



April 5, 2019

The Honorable John Hoeven
Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Agriculture, Rural Development Food
and Drug Administration and Related
Agencies
129 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and
Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Agriculture, Rural Development Food
and Drug Administration and Related
Agencies
190 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Fortenberry
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and
Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hoeven, Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Merkley, and Ranking Member Fortenberry:

On behalf of the National Association of Animal Science (NAAAS), I am writing to request your support for funding of programs critical for animal science research. NAAAS is an association of departments of animal, dairy, poultry and veterinary science from across the nation, as well as national organizations affiliated with animal science and animal agriculture.

Additional federal investment in agricultural research is critically important for the United States to maintain its competitive advantage around the world. For decades, the federal investment has been stagnant, while countries like China have greatly expanded their agricultural research investments. According to ERS, China is now outspending the United States by approximately 2 to 1, with some estimates showing an even greater discrepancy. Given the additional resources freed-up by the recent budget deal, we strongly encourage Congress to dedicate additional resources to agricultural research and specifically to animal science.

As the world's population grows and natural resources become limited, animal agriculture research is necessary now more than ever to improve efficiency in order to continue providing safe and abundant food supplies for the growing global community. It is imperative that the increased food production be done in a manner that will protect our natural resources while maintaining America's global competitiveness in producing animals and animal products.

Demand for food is expected to increase from 70 to 100 percent by 2050 and animal agriculture must be a major contributor to meet these needs. Meat consumption is estimated to increase by 73 percent, dairy consumption is

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estimated to increase 57 percent, and per capita egg consumption in developing countries is expected to rise by almost 40 percent.

Advancements in animal science will play an important role in the future success of animal agriculture and the rural economy. Livestock and poultry sales account for 40 percent of all farm income. When feed crops consumed by livestock are included, the contribution to farm income is 60 percent. The United States must step up its investments in agriculture research to maintain its status as a leading producer of safe, affordable and abundant food and meet increasing demands.

Unfortunately, current funding by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support the animal sciences is not proportionate with the economic contributions of animal agriculture. In fact, investment in the animal sciences has been stagnant for many years, even for programs such as the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) that have received increased appropriations. This disturbing trend was highlighted by National Academy of Sciences in its report “Critical Role of Animal Science Research in Food Security and Sustainability” that was released in 2015. The report recognizes the historic underfunding of animal sciences and calls for increased investments. This imbalance in support for animal science puts U.S. animal agriculture at a major disadvantage at a critical time when livestock and poultry producers are striving for global competitiveness, improving sustainability and working to feed a growing global population.

The 2018 farm bill reauthorized an important expansion of Section 1433 to establish a competitive research grants mechanism to address critical priorities in food security, one health and stewardship. The expanded authority came in response to a historic funding disparity for the animal sciences and represents a strong opportunity to address significant challenges facing animal agriculture.

The competitive grants program in Section 1433 provides a mechanism to focus resources on high priority areas to help animal agriculture meet future challenges. We respectfully request that **\$10 million** be appropriated for Section 1433 in fiscal year 2020.

The 2018 farm bill also includes authority for Agricultural Genome to Phenome Initiative. This new initiative recognizes the critical need for increased federal investment to advance genomics in agriculturally important animal and species. Significant research is needed to fully characterize the phenotypes, which are collectively known as the “phenome” of our major crop and livestock species. The Agricultural Genomes to Phenomes Initiative will develop tools and knowledge to allow for the analysis of phenotypes across a diverse array of agriculturally important species, and help individual farmers make better management decisions and increase productivity. NAAAS requests **\$40 million** in fiscal year 2020 to support the Agricultural Genome to Phenome Initiative.

In addition to support for the newly expanded Section 1433, NAAAS requests the following funding amounts for specific NIFA accounts:

Hatch Act	\$291,000,000
Agriculture and Food Research Initiative	\$500,000,000
Smith Lever, Section 3(b) and (c)	\$358,000,000
Section 1433	\$10,000,000
Agricultural Genome to Phenome Initiative	\$40,000,000
Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program	\$9,000,000
Veterinary Services Grant Program	\$3,000,000
Food Animal Residue Avoidance Database Program	\$2,500,000
Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative	\$10,000,000

For ARS, NAAAS recommends **\$1.821 billion** for Salaries and in FY 2020. ARS has the potential to make significant progress towards solving problems facing America’s livestock and poultry producers but is consistently receiving funding disproportionate to its contributions to the farm economy. ARS intramural research is uniquely suited for projects that require a long-term investment leading to high-impact payoffs, while maintaining the capacity and readiness to respond to emerging and pressing problems.

Of the proposed increase to ARS, we request that **\$92.8 million** be designated to support the operations and maintenance and other transition costs related to the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF). NAAAS strongly supports the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF). This new facility will conduct critical research on large animal zoonotic diseases and develop countermeasures to protect human and animal health, as well as protect the agricultural economy from future threats. ARS is well positioned manage and conduct the critical work of NBAF, but such responsibilities will require sufficient new resources, and must not come at the expense of other ongoing ARS research.

NAAAS appreciates the opportunity to share its priorities and appropriations requests with the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittees. We respectfully offer this input in order to help to strengthen our position as a leader in agricultural research and national and global food security, and improve the competitiveness of American agriculture. Please let us know if you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance as the FY 2020 appropriations process moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Gerrard". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

David Gerrard
President
National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science