

November 9, 2015

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

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

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Farr
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support for USDA REE ERS and NASS FY16 Funding

Dear Appropriations Leaders,

The undersigned groups, which include various members of the Friends of Agricultural Statistics and Analysis, strongly support federal investment to advance agricultural statistics and research in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS) and the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) in fiscal 2016 (FY16) at levels that are at least equivalent to the agencies' fiscal year 2015 (FY15) levels. The FY15 appropriations levels are \$85.4M for ERS and \$172.4M for NASS (\$47.8M for the Census of Agriculture).

The U.S. agricultural economy relies on objective agricultural statistics and analysis to function properly and to support the success of U.S. agriculture domestically and in international trade. In previous letters this year, we've stated the consequences of reducing the appropriation for both the Economic Research Service and the National Agricultural Statistics Service. We encourage you to consider an appropriation for these agencies at levels that maintain their FY15 funding.

The information that ERS and NASS produce is essential to farms and agribusiness, government agricultural programs, and food policy. The efforts to strengthen policy-making in support of U.S. agricultural markets and expanded trade in 2015 are reinforced by maintaining these critical resources. These investments seem small, but have a great impact on millions of farm and agri-business operations throughout the supply chain. The statistics, data, and analysis provided by these agencies underpin the health and vitality of our U.S. agricultural sector.

If you have any specific questions with regard to agricultural data products related to your state, please contact agricultural.statistics@gmail.com. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of this information.

Thank you for all that you do on behalf of your great state and our great nation.

Sincerely,

Agricultural & Applied Economics Association
American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases
American Dairy Science Association
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Animal Science
American Statistical Association
American Sugar Alliance
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
Crop Science Society of America
CropLife America
Deere & Company
Federation of Animal Science Societies
Global Cold Chain Alliance
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Coalition for Food and Agriculture Research
National Farmers Union
National Organic Coalition
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
North American Regional Science Council
Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association
Poultry Science Association
Restaurant Services, Inc.
Soil Science Society of America
The Fertilizer Institute