

March 3, 2020

The Honorable Sanford Bishop  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Agriculture  
House Committee on Appropriations  
2632-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Fortenberry  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Agriculture  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1514 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Hoeven  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Agriculture  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
338 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Agriculture  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
313 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Bishop and Hoeven and Ranking Members Fortenberry and Merkley:

As your committees consider Appropriations for the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for Fiscal Year 2021, we respectfully request funding the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AgARDA), authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill.

The world has witnessed a dramatic increase in existential threats to agriculture – from infectious disease outbreaks to changing climates to labor challenges. Many of these challenges can be addressed through targeted, novel, early stage innovative agricultural research.

Modeled after the successes of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), the 2018 Farm Bill authorized AgARDA to foster research and development that would help to protect the US agriculture and food supply from threats, such as those posed by highly pathogenic African Swine Fever that has decimated one quarter of the global population of pigs or the severe labor shortages experienced by specialty crop growers that are straining their harvest capabilities.

AgARDA will leverage successful public-private partnerships to improve efficiency and accelerate research and development in pursuit of overcoming long-term and high-risk agricultural and food related research and development challenges.

With the specialized statutory hiring authorities and alternative contracting vehicles, combined with the strategic planning, and coordination and consultation, AgARDA allows significant achievements to occur more rapidly than in a conventional setting.

We urge you to fund the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority pilot project at the authorized level of \$50 million. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

American Dairy Coalition  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Seed Trade Association  
American Society for Microbiology  
American Society of Agronomy  
American Society of Plant Biologists  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
Association of American Universities  
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges  
California Fresh Fruit Association  
Colorado State University  
Crop Science Society of America  
Edge, Dairy Farmer Cooperative  
Entomological Society of America  
Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association  
Florida Tomato Exchange  
Iowa State University  
Kansas State University  
Michigan State University, AgBioResearch  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Cattlemen's Beef Association  
National Farmers Union  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Pork Producers Council  
National Turkey Federation  
North American Meat Institute  
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union  
Rural & Agriculture Council of America  
Society for Range Management  
Soil Science Society of America  
U.S. Cattlemen's Association  
Western Growers Association

cc:

Honorable Richard Shelby  
Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Honorable Nita Lowey  
Honorable Kay Granger