



## NATIONAL COALITION FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

For Immediate Release

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### **National C-FAR President Applauds Obama Administration Commitment to Increasing Investments in Food and Ag Research**

**Washington, DC** – October 9, 2009 – Joseph H. Layton, Jr., a soybean, corn and grape producer on Maryland's Eastern Shore, and President of the National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (National C-FAR), today applauded USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack for affirming that agricultural science needs to be a part of the President's commitment to increasing investments in scientific research to up to 3 percent of the nation's GDP. Secretary Vilsack and John Holdren, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, outlined the Administration's vision for a revitalized and better funded research mission at a National Press Club event on October 8 to launch the new National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

"We are all customers—farmers and consumers—who are dependent upon our food and ag research programs for sound answers," Layton said. "We must seize this historic opportunity to come together in support of increased federal funding for both fundamental and applied research if we are to expect our researchers to provide the science-based outcomes needed to meet multiple challenges we are facing, both known and unknown."

Layton expressed excitement about the vision and leadership that USDA Under Secretary and Chief Scientist Rajiv Shah and new NIFA Director Roger Beachy are bringing to USDA's research mission, pledging that National C-FAR would work to help increase funding for food and agricultural research, extension and education.

Layton pointed out that the Research Title of the 2008 Farm Bill represents the nation's signature federal investment in the future of the food and agricultural sector, with the success of every other Title in the Farm Bill and those who are charged with carrying out their respective missions dependent in significant part on scientific outcomes and tools generated by research programs.

"Research reforms we all support will not work if the USDA research mission remains seriously underfunded," warned Layton. The ag leader called for increasing funding for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) to the fully authorized level of \$700 million annually as soon as possible, as part of increased funding overall for both extramural and intramural research. He also commended the Administration for strengthening the commitment to leveraging USDA research funds through enhanced collaborative efforts with other federally funded entities, including the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.

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**NATIONAL C-FAR** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, consensus-based, and *customer-led* coalition that brings food, agriculture, nutrition, conservation, and natural resource stakeholders together with the food and agriculture research and extension community, serving as a forum and a unified voice in support of sustaining and increasing public investment at the national level in food and agricultural research, extension, and education. Interviews with National C-FAR President Joseph H. Layton, Jr. are available by request. For additional information, go to [www.ncfar.org](http://www.ncfar.org); or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director, at [tom@vanarsdall.com](mailto:tom@vanarsdall.com) or (703) 509-4746.