

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
Chairman, Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and  
Forestry Committee

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Ranking Member, Senate Agriculture,  
Nutrition, and Forestry Committee

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman, Senate Appropriations  
Committee

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

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

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

As organizations concerned about the future of food and agricultural science, the undersigned are writing to show our support for the *America Grows Act* (S.2458), a bill Senator Durbin has 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 \$1 trillion of our GDP, 1 in 10 jobs, and a significant contribution to our nation's trade balance. Our nation has long understood the critical role agriculture and our food system play in our 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 \$20 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 *21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act* passed in 2016, which spurred additional funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the *America Grows Act* authorizes a five percent inflation-adjusted annual increase for the next five years for agricultural research in the following USDA agencies:

- National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
- Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
- Economic Research Service (ERS)
- National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

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. USDA projected 2019 net-farm income to be half that of 2013. An unusually wet spring has led to flooding and one of the latest planting seasons on record for much of the Midwest. 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,

AFRI Coalition	American Society for Nutrition	College of Agricultural Sciences, Penn State University
Agricultural and Applied Economics Association	American Society of Agronomy	Consumer Federation of America
Agricultural Retailers Association	American Society of Animal Science	Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST)
American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases	American Society of Plant Biologists	Crop Science Society of America
American Dairy Science Association	American Veterinary Medical Association	Entomological Society of America
American Farm Bureau Federation	Aquatic Plant Management Society	Eversole Associates
American Malting Barley Association	Association of 1890 Research Directors	Experiment Station on Organization & Policy (ESCOP)
American Phytopathological Society	Association of American Universities	Farm Journal Foundation
American Phytopathological Society (APS)	Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges	FASS
American Pulse Association	Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities	Friends of ARS Coalition
American Society for Horticultural Science	Brooks Tropicals, LLC	Fort Valley State University
American Society for Microbiology	Charles V. Riley Memorial Foundation	Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research

Institute of Food Technologists	National Cotton Council	Soil and Water Conservation Society
IR-4 Project	National Farmers Union	Soil Science Society of America
Kauffman's Animal Health	National Grange	Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
Michigan State University AgBioResearch	National Pork Producers Council	Southern Weed Science Society
Midwest Poultry Consortium	National Sunflower Association	Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) Foundation
Minnesota Canola Council	National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition	Union of Concerned Scientists
Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals Multistate Initiative	National Turfgrass Federation (NTF)	United States Cattlemen's Association
National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance	North Central Regional Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NCRA)	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science	North Central Weed Science Society	US Canola Association
National Association of Plant Breeders	Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA)	US Dairy Forage Research Center Stakeholder Committee
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture	Northeastern Weed Science Society	US Dry Bean Council
National Barley Growers Association	Pollinator Partnership	USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
National Barley Improvement Committee	Poultry Science Association	Weed Science Society of America
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research	Robinson Oak Lea Farm	Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
National Corn Growers Association	Rural & Agriculture Council of America	Western Society of Weed Science
	Society for Range Management	

CC: The Honorable Richard Durbin  
Senate Minority Whip