

The Honorable Mike Conaway
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
& Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
& Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

May 4, 2017

Dear Chairmen Conaway and Roberts and Ranking Members Peterson and Stabenow:

We the undersigned organizations are writing to urge your support for critical investments in science to support the future of animal agriculture. Animal agriculture is a major economic driver for our nation. According to the USDA Economic Research Service, total cash receipts for animals and animal products was over \$189 billion in 2015. This represents over fifty percent of all farm cash receipts.

Unfortunately, the economic contributions of the animal agriculture industry are under the constant threat of emerging animal pests and diseases that have the potential to devastate production capacity and competitiveness. In recent years, disease outbreaks have cost billions in production losses and response costs. For example, the last avian influenza outbreak cost taxpayers \$1 billion in response, clean up, and indemnity costs and required the depopulation of nearly 50 million birds. That doesn't include lost export markets, temporary shortages, or price increases for certain poultry and their products. Researchers estimate that an uncontrolled outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the United States could have as much as a \$200 billion impact over 10 years. Without effective science-based tools to prevent and mitigate future outbreaks, animal agriculture will be vulnerable to major economic impacts.

Current funding by USDA to support animal science is not proportionate with the economic contributions of animal agriculture. In fact, investment in the animal sciences has been stagnant for years. This disturbing trend was highlighted by National Academy of Sciences in its 2015 report "Critical Role of Animal Science Research in Food Security and Sustainability". The report recognizes the historic underfunding of animal sciences and calls for increased investments.

The current funding imbalance puts U.S. animal agriculture at a major disadvantage at a critical time when livestock and poultry producers are facing serious threats from pests and disease. To help meet these threats we respectfully request the investment of **\$25 million in annual mandatory funding** be included in the 2018 Farm Bill to support Sec. 1433 Continuing Animal Health and Disease Programs.

Sec. 1433 was expanded during the last Farm Bill to authorize a competitive grants mechanism to address high priority research needs. Mandatory funding for Sec. 1433 would build on the efforts from the 2014 Farm Bill by funding the competitive grants program and enabling the support of critical research to provide science-based solutions to animal pest and disease threats.

We stand ready to answer any questions about our request and the critical needs for science-based solutions to protect animal agriculture. We look forward to working with you as work on the 2018 Farm Bill continues.

Sincerely,

American Association of Avian Pathologists

American Association of Bovine Practitioners

American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases (AAMD)

American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners

American Association Of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians

American Dairy Goat Association

American Dairy Science Association

American Feed Industry Association

American Goat Federation

American Horse Council

American Sheep Industry

American Society of Animal Science

American Veterinary Medical Association

Animal Agriculture Alliance

Animal Health Institute

Arizona Cattle Feeders' Association

Arizona Cattlemen's Association

Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges

Association of Veterinary Biologics Companies

Biotechnology Industry Organization

California Pork Producers Association

California Poultry Federation

California Wool Growers Association

Chicken and Egg Association of Minnesota

Colorado Cattlemen's Association

Colorado Livestock Association

FASS

Fats and Proteins Research Foundation

Florida Cattlemen's Association

Georgia Cattlemen's Association

Georgia Poultry Federation

Indiana State Poultry Association

Iowa Turkey Federation

Kentucky Poultry Federation

Michigan Agri-Business Association

Michigan Allied Poultry Industries

Michigan Cattlemen's Association

Michigan Pork Producers Association

Minnesota Turkey Growers Association

Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals Multistate Initiative (MDA)

National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials

National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science

National Association of Federal Veterinarians

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture

National Aquaculture Association

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

National Grain and Feed Association

National Milk Producers Federation

National Renderers Association

National Turkey Federation

North Carolina Poultry Federation

North Dakota Turkey Federation

Ohio Poultry Association

Oklahoma State University – Department of Animal Science

Poultry Science Association

South Carolina Poultry Federation

South Dakota Pork Producers Council

South Dakota Poultry Industry Association

Texas Poultry Federation

Texas Turkey Federation

The Poultry Federation – Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma

United Egg Producers

University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine

University of Florida, Department of Animal Sciences

U.S. Animal Health Association

U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center Research and Industry Committee

U.S. Poultry & Egg Association

Virginia Poultry Federation

Wisconsin Poultry and Egg Industry Association