April 4, 2019

The Honorable John Hoeven
Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies
129 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies
190 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Fortenberry
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hoeven, Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Merkley, and Ranking Member Fortenberry:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to request your support for **$40 million** in appropriations for the Agricultural Genome to Phenome Initiative. This new initiative was established in the 2018 Farm Bill and recognizes the critical need for increased federal investment to advance genomics in agriculturally important plant and animal species.

It is widely acknowledged that obtaining phenotype information is a major limiting step in converting genomic information into useful improvements in agriculturally important species. Significant research is needed to fully characterize the phenotypes, which are collectively known as the "phenome" of our major crop and livestock species. Understanding the relationships between genes and trait phenotypes will eventually allow farmers and ranchers to enhance production by identifying optimal combinations of genetics and management practices. The Agricultural Genomes to Phenomes Initiative will develop tools and knowledge to allow for the analysis of phenotypes across a diverse array of agriculturally important species, and help individual farmers make better management decisions and achieve higher stable productivity.

Investments in the Agricultural Genome to Phenome Initiative will support:

- Studying agriculturally significant crops and animals in production environments to achieve sustainable and secure agricultural production.
- Ensuring that current gaps in existing knowledge of agricultural crop and animal genetics and phenomics are filled.

- Identifying and developing a functional understanding of relevant genes from agriculturally important animals and crops.
- Ensuring future genetic improvement of crops and animals of importance to the agriculture sector of the United States.
- Studying the relevance of diverse germplasm as a source of unique genes that may be of importance in the future.
- Enhancing genetics to reduce the economic impact of pathogens on crops and animals of importance to the agriculture sector of the United States;

We respectfully request that **$40 million** be appropriated for the Agricultural Genome to Phenome program in fiscal year 2020 to support this important work. Please let us know if you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance as the FY 2020 appropriations process moves forward.

Sincerely,

American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases

American Dairy Coalition

American Dairy Science Association

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Feed Industry Association

American Sheep Industry Association

American Society of Animal Science

American Society of Plant Biologists

American Veterinary Medical Association

Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges

Cornell University

FASS

Indiana Dairy Producers

Indiana State Poultry Association

Iowa Corn Growers Association

Iowa State University

Michigan Agri-Business Association

Michigan Pork Producers Association

Michigan Sheep Producers Association

Minnesota Pork Producers Association

Mississippi Poultry Association

Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals Multistate Initiative

National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science

National Corn Growers Association

National Dairy Herd Improvement Association

National Grain and Feed Association

National Milk Producers Federation

National Pork Producers Council

National Turkey Federation

Nebraska Cattlemen

Ohio Pork Council

Penn State University

University of Minnesota

University of Wisconsin-Madison

US Dairy Forage Research Center Stakeholder Committee