members

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History of Tennessee's Land Grant Universities

The Morrill Land-Grant Act was introduced by Representative Justin Morrill (VT) and passed by President Abraham Lincoln in 1862. This Act provides land and funds to establish universities focused on practical education, teaching agriculture, military tactics, mechanic arts, and classical studies. The newly established institutions were envisioned as an opportunity to provide working-class families the necessary training to enter more sustainable careers. In Tennessee, the 1862 Morrill Act established the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

In 1890, the federal government passed the second Morrill Act. States with segregated land-grant institutions would be eligible to receive support for institutions serving only black students. The 1890 Morrill Act bestowed land-grant status to Tennessee State University, along with many other Historically Black Colleges and Universities. A third Morrill Act, enacted in 1994, granted land-grant status to Native American Tribal Colleges.ⁱ Tennessee has no tribal colleges and is therefore not a recipient of funds made available by the 1994 Morrill Act.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) offers capacity grants to support research and extension activities. The grant amounts are primarily distributed to land-grant institutions and are based on statutory formulas which include share of state population living in rural areas and percent of land dedicated to farming activity.ⁱⁱ Many of these grants—and all grants included in this report—require institutions provide matching funds from a non-federal source that are equal to or greater than the federal appropriation awarded. The non-federal source can be a singular source or collection of sources, like private organizations, state appropriations or county-level appropriations.

Funds Allocated to Land Grant Units

Total Capacity Grant Investment

The capacity grants of interest in this report are the Agriculture Extension Programs at 1890 Institutions, Agricultural Research at 1890 Land-Grant Institutions, the Smith-Lever Capacity Grant, the Hatch Act of 1887, and the McIntire-Stennis Capacity Grant. Federal guidelines generally require institutions garner a one-to-one match of federal and non-federal funds to comply with the requirements of these federal grant programs. In FY2023-24—the most recent verifiable year of federal data—Tennessee State University and University of Tennessee secured their required non-federal match funds and received their federal allocations of \$9.9 million and \$16.8 million, respectively. A summary of the most recent five years of federal appropriations, matching funds required, and status of the match requirement are outlined in the tables below.

Total TSU					
		Federal Appropriation	Matching Funds Required	State Appropriation	Match Met by State Allocation
FY 2020	TSU	\$7,739,919	\$7,739,919	\$8,674,200	Yes
FY 2021	TSU	\$8,423,669	\$8,423,669	\$8,675,700	Yes
FY 2022	TSU	\$9,030,699	\$9,030,699	\$10,931,000	Yes
FY 2023	TSU	\$9,968,812	\$9,968,812	\$11,281,900	Yes
FY 2024	TSU	\$9,965,426	\$9,965,426	\$11,391,200	Yes

Source: United States Department of Agriculture.

Total UT					
		Federal Appropriation	Matching Funds Required ¹	State Appropriation	Match Met by State Allocation
FY 2020	UT	\$16,506,016	\$16,520,955	\$69,369,000	Yes
FY 2021	UT	\$16,499,445	\$16,524,670	\$69,589,600	Yes
FY 2022	UT	\$16,594,069	\$16,626,147	\$74,769,500	Yes
FY 2023	UT	\$16,632,515	\$16,817,960	\$78,959,200	Yes
FY 2024	UT	\$16,581,281	\$16,803,568	\$84,042,300	Yes

Source: United States Department of Agriculture.

¹ Matching requirement for the Hatch Multistate Research fund is not a 1:1.

