



National C-FAR

National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
Teaming Together For a Better Tomorrow

1101 W. Peabody Drive • Urbana, IL 61801
217/333-6575 • Fax: 217/244-8594 • E-mail: ejansen@uiuc.edu

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National C-FAR May Update

Dear Colleague Letter: A “Dear Colleague” letter, initiated by Congressman Cal Dooley (Dem, CA) and Chip Pickering (Rep, MS), was signed by a broad cross-section of 49 U.S. House of Representatives members, 29 of whom are on the House Agriculture Committee, and sent to the House Appropriations committee on June 6. In view of the short time for getting signatures and the recess, being able to muster 49 signatures is encouraging. The letter emphasized the need for doubling food and agriculture research, extension and education and mentioned National C-FAR’s support for doubling federal funding. Members of Senate are considering a similar letter prior to mark-up appropriations in about three weeks. A joint House-Senate letter to Appropriations conferees would then be sent in the coming months. The National C-FAR Legislative Committee has scheduled a special meeting on Thursday, June 14, at 10:00 a.m., to be hosted by David Graves at the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives offices, to consider our involvement in the proposed Senate and Conference Committee letters.

Legislative Committee Activities: The Legislative Committee, chaired by David Graves, has been holding regular meetings on the first Friday of each month. Normally, 10-15 representatives from member organizations participate. Due to the July 4 holiday, the next regular Legislative Committee meeting will be held at the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives Offices at 10:00-12:00 a.m., Friday, July 13.

At the May 4 Legislative Committee meeting, Ms. Terri Nintemann, then majority staff, Senate Agriculture Committee, and Mr. John Goldberg, majority staff, House Committee on Agriculture, were guest speakers. Their main points were: (1) Congress needs broad input in support of increasing food and agriculture research funding; (2) Congress needs to know about food and agriculture research success stories; (3) the coalition should have a widely accepted definition of food and agriculture research; and (4) Congress needs to know about the areas in the food and agriculture system where the U.S. is losing ground to other countries.

At the June 1 Legislative Committee meeting, Tim Galvin, the senior staff member for agriculture matters on the Senate Budget Committee, which after the Senate switch is now chaired by Senator Kent Conrad (Dem, ND), spoke to the Legislative Committee on June 1. Galvin said that for National C-FAR to be successful in achieving the doubling of food and agricultural research in face of the very tight budget prospects, we will need to: (1) make the case for a federal funding role and explain why not just leave research and education to the private sector; (2) demonstrate measurable results of research and education accomplishments in the past and the benefits received by farmers and consumers; and (3) emphasize the importance to both the food and agriculture sector and the American consumer that the U.S. invest in research for the future. Galvin noted that the “good news about food and agricultural research is that the negatives aren’t high” in Congress. Our challenge is to “get the positives higher.”

Research Committee Activities: The Research Committee, co-chaired by Rob Hedberg and Barbara Glenn, has been working closely with the Legislative Committee. They have been meeting following the Legislative Committee meetings. The Research Committee has asked for members' help in documenting the historical benefits of food and agricultural research, the problems still to be solved and the greatest research opportunities to pursue. These materials, when compiled and edited, will provide the information requested by Congressional staff to help them bolster the case for doubling federal funding of food and agricultural research. Plans are underway to work with CAST and other organizations in developing a comprehensive, compelling and convincing presentation of the benefits of past food and agricultural research and the major opportunities for the future. A meeting has been scheduled for July 12, 1:00- 3:00 p.m. at the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives Office to begin the development of these materials. All National C-FAR members are welcome to send representatives to this meeting. We especially welcome those with experience in communications who can help us prepare a compelling message to Congress, the Administration and the public. Please contact Joe Coffey about details of this meeting.

National C-FAR and the Food and Society Project Meet: Representatives from National C-FAR and the Food and Society project met in Chicago on May 18, 2001, to explore ways to work together to achieve our common goal of doubling food and agricultural research in the next five years. A joint statement of cooperation was drafted and is being reviewed. Some changes have been suggested and revisions are being discussed before formally submitting to the National C-FAR Board for approval. It is anticipated that the two groups will appoint a joint coordinating committee and will co-sponsor some regional stakeholder meetings.

The Food & Society project is sponsored by the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC) and supported by a grant from the Kellogg Foundation. It is a long-term effort, led by the university presidents, to expand federal funding of food & agricultural research and education.

National C-Far was represented by John Caspers, Walt Armbruster, Kraig Wagenecht, Joe Coffey, and Terry Wolf; plus Marc Curtis and Caroline Anderson, participating on behalf of Bob Stallman, linked via conference phone call.

