

March 6, 2023

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Chairwoman  
Senate Agriculture Committee

The Honorable John Boozman  
Ranking Member  
Senate Agriculture Committee

The Honorable Glenn “GT” Thompson  
Chairman  
House Agriculture Committee

The Honorable David Scott  
Ranking Member  
House Agriculture Committee

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Boozman, Chairman Thompson, and Ranking Member Scott:

As a diverse set of stakeholders dedicated to building a stronger, more resilient U.S. food and agricultural sector, we urge you to prioritize robust investments in food and agriculture research, facilities, Extension, and education in the Farm Bill.

**We urge you to support \$8 billion in mandatory funding in the research title to spur scientific breakthroughs, keep pace with our global competitors, modernize facilities, and ensure nutrition security and a sustainable food system.** Without immediate investment in food and agricultural research, we are facing an uncertain future where food and nutrition security is no longer guaranteed. The Farm Bill is our opportunity to secure this critical funding before it's too late.

Food and agricultural advancements rely on a continuous pipeline of innovations. These innovations help farmers and ranchers increase productivity, improve sustainability and resilience, adapt to new pests and diseases, and lower food prices. Research investments also help food producers and manufacturers unlock new technologies, improve food safety and traceability, and connect up and down stream to improve the food system. Despite growing threats to our food system, funding for public food and agricultural research has plummeted in the U.S. over the past two decades.

**Investment in U.S. public food and agricultural research has fallen by one third since 2002.**<sup>i</sup> Since then, spending has declined to where it was in 1970.

While U.S. investments decline, **China’s funding has grown to more than \$10 billion – double what the U.S. spends.**<sup>ii</sup> China is now the world’s largest funder of food and agriculture R&D. India, Brazil and the European Union have also increased R&D funding. The United States is in dire threat of losing its preeminence as a global leader in research and innovation.<sup>iii</sup>

In addition to declining investments in public research funding, our Nation’s agricultural research infrastructure is in disrepair. Scientists struggle to produce cutting-edge research in facilities and with equipment at the end of its usable lifespan.<sup>iv</sup>

These realities also impact our food and agricultural research workforce, with universities losing top tier talent to other disciplines. A diverse, well-funded workforce will re-establish the US as a leader in food and agricultural science and ensure the preeminence of our food and agriculture system.

**American leadership is critical to our competitiveness and national security.** Cutting-edge research ensures our food system is resilient to shocks such as global conflict, supply chain disruptions, pest resistance and outbreaks, and extreme weather. Without new investments we will be unprepared for future challenges.

Innovation fuels our economy. The **food and agriculture industry contributes over a trillion dollars to the U.S. GDP, and accounts for 21 million jobs.**<sup>v</sup> Robust funding is critical to maintaining our trade competitiveness.

Our food system is built on past innovations that increased food production by 300 percent since the 1940s.<sup>vi</sup> Increased productivity reduces pressure on natural resources and leads to a more sustainable food system. But gains in productivity are in deep decline<sup>vii</sup> putting at risk global food security. **Declining investments in R&D is directly tied to declining productivity.**

We look forward to working with you to grow investments in research and innovation, facilities, Extension, and education to meet the growing global demand for nutritious food.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Agricultural & Applied Economics Association  
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 Pulse Association  
American Seed Trade Association  
American Society for Horticultural Science  
American Society for Nutrition  
American Society of Agronomy  
American Society of Animal Science  
American Society of Plant Biologists  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
Aquatic Plant Management Society  
Association of 1890 Research Directors  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Biotechnology Innovation Organization  
Corn Refiners Association  
Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST)  
Crop Science Society of America  
Ecological Society of America  
Entomological Society of America  
Farm Journal Foundation  
FASS  
FMI - The Food Industry Association  
Friends of Hemp  
Glenn Family Farm  
Global Hemp Association (GHA)  
Institute of Food Technologists (IFT)  
Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals - Multistate Initiative  
National Association of Plant Breeders

National Barley Growers Association  
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Grange  
National Pork Producers Council  
National Sunflower Association  
National Wheat Improvement Committee  
North American Craft Maltsters Guild  
North American Millers' Association  
North Central Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors  
North Central Weed Science Society  
Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA)  
Northeastern Weed Science Society  
Oregon State University College of Agricultural Sciences  
Plant Based Products Council  
Soil Science Society of America  
Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors  
Southern Weed Science Society  
Spark Climate Solutions  
Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) Foundation  
Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council  
The Breakthrough Institute  
U.S. Canola Association  
US Dairy Forage Research Center Stakeholder Advisory Committee  
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council  
Weed Science Society of America  
Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors  
Western Society of Weed Science

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2022/june/investment-in-u-s-public-agricultural-research-and-development-has-fallen-by-a-third-over-past-two-decades-lags-major-trade-competitors/>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2022/june/investment-in-u-s-public-agricultural-research-and-development-has-fallen-by-a-third-over-past-two-decades-lags-major-trade-competitors/>

<sup>iii</sup> <ift-whitepaper-012720final.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.aplu.org/wp-content/uploads/a-national-study-of-capital-infrastructure-at-colleges-and-schools-of-agriculture-an-update-1.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/ag-and-food-statistics-charting-the-essentials/ag-and-food-sectors-and-the-economy/>

<sup>vi</sup> <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/agricultural-research-and-productivity/>

<sup>vii</sup> [https://globalagriculturalproductivity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-GAP\\_Report\\_final\\_110922.pdf](https://globalagriculturalproductivity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-GAP_Report_final_110922.pdf)