

# Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition

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Attention: Agriculture Appropriations Conference Committee

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<sup>1</sup>. 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

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<sup>1</sup> The Economic Returns to U.S. Public Agricultural Research, Alston, Julian M.; Andersen, Matthew A.; James, Jennifer S.; Pardey, Philip G., University of Minnesota, Department of Applied Economics, July 2011, <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