

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition

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September 14, 2009

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Kingston, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Appropriations for FY-2010

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Kingston,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing research institutions, scientists, and other agriculture stakeholders, we urge you to support the \$295 million funding level for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), as passed by the Senate in its FY 2010 agriculture appropriations bill. This strong funding level is a critical step forward in supporting the nation's competitive agricultural research enterprise to ensure the United States' economic vitality and well-being of all Americans.

Greater investment in basic and applied agricultural research, education, extension, and integrated projects is essential to meeting the demand for a safer and more nutritious food supply. Moreover, with the nation and world seeking innovative solutions for climate change, sustainable food and fuel production, and ecosystem health, now is the time to renew public investment in agricultural research. The creation of AFRI by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 presents a major opportunity, along with other competitive programs, to magnify and enhance the breadth of our nation's agricultural research, education, and extension portfolio. The new priorities added by Congress under AFRI, including rural entrepreneurship, conventional (classical) plant and animal breeding, and domestic marketing strategies, including local and regional food systems, merit additional funding in order to maintain the high-quality, competitive research in all areas vital to U.S. agriculture.

Through the AFRI Coalition, the agricultural research community is united in our endorsement of the \$295 million included in the Senate FY 2010 appropriations bill. As you enter conference, we respectfully request that you support a stronger and more sustainable American food and agricultural system through maximum funding of AFRI.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact us if we may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

American Dairy Science Association
American Phytopathological Society
American Society for Horticultural Science
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Nutrition
American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Animal Science
Aquatic Plant Management Society
Biotechnology Industry Organization
Crop Science Society of America
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology
Federation of Animal Science Societies
Institute of Food Technologists
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
National Association of Plant Breeders
National Organic Coalition
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
North Central Weed Science Society
Northeastern Weed Science Society
Poultry Science Association
Society of Nematologists
Soil Science Society of America
Southern Weed Science Society
The Rodale Institute
Union of Concerned Scientists
Weed Science Society of America
Western Society of Weed Science