



March 12, 2010

I'd like to thank PCAST for offering the Agronomy, Crop, and Soil Science Societies the opportunity to comment here today. Our comments this afternoon are related to the Administration's efforts towards food security, bioenergy, and climate change.

Food security is achieved when citizens have access to adequate, nutritious, and affordable food, which supports an active and healthy life. The challenge we are facing with relation to food supply is two-fold—requiring that we connect people to food and ensure that food is available, all while retaining our global natural resource base and protecting our environment. Because these factors are multidimensional, we find that the answers will not lie within any one science. Therefore, we request that within OSTP, a multi-disciplinary Food Security and Renewable Energy Advisory be established.

Related to bioenergy and biofuel feedstocks—we applaud the President's Biofuels Interagency Working Group report "Growing America's Fuels". We find that our nation's and the world's arable lands are under immense and unprecedented pressure to produce both food crops and biofuel feedstocks, while also providing wildlife habitat and enhancing water, soil, and air quality. Because of the importance and overlapping dynamics of these issues, we suggest that a Food Security and Renewable Energy Subcommittee be established within the Committee on Science in the NSTC. This subcommittee would help guide coordination between the agricultural food and energy sectors to ensure balanced production of food, feed, fuel and fiber worldwide.

Our final point today relates to climate change. Soil moisture measurements and estimates are one of the most important parameters used to predict and verify climate change models. Therefore, the Agronomy, Crop, and Soil Science Societies strongly suggest that the efforts to develop methods to predict and monitor this important parameter be coordinated among federal departments, agencies, and foundations. Without coordination, America will not be able to attain the level of accuracy we need as a nation to implement adaptive management necessary to plan for new measures to adjust to changing weather patterns or extreme events.

Thank you for your time.