



FASEB

Federation of American Societies
for Experimental Biology

Representing Over 130,000 Researchers

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Testimony of the

Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

Prepared for the

**House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and
Related Agencies**

Representative Sanford Bishop Jr., Chair
Representative Jeff Fortenberry, Ranking Member

On

**FY 2020 Appropriations for the Department of Agriculture-Agriculture and Food
Research Initiative**

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) respectfully requests a minimum of \$700 million in fiscal year (FY) 2020 for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative.

The rising demand for agricultural products, along with the need for greater food security and improved sustainability, presents unprecedented challenges for the global agricultural system. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funds an interdisciplinary research portfolio that brings cutting-edge science to these complex problems. Key to these efforts is USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) grant program.¹

AFRI funds agricultural and food sciences research at colleges, universities, and other institutions nationwide.² Established by the Farm Bill in 2008, AFRI funding has resulted in numerous advancements, including new cultivars of wheat and better tools for monitoring and preventing avian flu outbreaks.

Additional resources are needed to advance the safety, quality, and nutritive value of food. Childhood obesity and community-based nutrition education programs funded by AFRI help families and communities make informed nutrition choices.³

Despite AFRI's progress – and the need for scientifically informed solutions – the program is appropriated at about 50 percent of its full authorization, leaving scores of innovative meritorious proposals unfunded every year.⁴ AFRI should be funded at its full authorization of \$700 million (\$285 million above FY 2019⁵), which would support about 400 additional research grants.

FASEB FY 2020 recommendation: at least \$700 million for AFRI

¹ <https://nifa.usda.gov/about-nifa>

² [AFRI Annual Review, Fiscal Year 2016](#). United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC.

³ [National Institute of Food and Agriculture: Health \(Accessed January 2019\)](#)

⁴ [AFRI 2016 Annual Review, Tables 1 and 2](#). United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC.

⁵ [H.J.Res.31 – Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019](#)