

June 13, 2023

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Chairwoman, Senate Agriculture, Nutrition,  
and Forestry Committee

The Honorable John Boozman  
Ranking Member, Senate Agriculture, Nutrition,  
and Forestry Committee

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chairwoman, Senate Appropriations  
Committee

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chairman, Senate Appropriations  
Committee

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

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

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members,

As organizations concerned about the future of food and agricultural science, the undersigned are writing to express our support for the America Grows Act of 2023 (S.1628), a bipartisan bill Senators Durbin and Moran have 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 \$3 trillion of our GDP, 1 in 6 jobs, and a significant contribution to our nation's trade balance at more than \$155 trillion in export value. 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. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, emerging plant and animal pests and diseases, the increasing occurrence of natural disasters that impact farmer profitability, and increasing competition from other countries have exposed vulnerabilities in our agriculture and food system that innovation can help solve.

Although the public return on investment for agricultural research is significant, estimated at \$20 for every dollar spent, U.S. funding in this area has declined by 30 percent in real dollars since 2003 according to USDA, to roughly \$5.2 billion, while other forms of domestic research have risen dramatically. At the same time, China has ramped up spending to more than \$10 billion a year on public agriculture research as they seek to help their farmers better compete with U.S. producers. 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 21st Century Cures Act passed in 2016 which spurred additional funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the America Grows Act appropriates a 5% inflation-adjusted annual increase for the next 10 years for agricultural research in the following USDA agencies:

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

Agriculture has always been a bipartisan issue. As Congress comes together to negotiate the next Farm Bill and USDA begins to implement its 2023-2026 Science and Research Strategy to meet ambitious targets, the timing for the America Grows Act could not be better. Now is the time for Congress to commit to investments in agricultural research which are critical in improving productivity and nutrition, ensuring animal disease preparedness and addressing other major challenges across the U.S. food and agricultural sector which threaten our affordable, safe food supply, farmers' livelihoods and national security. 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.

Thank you for your consideration and your hard work on behalf of U.S. agriculture. We look forward to working with you to advance the America Grows Act.

Sincerely,

2 Blades

Agricultural & Applied Economics Association  
Alliance to End Hunger  
American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases  
American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges  
American Dairy Science Association  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Institute of Biological Sciences  
American Phytopathological Society  
American Seed Trade Association  
American Society for Microbiology  
American Society for Nutrition  
American Society of Agronomy  
American Society of Animal Science  
American Society of Plant Biologists  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
Animal Health Institute  
Aquatic Plant Management Society  
Association of 1890 Research Directors  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Bipartisan Policy Center Act  
BPC Action  
Bread for the World

Carbon180  
Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST)  
CropLife America  
Crop Science Society of America  
Earthjustice  
Ecological Society of America  
Entomological Society of America  
FASS  
Farm Journal Foundation  
FMI The Food Industry Association  
Glenn Family Farm  
LSU AgCenter  
Martinez Orchards  
Michigan State University AgBioResearch  
Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals – Multistate Initiative  
National Association of Plant Breeders  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research  
National Farmers Union  
National Grange  
National Grape Research Alliance  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Sorghum Producers  
National Sunflower Association  
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
National Turfgrass Federation  
New York Farm Bureau  
North Central Weed Science Society  
Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA)  
Northeastern Weed Science Society  
NY Wine Policy Institute  
Opportunity International  
Organic Farming Research Foundation  
PepsiCo  
Soil Science Society of America  
Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors  
Southern Weed Science Society  
Spark Climate Solutions  
St. James Winery  
Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) Foundation  
Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council  
The Breakthrough Institute  
The Good Food Institute  
Turfgrass Producers International

U.S. Canola Association  
University of Florida  
US Dairy Forage Research Center Stakeholder Committee  
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council  
Washington Winegrowers  
Weed Science Society of America  
Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors  
Western Society of Weed Science