(2) The need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields.

(b) In addition, when selecting non-government reviewers, the following factors will be considered:

(1) The need to include as reviewers other experts (*e.g.*, producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs;

(2) The need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (*e.g.*, colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations;

(3) The need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and

(4) The need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

(c) Authorized departmental officers will compile application reviews and recommend awards to OEPNU. OEPNU will make final award decisions.

§ 2903.13 Evaluation criteria.

(a) The following evaluation criteria will be used in reviewing applications submitted for the Biodiesel Fuel Education Program:

(1) Relevance of proposed project to current and future issues related to the production, use, distribution, fuel quality, and fuel properties of biodiesel, including:

(i) Demonstrated knowledge about markets, state initiatives, impacts on local economies, regulatory issues, standards, and technical issues;

(ii) Demonstrated knowledge about issues associated with developing a biodiesel infrastructure; and

(iii) Quality and extent of stakeholder involvement in planning and accomplishment of program objectives.

(2) Reasonableness of project proposal, including:

(i) Sufficiency of scope and strategies to provide a consistent message in keeping with existing standards and regulations;

(ii) Adequacy of Project Description, suitability and feasibility of methodology to develop and implement program;

(iii) Clarity of objectives, milestones, and indicators of progress;

(iv) Adequacy of plans for reporting, assessing and monitoring results over project's duration; and

(v) Demonstration of feasibility, and probability of success.

(3) Technical quality of proposed project, including:

(i) Suitability and qualifications of key project personnel;

(ii) Institutional experience and competence in providing alternative fuel education, including:

(A) Demonstrated knowledge about programs involved in alternative fuel research and education;

(B) Demonstrated knowledge about other fuels, fuel additives, engine performance, fuel quality and fuel emissions;

(C) Demonstrated knowledge about Federal, State and local programs aimed at encouraging alternative fuel use;

(D) Demonstrated ability in providing educational programs and developing technical programs; and

(E) Demonstrated ability to analyze technical information relevant to the biodiesel industry.

(iii) Adequacy of available or obtainable resources; and

(iv) Quality of plans to administer and maintain the project, including collaborative efforts, evaluation and monitoring efforts.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 2903.14 Conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

(a) During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. Determinations of conflicts of interest will be based on the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution. The program announcement will specify the methodology for determining such autonomy.

(b) Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be