Section 1444 of the National Ag Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977

The Agriculture Extension Program at 1890 Land-Grant Institutions capacity grant supports agricultural and forestry extension activities at the 1890 land-grant institutions. This grant is limited to the 1890 land-grant institutions, statutorily excluding 1862 land-grant institutions like the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Recipients must receive a 100 percent match from non-federal sources or apply for, and receive, a waiver. The program supports practical, research-based educational opportunities aligned with statewide and local needs—often funding small- to medium-size farms and helping them place their products in local, national, and international markets. Funds also support training for minority farmers and landowners in acquiring capital, adopting new technologies, and improving financial efficiencies.ⁱⁱⁱ

Agricultural Extension Programs at 1890 Institutions (Section 1444)					
		Federal Appropriation	Matching Funds Required	State Appropriation	Match Met by State Allocation
FY 2020	TSU	\$3,533,996	\$3,533,996	\$3,703,500	Yes
FY 2021	TSU	\$3,845,373	\$3,845,373	\$3,705,200	No ^{1, 2}
FY 2022	TSU	\$4,032,199	\$4,032,199	\$5,865,100	Yes
FY 2023	TSU	\$4,459,777	\$4,459,777	\$6,082,100	Yes
FY2024	TSU	\$4,459,777	\$4,459,777	\$6,162,600	Yes

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, verified by Tennessee State University.

1- State allocation in FY 2021 was \$3,705,200. TSU met the remaining balance with salary and benefits matching funds from the 60 counties served under these federal funds.

2 - The Governor's proposed budget for FY 2021 included additional recurring investments of \$2 million in operating dollars and \$101,800 for salary increases for TSU's agricultural extension program, a total recommended allocation of \$5.8 million. This additional funding was removed from the finalized budget, along with all operating and salary increases identified for higher education, due to state revenue uncertainties during the COVID-19 pandemic. These dollars were reinstated in the FY 2022 budget with additional salary revenue, resulting in a total recurring FY 2022 appropriation of approximately \$5.9 million to the TSU Agricultural Cooperative Extension program.

Section 1445 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977

The Agriculture Research at 1890 Land-Grant Institutions, or Evans-Allen, capacity grants are intended to support agricultural research and ensure capital capacity necessary for conducting agricultural research at the 1890 land-grant institutions.^{iv} As with the Section 1444 grant, this grant is limited to the 1890 land-grant institutions, statutorily excluding 1862 land-grant institutions like the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Recipients of this grant must provide a 100 percent match from a non-federal source or apply for and receive a waiver.

Agricultural Research at 1890 Land-Grant Institutions (Section 1445)					
		Federal Appropriation	Matching Funds Required	State Appropriation	Match Met by State Allocation
FY 2020	TSU	\$4,080,845	\$4,080,845	\$4,771,800	Yes
FY 2021	TSU	\$4,446,307	\$4,446,307	\$4,771,600	Yes
FY 2022	TSU	\$4,872,681	\$4,872,681	\$4,858,100	No ¹
FY 2023	TSU	\$5,380,316	\$5,380,316	\$4,984,400	No ¹
FY 2024	TSU	\$5,373,448	\$5,373,448	\$5,004,000	No ¹

Source: United States Department of Agriculture.

1 – Remaining match requirement met with non-state funds.

Notes: Preliminary data show a federal appropriation for FY 2025 of \$5,377,108. Tennessee State University's Agricultural Research center received a \$1.0 million increase in recurring state investments in FY 2025, bringing total state appropriations to \$6,009,200 and ensuring TSU receives full match funding from the state for this grant for FY 2025 and beyond.

Sections 3(b) and 3(c) of the Smith-Lever Act

Sections 3(b) and 3(c) of the Smith-Lever Act provide grant funds to 1862 land-grant institutions to conduct agricultural extension work. This grant is limited to the 1862 land-grant institutions, excluding 1890 land-grant institutions like Tennessee State University. Recipients of this grant must provide a 100 percent match from a non-federal source or apply for and receive a waiver.^v

Smith-Lever Capacity Grant					
		Federal Appropriation	Matching Funds Required	State Appropriation	Match Met by State Allocation
FY 2020	UT	\$9,337,771	\$9,337,771	*	Yes
FY 2021	UT	\$9,319,169	\$9,319,169	*	Yes
FY 2022	UT	\$9,447,475	\$9,447,475	*	Yes
FY 2023	UT	\$9,575,512	\$9,575,512	*	Yes
FY 2024	UT	\$9,408,681	\$9,556,949	*	Yes

Source: United States Department of Agriculture

* Data on state appropriations for University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture are not available at the grant level. Total appropriations to University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture exceed the matching fund requirement for all relevant programs resulting in a 'Yes' for match met by state allocation.

