

August 21, 2018

The Honorable Michael Conaway  
Chairman  
House Committee on Agriculture  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Agriculture  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts, Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Stabenow, and Ranking Member Peterson:

As you work toward a conference agreement for the 2018 Farm Bill, the below 37 undersigned organizations write to encourage your robust support for the agricultural research, extension and education enterprise. We are appreciative that both the House and Senate have recognized the importance of research throughout the Farm Bill process. While there are a number of important research provisions in both the House and Senate versions of the Farm Bill, we specifically applaud the efforts in the Senate's Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 to recognize the valuable role of research in the US food and agricultural sector, as both a way to foster innovation and mitigate risk.

The Senate's Farm Bill Research Title (Title VII) would make significant and needed federal investments in agricultural research through both mandatory and discretionary USDA programs. These funding increases are critical to advancing scientific discovery and spurring technology that will propel U.S. agriculture and ensure our nation's food security and global competitiveness.

Mandatory dollars are provided for specialty crop, organics, and biomass research, as well as providing the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) additional funding to ensure the continued development of public-private partnerships that address agricultural grand challenges. Some of the new investments proposed include programs focused on urban agriculture and agricultural education and workforce. The Senate's bill would also create a new advanced research and development authority within USDA with flexibility to work with other federal agencies and private entities to advance food defense and specialty crop research.

These are just a few of the many vital programs the Senate's Research Title would support. To ensure our country remains at the forefront of agricultural innovation, increased investment, as represented through the Senate's Title VII, is imperative. Please support these critical programs through the Farm Bill conference process.

Signed:

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Phytopathological Society  
American Samoa Community College  
American Society for Nutrition  
American Society of Agronomy  
American Society of Plant Biologists  
Aquatic Plant Management Society

Association of 1890 Research Directors, Inc.  
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges  
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Michigan State University  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Iowa State University  
Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences  
Crop Science Society of America  
Ecological Society of America  
Entomological Society of America  
Farm Journal Foundation  
Institute of Food Technologists  
National Association of Plant Breeders  
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture  
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research  
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
National Turfgrass Federation  
Northeastern Weed Science Society  
Organic Farming Research Foundation  
Pollinator Partnership  
Purdue University  
SoAR Foundation  
Soil Science Society of America  
Southern Weed Science Society  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
University of Georgia  
University of Nevada, Reno  
University of New Hampshire  
Weed Science Society of America  
Western Society of Weed Science