

October 5, 2016

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Cochran and Rogers & Ranking Members Mikulski and Lowey,

The undersigned organizations support the inclusion of \$3 million within the *Fiscal Year 2017 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act* to better inform the public about the application of biotechnology to food and agricultural production.

Regrettably, there is a tremendous amount of misinformation about agricultural biotechnology in the public domain. Dedicated educational resources will ensure key federal agencies responsible for the safety of our nation's food supply – the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) – are able to more easily convey to the public science- and fact-based information about food.

Agricultural innovation is important to all Americans because it enables plant and animal producers to increase production of healthful food using less land, while conserving soil, water, and on-farm energy. These benefits are passed on to consumers who reap the advantage of affordable food prices, greater access to nutritious food, an improved environment, a strengthened rural economy, and enhanced domestic and international food security.

Embracing modern agriculture is the right thing to do for our country, which has a rich history of nurturing science, research, and innovation in all areas of the economy, including farming. As President Obama stated in December 2011, “The world is shifting to an innovation economy and nobody does innovation better than America.” This presidential quote is displayed prominently in the *National Bioeconomy Blueprint*, which embraces and promotes the use of biotechnology as a significant driver of American economic growth.

The United States is strong and prosperous because American leaders embrace the responsible use of technology and set forth public policies to move the nation forward in this regard. Science education plays an important role in this forward momentum. That is why we support the inclusion of \$3 million for FDA and USDA to help the public better understand science- and fact-based information about agricultural biotechnology.

We urge you to retain this provision throughout the legislative process and oppose any legislative action to restrict agricultural technology development, to hinder farmers' access to modern agricultural tools, or to malign advancements in plant and animal agricultural applications that are helping society meet current and future food production challenges.

Sincerely,

AACC International  
Agricultural Retailers Association  
American Agri-Women  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Phytopathological Society  
American Seed Trade Association  
American Society of Agronomy  
American Society of Plant Biologists  
American Society of Sugarbeet Technologists  
American Soybean Association  
American Sugarbeet Growers Association  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Beet Sugar Development Foundation  
Biotechnology Innovation Organization  
Corn Refiners Association  
Cornell University  
Crop Science Society of America  
CropLife America  
Donald Danforth Plant Science Center  
FASS, Inc.  
Global Cold Chain Alliance  
Global Harvest Initiative  
Grocery Manufacturers Association  
International Dairy Foods Association  
National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science  
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture

National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Confectioners Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Grocers Association  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Potato Council  
National Renderers Association  
National Seasoning Manufacturers Association  
National Sorghum Producers  
New York Farm Bureau  
New York State Agribusiness Association  
North Dakota State University  
Northeast Agribusiness and Feed Alliance  
Pet Food Institute  
Produce Marketing Association  
Soil Science Society of America  
South Dakota State University  
Texas Tech University  
University of Georgia College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences  
University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment  
University of Missouri  
U.S. Beet Sugar Association  
U.S. Canola Association  
U.S. Dry Bean Council  
Virginia Tech

Cc: The Honorable Jerry Moran  
The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
The Honorable Sam Farr