The Hatch Act of 1887

The Hatch Act of 1887 funds programs at state agricultural experiment stations that conduct agricultural research that solve problems at local, state, regional, and national levels.

Potential research topics for experiment stations include soil and water conservation and use; plant and animal production, protection, and health; human nutrition; rural and community development; sustainable agriculture; molecular biology; and biotechnology.^{vi}

The Hatch Act of 1887 Multistate Research Fund supports institutions conducting research involving the partnership between a state agricultural experiment station and another state agricultural experiment station, the Agricultural Research Service, or a college or university to solve problems of concern to more than one state. This grant supports agricultural research efforts at 1862 land-grant institutions and state agricultural experiment stations.^{vii}

Both Hatch Act of 1887 grants require a match from a non-federal source and are granted primarily to 1862 land-grant institutions and state agricultural experiment stations, excluding 1890 land-grant institutions like Tennessee State University.

Hatch Act 1887					
		Federal Appropriation	Matching Funds Required	State Appropriation	Match Met by State Allocation
FY 2020	UT	\$5,161,268	\$5,161,268	*	Yes
FY 2021	UT	\$5,143,700	\$5,143,700	*	Yes
FY 2022	UT	\$5,146,539	\$5,146,539	*	Yes
FY 2023	UT	\$5,179,723	\$5,179,723	*	Yes
FY2024	UT	\$5,163,787	\$5,163,787	*	Yes

Source: United States Department of Agriculture

* Data on state appropriations for University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture are not available at the grant level. Total appropriations to University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture exceed the matching fund requirement for all relevant programs resulting in a 'Yes' for match met by state allocation.

The Hatch Act of 1887 (Multistate Research Fund)					
		Federal Appropriation	Matching Funds Required ²	State Appropriation	Match Met by State Allocation
FY 2020	UT	\$1,230,421	\$1,313,117	*	Yes
FY 2021	UT	\$1,231,696	\$1,313,861	*	Yes
FY 2022	UT	\$1,238,701	\$1,319,157	*	Yes
FY 2023	UT	\$1,248,530	\$1,333,318	*	Yes
FY 2024	UT	\$1,259,677	\$1,333,696	*	Yes

Source: United States Department of Agriculture

* Data on state appropriations for University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture are not available at the grant level. Total appropriations to University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture exceed the matching fund requirement for all relevant programs resulting in a 'Yes' for match met by state allocation.

² Matching requirement for the Hatch Multistate Research fund is not a 1:1.

McIntire-Stennis Capacity Grant

The McIntire-Stennis Capacity Grant provides funding to states that are leading forestry research and training of forest scientists. These scientists conduct research on managing land dedicated to crops and timber; improving conditions of water flow; protecting against floods and erosion; and protecting forest lands against fire, insects, diseases, or other destructive agents. Recipients of this grant must provide a 100 percent match from a non-federal source or apply for and receive a waiver. Both 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions are eligible to receive this grant.^{viii}

TSU - McIntire Stennis Capacity Grant					
		Federal Appropriation	Matching Funds Required	State Appropriation	Match Met by State Allocation
FY 2020	TSU	\$125,078	\$125,078	\$198,900	Yes
FY 2021	TSU	\$131,989	\$131,989	\$198,900	Yes
FY 2022	TSU	\$125,819	\$125,819	\$207,800	Yes
FY 2023	TSU	\$128,719	\$128,719	\$215,400	Yes
FY 2024	TSU	\$132,201	\$132,201	\$224,600	Yes

Source: United States Department of Agriculture

UT - McIntire-Stennis Capacity Grant					
		Federal Appropriation	Matching Funds Required	State Appropriation	Match Met by State Allocation
FY 2020	UT	\$708,779	\$708,799	*	Yes
FY 2021	UT	\$747,940	\$747,940	*	Yes
FY 2022	UT	\$712,976	\$712,976	*	Yes
FY 2023	UT	\$729,407	\$729,407	*	Yes
FY 2024	UT	\$749,136	\$749,136	*	Yes

Source: United States Department of Agriculture

* Data on state appropriations for University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture are not available at the grant level. Total appropriations to University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture exceed the matching fund requirement for all relevant programs resulting in a 'Yes' for match met by state allocation.

