

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 17, 2013

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chair, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies  
2362-A Rayburn Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Farr  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member Farr:

As you draft the Fiscal Year 2014 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we ask you to invest in organic agriculture by funding key programs that underpin the sector's strong growth at the levels needed in order to make them successful. The organic agriculture sector is a growing industry that keeps over 14,500 American family farmers on the land, profitably producing food that is increasing in demand. After experiencing double-digit growth for a decade, the sector continues to experience positive growth during the economic downturn and grew by over 10% in 2012 to \$35 billion.

Ensuring the continued growth of organic agriculture requires continuing the modest but important federal investment in organic agriculture. There is a critical set of national programs that work synergistically to provide the research, information, and regulatory oversight so that the industry can flourish. These programs are:

- **Organic Transitions Integrated Research Program (ORG)**  
ORG is a competitive research, education, and extension program that funds research that organic farmers need to improve and increase production. Funding ORG at this level would help bridge the gap between organic sector growth and research investment at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- **National Organic Program (NOP)**  
NOP enforces the national organic program standards, accredits certifiers, develops equivalency agreements, handles complaints – in essence, NOP performs regulatory oversight of the organic label, ensuring its integrity. Funding NOP at this level would ensure that NOP keeps pace with the sector's strong growth.
- **Organic Production and Market Data Initiatives (ODI)**  
ODI is a multi-agency organic data collection initiative that collects information vital to maintaining stable markets, creating risk management tools, and negotiating equivalency agreements with foreign governments. Funding ODI at this level would allow for continued price data collection and dissemination through Market News Reports.

- **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SARE)**


SARE has helped turn farmer-driven research, education, and extension initiatives into profitable and environmentally sound practices for over two decades. Funding the program at this level would jumpstart the Federal-State Matching Grants program and continues important on-farm research.

Funds invested in organic agriculture programs have accounted for less than one percent of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's budget in recent years, but the return on that investment has been substantial. Unfortunately, the Farm Bill extension legislation passed by Congress earlier this year excluded funding for all organic Farm Bill programs. This unfortunate circumstance places an even higher priority on discretionary funding sources for the programs of importance to the organic sector. Organic agriculture is a growing industry that provides jobs throughout the supply chain – from farm fields to Main Street businesses. We ask that you support its growth by funding the programs listed above at the requested levels.

Sincerely,



Peter DeFazio  
Member of Congress



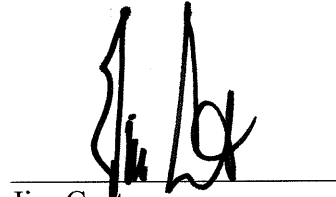
Richard Hanna  
Member of Congress



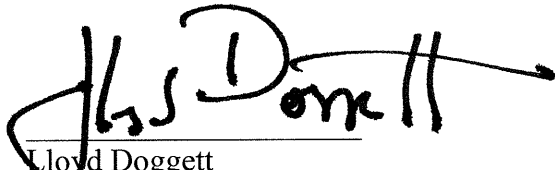
Ron Kind  
Member of Congress



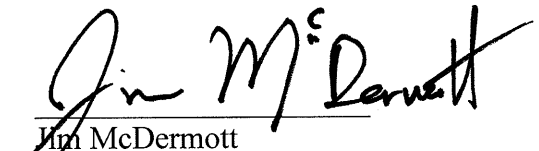
William Owens  
Member of Congress



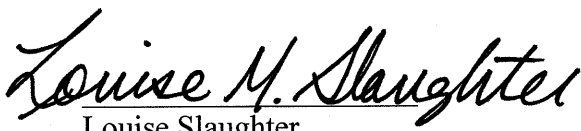
Jim Costa  
Member of Congress




Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress



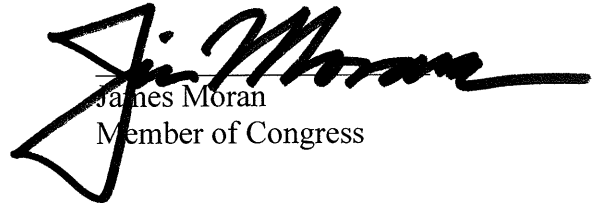
Louise Slaughter  
Member of Congress



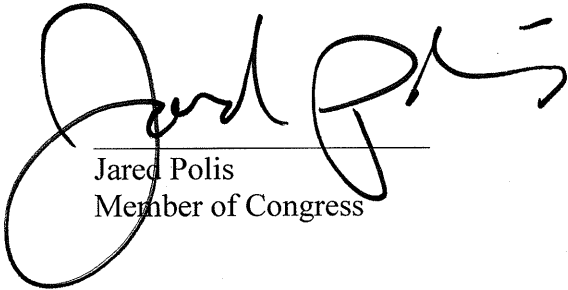
Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



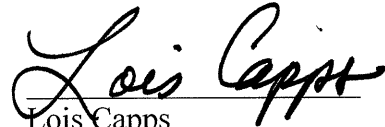
Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



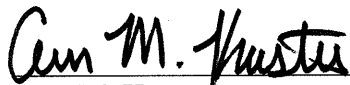
James Moran  
Member of Congress



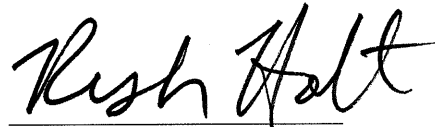
Jared Polis  
Member of Congress



Lois Capps  
Member of Congress



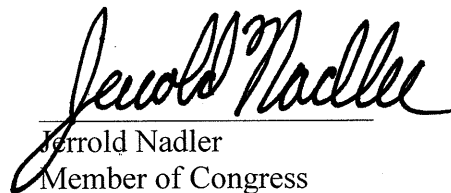
Ann M. Kuster  
Member of Congress



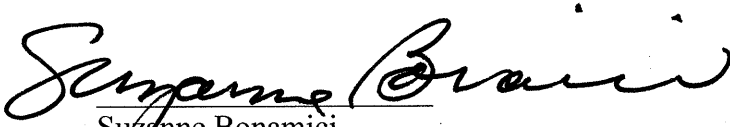
Rush Holt  
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress



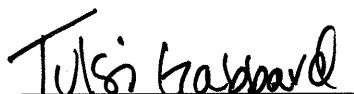
Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



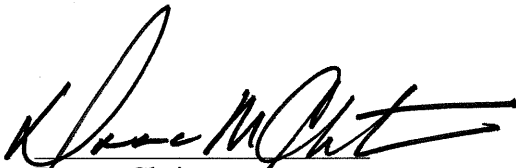
Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress



Tulsi Gabbard  
Member of Congress

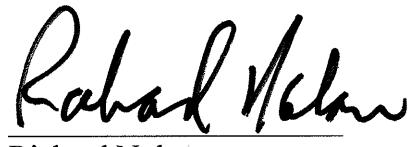


Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



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Donna Christensen  
Member of Congress



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Richard Nolan  
Member of Congress



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Judy Chu  
Member of Congress