

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition

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September 26, 2011

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
S-128 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
S-146A Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Herb Kohl
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture Appropriations
U.S. Senate
330 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture Appropriations
U.S. Senate
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye, Chairman Kohl, Ranking Member Cochran and Ranking Member Blunt:

The AFRI Coalition, comprised of organizations representing research institutions, scientific societies, and other agricultural stakeholders, writes to thank you for your commitment to continued investment in the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) in fiscal year 2012. AFRI is the nation's premier competitive agricultural research grants program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

The Coalition is grateful that the Senate Appropriations Committee has prioritized \$266 million for AFRI in fiscal year 2012 given the difficult economic environment and the many competing priorities with which you are faced. We understand that AFRI may still be subject to detrimental losses as the House-passed bill includes a harmful \$35.5 million cut. The Coalition is urging the House to recede to the Senate's funding level and we ask that you continue to support AFRI.

The Coalition exhorts lawmakers to make sustainable increases in funding for AFRI as the U.S. economy recovers. For every \$1 invested in publicly funded agricultural research, \$20 in economic activity is generated. Investments in agricultural research funded through AFRI bolster work performed by USDA's Agricultural Research Service, land grant universities and colleges, other academic institutions, and the private sector, thus magnifying the impact.

Again, thank you for your stalwart support of AFRI. The Coalition recognizes that lawmakers have many difficult decisions to make, especially in this austere budget environment. If you would like to learn more about AFRI or specific funding in each state, please contact us at sciencepolicy@sciencesocieties.org.

Sincerely,
American Society of Animal Science
American Society for Horticultural Science
American Society for Nutrition
American Phytopathological Society
American Veterinary Medical Association
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Federation of Animal Science Societies
Institute of Food Technologists
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
Poultry Science Association