November 4, 2011

Dear Conferee:

As the Conference Committee continues to consider the FY 2012 Agriculture Appropriations bill (H.R. 2112), the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition, comprised of organizations representing research institutions, scientific societies, and other agricultural stakeholders, writes to urge the you to support funding for AFRI at $266 million for fiscal year 2012, the level now set in H.R. 2112, and passed by the full Senate. AFRI is the nation’s premier competitive agricultural research grants program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

The AFRI Coalition recognizes that lawmakers face many difficult decisions and competing priorities in this austere budgetary environment. Nevertheless, investments in research lead to innovation and economic development. A recent study found that for every $1 invested in publicly funded agricultural research, $20 in economic activity is generated\(^1\). Therefore the AFRI Coalition urges lawmakers to make sustainable increases in funding for AFRI which will contribute to U.S. economic recovery.

Sincerely,

American Dairy Science Association
American Phytopathological Society
American Society for Horticultural Science
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Nutrition
American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Animal Science
American Society of Plant Biologists
American Veterinary Medical Association
Aquatic Plant Management Society
Association of American Universities
Biotechnology Industry Organization
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics
Crop Science Society of America
Federation of Animal Science Societies
Institute of Food Technologists
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
National Association of Plant Breeders
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
National Turfgrass Federation

\(^1\) The Economic Returns to U.S. Public Agricultural Research, Alston, Julian M.; Andersen, Matthew A.; James, Jennifer S.; Pardey, Phillip G., University of Minnesota, Department of Applied Economics, July 2011, [http://purl.umn.edu/95522](http://purl.umn.edu/95522).
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
North Central Weed Science Society
Northeastern Weed Science Society
Poultry Science Association
Society of Nematologists
Soil Science Society of America
Southern Weed Science Society
The Rodale Institute
Union of Concerned Scientists
Weed Science Society of America
Western Society of Weed Science