

September 10, 2015

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,  
and Forestry  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,  
and Forestry  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable K. Michael Conaway  
Committee on Agriculture  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Committee on Agriculture  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bob Corker  
Committee on Foreign Relations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ben Cardin  
Committee on Foreign Relations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Edward R. Royce  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Eliot L. Engel  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Roberts, Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Stabenow, Ranking Member Peterson, Chairman Corker, Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Cardin, and Ranking Member Engel:

As Congress considers global food security legislation, the undersigned broad cross-section of U.S. international development groups, farm and commodity organizations, and agriculture-related foundations agree that increasing agricultural productivity and food production by smallholder farmers in the poorest countries is essential in helping to build a solid foundation for sustainable economic growth. Key to meeting these objectives are increased collaboration across U.S. agriculture and additional resources dedicated to enhancing agricultural-related research in the areas of technology adoption and extension education. These efforts are critically important as agriculture and food security plays an integral role in developing markets, generating rural income, and reinforcing civil and political stability around the world.

The focus of our discussions has centered on the potential role of U.S. agriculture in assisting global agricultural development programming undertaken by the U.S. government. The group's discussions have identified the following shared principles:

- International agricultural development is essential to meeting the urgent goal of feeding the world's growing population.
- Alleviating global hunger and poverty is consistent with U.S. agriculture's values and its long term interests.
- The U.S. agricultural community has expertise and assets that can enhance agricultural development efforts in developing countries.
- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. land grant university system, farm organizations, and agribusiness should be leveraged more prominently in international agricultural development efforts by working in tandem with other development and humanitarian programs administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development.
- Key areas where USDA and U.S. agriculture's expertise can and should be brought to bear include: university human and institutional capacity building, research, extension, trade (both imports from developing countries and U.S. exports) and public-private partnerships.

The U.S. Agency for International Development's leadership in the Feed the Future initiative has advanced agricultural development efforts and is having a positive impact on the lives of people in food-insecure communities around the world. However, to truly implement a whole-of-government approach in a U.S. global food security strategy, the significant capabilities of USDA and other federal agencies, the Land Grant university system, and the U.S. private food and agricultural sector must be leveraged in a collaborative, cooperative process.

Many of the inter-agency efforts to date in the area of global food security, while successful, have been ad-hoc and dependent on personal relationships and goodwill, which is not a strategy for sustained success. Formalizing these relationships legislatively would solidify a future for these programs, ensure access to the best available public and private expertise, help identify and educate on best practices, and create incentives for the most effective and efficient use of federal and other resources.

To achieve these overall objectives, the undersigned groups support global agricultural development efforts and believe authorizing legislation should codify the role of the U.S. agricultural system by:

- Requiring that a global food security strategy specifically incorporate the expertise of USDA, including but not limited to, agricultural research and extension, and university human and institutional capacity building in partnership with land grant and other academic institutions.
- Establishing platforms for regular consultation and collaboration between government agencies and the private sector, including but not limited to agricultural commodity and farmer organizations and agribusinesses.

We thank you for your attention to these important issues, and look forward to working with you as this process moves forward.

Sincerely yours,

ACDI-VOCA

AGree: Transforming Food and Agricultural Policy

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Soybean Association

CNFA

Farm Journal Foundation

National Association of Wheat Growers

National Corn Growers Association

National Farmers Union

National Grain Sorghum Producers

National Milk Producers Federation

The Lugar Center

Douglas Bereuter

Cochair, Global Agriculture Development Initiative, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

President Emeritus, The Asia Foundation

Member, U.S. House of Representatives (1979-2004)

Dan Glickman

Cochair, Global Agriculture Development Initiative, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture (1995-2001)

Member, U.S. House of Representatives (1977-1995)