



American Society of Agronomy • Crop Science Society of America • Soil Science Society of America

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August 12, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

RE: Support for Implementing Recommendations from PCAST's Report to the President on Agricultural Preparedness and the Agriculture Research Enterprise

Dear Mr. President,

The American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA)¹ applaud your Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) for producing the timely “**Report to the President on Agricultural Preparedness and the Agriculture Research Enterprise.**” If America is to address the many challenges facing agriculture— Growing food in a changing climate; Managing the production of bioenergy; Producing safe and nutritious food; Assisting with global food security and maintaining abundant yield; Increasing the efficiency of water use; Reducing the environmental footprint of agriculture; Managing new pests, pathogens, and invasive plants—and remain competitive, there must be a reinvigoration of public investment in agricultural research which, in real (2006) dollars, decreased 8% from 2002 to 2009.

The ASA, CSSA, and SSSA therefore urge you to act expeditiously on the following recommendations from the Report:

1. Increase competitive funding for research, Extension, and educational programming in agriculture including, but not limited to, intra- and extramural USDA research (PCAST recommendation 1a), competitive grants through NIFA-AFRI (PCAST recommendation 1c), pre- and post-doctoral fellowships (PCAST recommendation 2), and research infrastructure (PCAST recommendation 3).
2. Increase the National Science Foundation (NSF) budget for basic science relevant to agriculture from \$120 million to \$250 million per year (PCAST recommendation 1b).
3. Create six large, multidisciplinary innovation institutes focused on emerging challenges to agriculture, supported by public-private partnerships at an initial new Federal

¹The American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) represent over 18,000 members in academia, industry, and government, and 12,500 Certified Crop Advisers, as the largest coalition of professionals dedicated to the agronomic, crop and soil science disciplines in the United States. ASA, CSSA, and SSSA are dedicated to developing innovative, science-based solutions to meet our growing food, fuel, feed, and fiber needs. With an ever expanding global population and increasing food demands, investment in food and agriculture research is essential to maintaining our nation's food, economic and national security.

investment of \$150 million per year to create six institutes at a funding level of \$25 million per year for no less than 5 years (PCAST recommendation 4).

4. Create a permanent, independent science advisory committee to advise the Chief Scientist of the USDA (part of PCAST recommendation 6).

The ASA, CSSA, and SSSA thank you for your consideration of our recommendations in response to the **PCAST's Report to the President on Agricultural Preparedness and the Agriculture Research Enterprise**. Given the ever-pressing challenges facing American agriculture in an increasingly competitive world, we urge you to expedite the establishment of an implementation committee and stand ready to work with you to achieve the vital outcome of an effective and responsive food and agricultural research, extension, and education enterprise.

Sincerely,



Sharon Clay
President
American Society
of Agronomy



Mark Brick
President
Crop Science Society
of America



David Lindbo
President
Soil Science Society
of America

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