

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 Malting Barley Association
 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
 APLU Extension Committee on Organization and Policy
 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 Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Barley Growers Association
National Barley Improvement Committee
National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy (NCFAP)
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
National Corn Growers Association
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