November 4, 2013

RE: Support for Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research in 2013 Farm Bill

Dear Farm Bill Conferee:

The undersigned support the provision to establish a Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) in the Senate-passed Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2013 (Sec. 7601). The provision provides an initial investment of $200 million in mandatory funding to match private funding.

As a conferee on the 2013 Farm Bill, we urge you to support inclusion of this important provision in the final Farm Bill Conference Report to foster continued innovation in agricultural research.

The Foundation would complement USDA’s portfolio of intramural and extramural research programs that help solve current and future challenges facing agriculture, develop new opportunities for American agriculture, and bring innovative technology from laboratory to marketplace.

With an ever expanding global population and increasing demands for food and other agricultural products, increased investments in food and agricultural research are essential to maintaining our nation’s food, economic and national security. Despite the importance of such research, current funding for food and agricultural research is less than 2.5 percent of USDA’s budget.

We recognize the need for innovative solutions to increase funding and leverage private sector investments in research. Establishing a FFAR will generate new sources of funding for food and agricultural research, and provide a structure for new public/private partnerships and investments. A FFAR can help provide funding for new concepts and ideas, high risk/high reward research, research to address knowledge gaps, translational research and emerging research needs.

Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership on food and agricultural research, extension and education.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
American Association of Avian Pathologists
American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases
American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians Inc.
American Bakers Association
American Dairy Science Association
American Feed Industry Association
American Malting Barley Association
American Seed Trade Association
American Society for Nutrition
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Animal Science
American Soybean Association
American Veterinary Medical Association
Animal Health Institute
Aquatic Plant Management Society
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Biotechnology Industry Organization
California Association of Wheat Growers
California Specialty Crops Council
Crop Science Society of America
CropLife America
Entomological Society of America
Florida Peanut Producers
Gale Buchanan, Ph.D.
Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station
Illinois Soybean Association
Kansas Association of Wheat Growers
Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals, Multistate Initiative
National Association of Plant Breeders
National Barley Improvement Committee
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
North Central Weed Science Society
Northeastern Weed Science Society
Soil and Water Conservation Society
Soil Science Society of America
Southern Weed Science Society
The American Society for Microbiology
University of Minnesota Extension
University of Nebraska
Weed Science Society of America
Western Society of Weed Science