Current Funding of Land-Grant Institutions & Units

The state of Tennessee allocates funds to the units below which house each of the land-grant capacity funds requiring non-federal match funds.

	State Appropriations				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
UT Ag. Experiment Station	\$31,160,800	\$32,488,900	\$34,172,600	\$36,194,200	\$37,106,800
UT Ag. Extension Service	\$38,428,800	\$42,280,600	\$44,786,600	\$47,848,100	\$49,214,400
UT Total	\$69,589,600	\$74,769,500	\$78,959,200	\$84,042,300	\$86,321,200
TSU Institute of Ag. and Environmental Research	\$4,771,600	\$4,858,100	\$4,984,400	\$5,004,000	\$6,009,200
TSU Cooperative Extension	\$3,705,200	\$5,865,100	\$6,082,100	\$ 6,162,600	\$6,196,400
TSU McIntire-Stennis Forestry Research	\$198,900	\$207,800	\$215,400	\$224,600	\$228,400
TSU Total	\$8,675,700	\$10,931,000	\$11,281,900	\$11,391,200	\$12,434,000
Total Land-Grant Funding	\$78,265,300	\$85,700,500	\$90,241,100	95,433,500	\$98,755,200

Conclusion

This report presents a five-year history of land grant funding and matching funds received by the two land-grant institutions in Tennessee, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and Tennessee State University. In the aggregate, each institution has received state appropriations that exceed the required federal match over the past five years.

As outlined in this report, the land-grant program is made-up of distinct grants created for specific purposes. There are instances in the past five years where the state match requirements by grant were not met for Tennessee State University. More specifically, the state match was not met in FY2021 for the Agricultural Extension Programs (Section 1444), and in FY2022, FY2023, and FY2024 for the Agricultural Research (Section 1445) unit. The Tennessee budget calendar begins on July 1 each year, preceding the federal budget calendar which begins on October 1. The discrepancy in timing, as well as the unknown level of federal funding, creates challenges in providing the state ample information to meet the match each year during the state budget process.

Endnotes

ⁱ Land-grant university FAQ. (n.d.). The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU). Retrieved from <http://www.aplu.org/about-us/history-of-aplu/what-is-a-land-grant-university/>

ⁱⁱ Capacity grants. (n.d.). United State Department of Agriculture (USDA): National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Retrieved from <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/capacity-grants>

ⁱⁱⁱ Agricultural extension programs at 1890 institutions. (n.d.). United State Department of Agriculture (USDA): National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Retrieved from <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/agricultural-extension-programs-1890-institutions>

^{iv} Agricultural research at 1890 land-grant institutions. (n.d.). United State Department of Agriculture (USDA): National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Retrieved from <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/agricultural-research-1890-land-grant-institutions>

^v Smith-Lever Act capacity grant. (n.d.). United State Department of Agriculture (USDA): National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Retrieved from <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/smith-lever-act-capacity-grant>

^{vi} The Hatch Act of 1887. (n.d.). United State Department of Agriculture (USDA): National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Retrieved from <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/hatch-act-1887>

^{vii} The Hatch Act of 1887 (multistate research fund). (n.d.). United State Department of Agriculture (USDA): National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Retrieved from <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/hatch-act-1887-multistate-research-fund>

^{viii} McIntire-Stennis capacity grant. (n.d.). United State Department of Agriculture (USDA): National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Retrieved from <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/mcintire-stennis-capacity-grant>