

March 1, 2021

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

The Honorable Jeff Fortenberry
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
House Committee on Appropriations
1514 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Senate Committee on Appropriations
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Chairman Bishop, Chairwoman Baldwin, Ranking Member Fortenberry and Ranking Member Hoeven:

As your committees consider Appropriations for the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for Fiscal Year 2022, we respectfully request full funding for the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AgARDA), authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill.

Now more than ever, funding for agricultural research is of vital importance. Over the last year, the food and agriculture sector has faced unprecedented disruption that has had rippling effects across our entire supply chain as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding AgARDA will be instrumental to overcome gaps in the stability of the U.S. food system, and it will help the United States maintain a position of global leadership when new challenges, or science and engineering opportunities, emerge.

AgARDA's authorizing legislation aims to quickly and definitively tackle some of the biggest challenges in food and agriculture, from climate change, to production mechanization, to zoonotic diseases. AgARDA's specialized statutory hiring authorities and contracting vehicles, combined with the strategic planning, coordination and consultation, allows significant achievements to occur more rapidly than in a conventional setting. Leveraging this model will serve to boost economic recovery, kickstarting new ventures and creating new career opportunities in the agricultural sector.

As we have learned all too well from recent human, animal, and plant health crises, ranging from COVID-19 to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, the United States must be prepared to respond rapidly to outbreaks by leveraging public-private partnerships, improving efficiency and accelerating research and development for critical technologies. AgARDA, which is modeled after the successes of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), will foster research and development that will help the U.S. food and agriculture value chain better prepare for future pandemics and respond more efficiently.

Extreme weather events caused by continued changes to climate represent a real, long-term threat to our ability to maintain a domestic food supply. Innovative research funded by AgARDA will not only

improve biosecurity but also advance climate smart technologies and production practices that put U.S. farmers in the driver seat to address challenges related to climate change.

As Congress looks for ways to combat the health, economic, and climate crises Americans currently face, we urge you to fund the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority pilot at the authorized level of \$50 million. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases
American Dairy Coalition
American Dairy Science Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Seed Trade Association
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Animal Science
American Society of Plant Biologists
American Society for Microbiology
American Soybean Association
Association of American Universities
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
California Citrus Mutual
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Table Grape Commission
Colorado State University
Corn Refiners Association
Crop Science Society of America
Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative
Entomological Society of America
FASS
Florida Tomato Exchange
Iowa State University
Kansas State University
Michigan State University, AgBioResearch
Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals – Multistate Initiative
National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Coalition for Food & Agricultural Research
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
National Turkey Federation
North American Meat Institute
Pet Food Institute
Plant Based Products Council
Produce Marketing Association

Rochester Institute of Technology
Rural & Agriculture Council of America
Society for Range Management
Soil Science Society of America
Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) Foundation
Union of Concerned Scientists
United Fresh Produce Association
United States Cattlemen's Association
Western Growers

cc:

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
The Honorable Richard Shelby
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
The Honorable Kay Granger