

February 26, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Andy Harris
Chair
Subcommittee on Agriculture
House Committee on Appropriations
1536 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Hoeven
Chair
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Senate Committee on Appropriations
338 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
House Committee on Appropriations
2407 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Senate Committee on Appropriations
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: FY 2027 302(b) Allocation—Support a Robust Allocation for the Agriculture Appropriations Bill

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the undersigned stakeholders representing food and agriculture organizations, we write to urge you to provide a robust FY 2027 allocation for the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

USDA-funded research is a core driver of American agricultural strength. It helps producers reduce input costs, raise yields, manage pests and disease, improve soil and water efficiency, and bring innovations to market faster. These outcomes translate into **greater farm profitability, stronger rural communities, and lower food prices for American families**. In short: USDA research advances the practical, applied science that keeps U.S. agriculture competitive and our food supply abundant.

However, the Agriculture Appropriations bill has too often received an allocation that does not keep pace with real-world costs or national needs. When the topline is constrained, USDA's research mission is forced into a zero-sum exercise: unavoidable increases—personnel, facilities, inflation, and other fixed costs—inevitably squeeze funding available for on-the-ground research, extension, and innovation. This erosion is rarely sudden, but it is persistent, and it undermines the very programs that deliver measurable value to producers and consumers.

A stronger FY 2027 allocation is essential to protect and grow the USDA research enterprise, including:

- **Agricultural Research Service (ARS):** conducts intramural research that develops solutions producers can use immediately—new crop varieties, pest and disease control strategies, and production practices that lower costs and improve resilience.
- **National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA):** administers competitive and capacity programs that fuel innovation through land-grant universities and partners in every state.
 - **Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI):** USDA's premier competitive grants program, supporting cutting-edge research and technology development.
 - **Capacity funds (Hatch, Evans-Allen, McIntire-Stennis) and Extension support (Smith-Lever):** the backbone of the land-grant system that translates research into practical tools for producers and rural businesses.
- **Economic Research Service (ERS) and National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS):** develop reliable, objective data and analysis that help farmers, agribusinesses, lenders, and policymakers make informed decisions—reducing uncertainty and supporting efficient markets.

These programs are not abstract - this bill contains critical accounts that have been squeezed in recent years. We need your leadership to drive the nation's status as the global leader in agricultural, food, and nutrition innovation. Doing so promotes real-world outcomes and budgetary impacts that provide benefits to all American citizens: supporting new uses and new markets, keeping food costs down, and stronger private-sector preparedness, underpinning our national security. Research that expands markets, improves animal health, strengthens biosecurity, and reduces crop losses is far less expensive than responding to widespread outbreaks, severe shortages, or emergency market disruptions.

A robust FY 2027 allocation for the Agriculture bill will also help address the challenges producers are currently facing: volatile input costs, global competition, supply chain disruptions, and the increasing threat of pests, pathogens, and invasive species. Continued underinvestment diminishes the effectiveness of USDA programs, slowing the development and deployment of technologies and practices that can reduce costs at the farm gate and keep food affordable.

Our request is straightforward: as you develop FY 2027 302(b) allocations and advance the Agriculture appropriations bill, we urge you to consider we are operating largely at FY 2023

levels, not even adjusted for inflation. We urge you to provide a strong topline that prevents continued erosion of USDA research and ensures these high-value programs can meet the needs of producers and consumers, putting us back on track to best compete in the global food and agriculture system.

We appreciate your leadership and your commitment to rural America. We stand ready to work with you and your staff to provide additional information and to highlight how USDA research investments deliver practical results for farmers, ranchers, foresters, and the American public.

Sincerely,

2Blades

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

agInnovation North Central

agInnovation Northeast

agInnovation South

agInnovation West

Alliance to End Hunger

American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases

American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges

American Dairy Science Association

American Institute of Biological Sciences

American Meat Science Association

American Seed Trade Association

American Society for Horticultural Science

American Society for Nutrition

American Society of Agronomy

American Society of Plant Biologists

American Soybean Association

Animal Health Institute

Carbon180

Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST)

Crop Science Society of America

Entomological Society of America

Farm Journal Foundation

Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB)

Friends of the USDFRC

Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station

Michigan State University AgBioResearch

Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals - Multistate Initiative

National Association of Wheat Growers

National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research

National Corn Growers Association

National Cotton Council of America
NC State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs)
North Dakota State University
Organic Farming Research Foundation
Soil and Water Conservation Society
Soil Science Society of America
Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council
The Breakthrough Institute
The Good Food Institute
World Coffee Research