

Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR)

Investing in the Future of Agricultural Research:

Recognizing the current budgetary constraints, it is critical to maintain Federal investment in agricultural research. Given the important role food plays in national security and stability, U.S. producers face an enormous challenge of having to double production in order to feed 9 billion people in the coming decades. Currently, USDA's agricultural research budget is approximately \$3 billion which totals less than 10 percent of USDA's total budget. Significant reductions to USDA's research budget will threaten American producers' ability to increase farm productivity and meet the challenges of feeding a growing world. In order to maintain continued Federal investment in agricultural research, it is essential to develop an innovative solution. Establishing a Foundation for USDA's agricultural research agencies will support and advance that mission through soliciting and accepting private donations to fund research activities focused on key problems of national and international significance relating to:

- plant health, production, and products;
- animal health, production and products;
- food safety, nutrition and health;
- renewable energy, natural resources, and environment;
- agricultural and food security;
- agriculture systems and technology;

Precedent for the Foundation Model:

Examples of Congressionally mandated Foundation models across the Federal government include entities devoted to medical research, public health and safety, and natural resource conservation. The primary purpose of each Foundation is to support and advance the mission of its respective agency and foster new partnerships among stakeholders to generate and leverage new sources of funding for research and program priorities.

- Foundation for the National Institutes of Health
- Foundation for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
- National Forest Foundation
- Foundation for the Food & Drug Administration (Reagan-Udall Foundation)

Organization & Structure:

- Solicits and accepts private donations to award grants for collaborative public/private partnerships with scientists and entities including USDA, academia, non-profits, and the private sector.
- 501(c)3, non-profit corporation.
- Includes an appointed Board of Directors that represents the diverse sectors of agriculture.
- Incorporates accountability and transparency measures for good governance.

Benefits of the Legislation:

- Creates a centralized 21st century organization for the agricultural research community to identify, prioritize and address the most important needs facing a growing world.
- Complements the efforts of USDA basic and applied research activities while also addressing new and emerging agricultural research needs.
- Increases the effectiveness of taxpayer dollars by generating new sources of funding for agricultural research while ensuring that the investment in Federal agricultural research programs is maintained without relying entirely on Federal appropriations.
- Fosters new public/private partnerships among the agricultural research community – federal agencies, non-profit organizations, academia, corporations, individual donors, etc.