

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman, Senate Agriculture, Nutrition,
and Forestry Committee

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member, Senate Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry Committee

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman, Senate Appropriations
Committee

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chairman, Senate Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug
Administration, and Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee

The Honorable John Hoeven
Ranking Member, Senate Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug
Administration, and Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

As organizations concerned about the future of food and agricultural science, the undersigned are writing to express our support for the *America Grows Act of 2021* (S.____), a bipartisan bill Senators Durbin and Moran have recently introduced that would significantly increase our nation's investment in agricultural research and development.

Food and agriculture remain a pillar of the U.S. economy, accounting for nearly \$3 trillion of our GDP, 1 in 6 jobs, and a significant contribution to our nation's trade balance at more than \$155 trillion in export value. As the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed vulnerabilities of our agriculture and food system, and the increasing occurrence of natural disasters that harm harvests and production, agricultural research is a critical solution for our nation's economic and national security. Thanks to the U.S. government's extraordinary leadership and commitment to agricultural research and development since 1862, our agriculture sector is the most productive in the world, providing Americans with safe, affordable, and abundant food.

The public return on investment for agricultural research is significant, estimated at \$17 to \$1. Yet U.S. funding in this area has declined in real dollars since 2003 while other forms of domestic research have risen dramatically. The *America Grows Act* would help reverse this dangerous trend by reinvesting in our nation's scientists and producers and helping reassert U.S. research leadership on the global stage. Modeled after the successful *21st Century Cures Act* passed in 2016, which spurred additional funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the *America Grows Act* appropriates a 5% inflation-adjusted annual increase for the next 10 years for agricultural research in the following USDA agencies:

- Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
- Economic Research Service (ERS)
- National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

- National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

The timing for the *America Grows Act* could not be better. Investments in research are critical in addressing production, nutrition, food security, and other major challenges across the U.S. food and agricultural sector. Farm cash receipts from crop and livestock sales are at their lowest point since 2016, and USDA projects that farm income will decline 8% in 2021. Our nation’s producers are facing pest, disease, and severe weather challenges that research can solve.

Thank you for your consideration and your hard work on behalf of agriculture and agricultural research. We look forward to working with you to advance the *America Grows Act*. This legislation represents a crucial step in meeting the vital needs of our nation’s producers and consumers while retaining our status as the world leader in agricultural innovation.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics	American Phytopathological Society (APS)	Association of 1890 Research Directors
AFRI Coalition	American Pulse Association	Association of American Universities
Agricultural and Applied Economics Association	American Seed Trade Association	Association of Northeast Extension Directors (NEED)
Agricultural Retailers Association	American Society for Horticultural Science	Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities
American Association for the Advancement of Science	American Society for Microbiology	Association of Southern Region Extension Directors
American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases	American Society for Nutrition	The Breakthrough Institute
American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges	American Society of Agronomy	Brooks Tropicals, LLC
American Dairy Science Association	American Society of Animal Science	Charles V. Riley Memorial Foundation
American Farm Bureau Federation	American Society of Plant Biologists	College of Agricultural Sciences, Penn State University
American Malting Barley Association	American Statistical Association	Colorado State University
American Phytopathological Society	American Veterinary Medical Association	Consumer Federation of America
	Aquatic Plant Management Society	Corn Refiners Association
	Arizona Farm Bureau	

Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences	IR-4 Project	National Barley Improvement Committee
Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST)	Kansas State University	National Cattlemen's Beef Association
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics	Kauffman's Animal Health	National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
Crop Science Society of America	Michigan State University	National Corn Growers Association
Ecological Society of America	Michigan State University AgBioResearch	National Cotton Council
Entomological Society of America	Midwest Poultry Consortium	National Farmers Union
Eversole Associates	Minnesota Canola Council	National Grange
Experiment Station on Organization & Policy (ESGOP)	Montana State University	National Milk Producers Federation
Farm Journal Foundation	Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals Multistate Initiative	National Pork Producers Council
FASS	National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization	National Sunflower Association
The Fertilizer Institute	National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance	National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
Friends of ARS Coalition	National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science	National Turfgrass Federation (NTF)
Fort Valley State University	National Association of Forest Resources Programs	National WIC Association
Hop Growers of America	National Association of Plant Breeders	New York Farm Bureau
Hop Growers of Washington	National Association of State Departments of Agriculture	North American Millers' Association
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy	National Barley Growers Association	North Carolina State University
Institute of Food Technologists		North Central Regional Association of Agricultural

Experiment Station Directors (NCRA)	Soil and Water Conservation Society	University of Maryland
North Central Weed Science Society	Soil Science Society of America	University of Nebraska
Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA)	South Dakota State University	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Northeastern Weed Science Society	Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors	University of Wyoming
Oklahoma State University	Southern Weed Science Society	US Canola Association
Oregon State University	Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) Foundation	US Dairy Forage Research Center Stakeholder Committee
Plant Based Products Council	Union of Concerned Scientists	US Dry Bean Council
Pollinator Partnership	United States Cattlemen's Association	USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
Poultry Science Association	The University of California System	USA Rice
Robinson Oak Lea Farm	University of California, Davis	Virginia Farm Bureau Federation
Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Delaware	Weed Science Society of America
Rural & Agriculture Council of America	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
Society for Range Management		Western Society of Weed Science

CC: The Honorable Richard Durbin
Democratic Whip

The Honorable Jerry Moran