February 4, 2014

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman, Agriculture Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Rayburn House Office Building, 2362-A
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Farr
Ranking Member, Agriculture Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Longworth House Office Building, 1016
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member Farr,

We are writing to express our sincere appreciation for your leadership on the funding of the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014.

Your decision to provide additional investment in agricultural research during this time of budgetary constraint reflects great prescience. Although dollars invested today may take years to reap tangible rewards, agricultural research is vital to the advancement of our nation. Specifically, we want to thank you for recognizing that a competitive, merit-based review grants program such as AFRI is a tested way of awarding federal funding to projects that apply the best science to the most important problems.

In its short existence, AFRI already has infused American agricultural research with new energy. As AFRI matures with prudent management and funding, we are confident it will continue to facilitate groundbreaking research resulting in significant discoveries that will shape how we grow our food, fiber, fuel and environmental crops. The United States, as well as its farmers, consumers, and trade partners, will benefit mightily from such investment.

With much appreciation,

The Founding Members of Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR)

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