December 20, 2013

The Honorable Mark Pryor
Chairman, Agriculture Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman, Agriculture Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member, Agriculture Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Chairman Pryor, Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member Blunt and Ranking Member Farr:

As you work to finish fiscal year (FY) 2014 appropriations for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the members of the AFRI Coalition, urge you to support the USDA’s Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) with at least $316 million in FY 2014.

The AFRI Coalition, a broad and diverse bipartisan collection of over 40 organizations, scientific societies and interest groups, strongly supports $316 million for AFRI as provided in the Senate Agriculture Appropriations bill (S.1244). AFRI is the premier competitive grants program for fundamental and applied research, extension and education in support of our nation’s food and agricultural systems.

Agricultural research depends on adequate and sustainable funding. Research to address some of our nation’s most pressing challenges are supported through funding from AFRI including; human and plant health, emerging plant pest risks, severe weather management, depleted water resources, food safety and security among others.

We understand that you are working within a constrained budget with competing priorities and we encourage you to make strategic investments in our agricultural economy through scientific innovation. A recent study found that for every $1 invested in publicly funded agricultural research, $20 in economic activity is generated.

The budgetary decisions made today have far reaching impacts: research funded today will be responsible for enhancing the nation’s agricultural productivity and economic prosperity in the future.

We look forward to supporting you in this important effort and thank you for your support of AFRI. To learn more about the Coalition or to see a list of members, please visit: http://africoalition.org

Sincerely,

The AFRI Coalition
Members of the AFRI Coalition include:

- American Dairy Science Association
- American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
- American Phytopathological Society
- American Society for Horticultural Science
- American Society for Microbiology
- American Society for Nutrition
- American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers
- American Society of Agronomy
- American Society of Animal Science
- American Society of Plant Biologists
- American Soybean Association
- American Veterinary Medical Association
- Aquatic Plant Management Society
- Association of American Universities
- Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
- Biotechnology Industry Organization
- Consortium of Social Science Associations
- Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics
- Crop Science Society of America
- Entomological Society of America
- Federation of Animal Science Societies
- Genetics Society of America
- Institute of Food Technologists
- Iowa State University
- Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
- National Association of Plant Breeders
- National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
- National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
- National Turfgrass Federation
- North Central Weed Science Society
- Northeastern Weed Science Society
- Poultry Science Association
- Society of Nematologists
- Soil Science Society of America
- Southern Weed Science Society
- The American Physiological Society
- The Rodale Institute
- Union of Concerned Scientists
- Weed Science Society of America
- Western Society of Weed Science