Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Boozman and Ranking Member Scott:

As a diverse set of stakeholders dedicated to building a stronger, more resilient U.S. food and agricultural sector, we urge you to prioritize robust investments in food and agriculture research, facilities, Extension, and education in the Farm Bill.

We urge you to support $8 billion in mandatory funding in the research title to spur scientific breakthroughs, keep pace with our global competitors, modernize facilities, and ensure nutrition security and a sustainable food system. Without immediate investment in food and agricultural research, we are facing an uncertain future where food and nutrition security is no longer guaranteed. The Farm Bill is our opportunity to secure this critical funding before it's too late.

Food and agricultural advancements rely on a continuous pipeline of innovations. These innovations help farmers and ranchers increase productivity, improve sustainability and resilience, adapt to new pests and diseases, and lower food prices. Research investments also help food producers and manufacturers unlock new technologies, improve food safety and traceability, and connect up and down stream to improve the food system. Despite growing threats to our food system, funding for public food and agricultural research has plummeted in the U.S. over the past two decades.

Investment in U.S. public food and agricultural research has fallen by one third since 2002[i]. Since then, spending has declined to where it was in 1970.

While U.S. investments decline, **China's funding has grown to more than $10 billion – double what the U.S. spends**[ii]. China is now the world's largest funder of food and agriculture R&D. India, Brazil and the European Union have also increased R&D funding. The United States is in dire threat of losing its preeminence as a global leader in research and innovation.[vii]

In addition to declining investments in public research funding, our Nation's agricultural research infrastructure is in disrepair. Scientists struggle to produce cutting-edge research in facilities and with equipment at the end of its usable lifespan.[iii]

These realities also impact our food and agricultural research workforce, with universities losing top tier talent to other disciplines. A diverse, well-funded workforce will re-establish the US as a leader in food and agricultural science and ensure the preeminence of our food and agriculture system.

American leadership is critical to our competitiveness and national security. Cutting-edge research ensures our food system is resilient to shocks such as global conflict, supply chain disruptions, pest resistance and outbreaks, and extreme weather. Without new investments we will be unprepared for future challenges.

Innovation fuels our economy. The **food and agriculture industry contributes over a trillion dollars to the U.S. GDP, and accounts for 21 million jobs**[iv]. Robust funding is critical to maintaining our trade competitiveness.

Our food system is built on past innovations that increased food production by 300 percent since the 1940s[v]. Increased productivity reduces pressure on natural resources and leads to a more sustainable food system. But gains in productivity are in deep decline[vi] putting at risk global food security. **Declining investments in R&D is directly tied to declining productivity.**

We look forward to working with you to grow investments in research and innovation, facilities, Extension, and education to meet the growing global demand for nutritious food.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Agricultural & Applied Economics Association
American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges
American Institute of Biological Sciences
American Phytopathological Society
American Seed Trade Association
American Society for Horticultural Science
American Society for Nutrition
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Animal Science
American Society of Plant Biologists
Aquatic Plant Management Society
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of Public Land-Grant Universities
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Corn Refiners Association
Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST)
Crop Science Society of America
Ecological Society of America
Entomological Society of America
Friends of Hemp
Glenn Family Farm
Global Hemp Association
National Barley Improvement Committee
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
National Corn Growers
National Grange
National Pork Producers Council
National Wheat Improvement Committee
North American Craft Maltsters Guild
North American Millers' Association
North Central Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
North Central Weed Science Society
Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors (NERA)
Northeastern Weed Science Society
Oregon State University College of Agricultural Sciences
Plant Based Products Council
Soil Science Society of America
Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
Southern Weed Science Society
Spark Climate Solutions
Supporters of Agricultural Research Foundation

Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council
The Breakthrough Institute
Weed Science Society of America
Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
Western Society of Weed Science

---

[i] https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2022/june/investment-in-u-s-public-agricultural-research-and-development-has-fallen-by-a-third-over-past-two-decades-lags-major-trade-competitors/
[ii] https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2022/june/investment-in-u-s-public-agricultural-research-and-development-has-fallen-by-a-third-over-past-two-decades-lags-major-trade-competitors/
[iii] https://www.aplu.org/wp-content/uploads/a-national-study-of-capital-infrastructure-at-colleges-and-schools-of-agriculture-an-update-1.pdf
[iv] https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/ag-and-food-statistics-charting-the-essentials/ag-and-food-sectors-and-the-economy/
[v] https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/agricultural-research-and-productivity/
[vi] https://globalagriculturalproductivity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-GAP_Report_final_110922.pdf
[vii] ift-whitepaper-012720final.pdf