Participating on behalf of Food & Society Project were: Jim Stukel, President of the University of Illinois and liaison with National C-FAR; Sam Smith, President Emeritus Washington State University and Project Director; Jim Jepson, University of Illinois; Mort Neufville, Executive Vice President of NASULGC; and via conference call were Peter Magrath, President of NASULGC, and Dick Stoddard of The Ohio State University.

We are very pleased to have an opportunity to join with the university presidents to strengthen our advocacy and involvement in expanded food and agricultural research and education. This coordination with the Food & Society Project, of course, will not affect the operation, independence or by-laws of National C-FAR. The advantage of more formally working together is that it addresses many of the questions raised about our relationships that are often raised when making presentations at various meetings.

More importantly, this working relationship will permit us to capitalize upon our respective strengths. National C-FAR members are generally more familiar with research and education programs funded by USDA and have worked more closely with the congressional agriculture committees. The university presidents, have close relationships with the major research and education funding programs at the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Health, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Energy. These federal agencies are

an expanding source of competitive grant funding of food and agricultural research and education and have a potential for growth in the future.

New Web Site under Construction: Log on and see the development of the new National C-FAR web site at www.ncfar.org! Though still under construction, our friends at Purdue are making tremendous strides in the designing of our new web site. Take a peek at our lengthening list of members and the links to their web sites. As new features will be continually added, this site will become a great communication tool to our members and a resource we can refer prospective members to.

NRC Workshop on May 22-23,2001: President Terry Wolf spoke to the National Research Council Workshop, "A Vision for USDA's Food and Agricultural Research in the 21st Century" held on May 22 and 23, 2001. The workshop is part of a three-year study being conducted by the National Academy of Sciences to objectively evaluate "the quality of research, education, and extension activities of USDA's REE mission area" and "provide a useful assessment of current efforts and recommendations to strengthen future research capabilities to meet national needs." About 100 people participated in the workshop.

Reception: A reception to explain National C-FAR to potential members was held from 5:30-7:00 p.m. on May 22, in Washington, DC. President Terry Wolf welcomed the group and provided an overview of National C-Far. Vice President David Graves outlined our legislative activities and introduced Ms. Terri Nintemann of Senator Lugar's staff. Ms. Nintemann gave an update on food and agriculture research legislation and responded to several questions from the guests. Over 50 people attended the reception. We were especially honored to have several of the distinguished participants of the National Research Council's Workshop attend the reception. We owe a special thanks to our member organizations the American Farm Bureau Federation for providing the facilities for the reception in their Washington D.C. offices and the American Vintners Association for providing the wine.

Now 89 Strong! May was a successful month for our membership roster. Four new National and six new Affiliate members joined making our total membership 89. The ten new members are: American Society for Nutritional Sciences, American Veterinary Medical Association, Biotechnology Industry Organization, Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Mississippi State University, Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (SAAESD), University of Connecticut, University of Florida, University of Illinois, Extension & Outreach, and University of Minnesota. Based upon the conversations at our May 22 reception, we are optimistic that additional organizations will be joining. All members are encouraged to recruit new members. Please do not hesitate to contact Ray McAllister (ray@acpa.org), Chair of our Recruitment Committee or Joe Coffey (jdcoffey@home.com) if you need recruiting materials or have some suggestions. The list of current members, membership application and brochure are available for download at our new website (www.ncfar.org).

June 27 Testimony: We are pleased that the House Agriculture Committee is going to invite National C-FAR to testify on June 27. A draft of the proposed testimony will be circulated for comment soon. It will closely follow the testimony already presented in the Senate and submitted to the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittees. In response to the suggestions of Congressional staff and the efforts of the Research Committee discussed above, we expect to supplement the testimony with success stories and charts highlighting trends in federal funding and measuring the contributions of food and agricultural research.

New York Times Article: A major article touting the importance of federal support of food and agricultural research by Andrew Pollack, "The Green Revolution Yields to the Bottom Line," appeared in the May 15, 2001, *New York Times*. Terry Wolf of National C-FAR, Sam Smith of

the Food and Society Project, and Vic Lechtenberg of Purdue were quoted. Articles like this that appear in major national news can be convincing and credible handouts to be shared with Congress and the Administration. Copies are available from Ellen Jansen (ejansen@uiuc.edu).

“National C-FAR”, Please: Please, include “National” when referring to our organization in writing. Failing to include “National” is causing some confusion with our friends in the Illinois C-FAR organization. Though our official names are different, National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research vs. Illinois Council for Food and Agricultural Research, we share the acronym C-FAR and interests.

Joe Coffey
Secretary/Treasurer
National C-FAR
3221 Regatta Pointe Court
Midlothian, VA 23112
Phone: (804) 744-1486
Fax: (804) 744-2192
Email: jdcoffey@home.com