



CONSORTIUM *of* SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

Analysis of the FY 2017 House Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill | April 19, 2016

The House Appropriations Committee has approved its [draft bill](#) for fiscal year (FY) 2017 funding for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies. The bill passed the Subcommittee by voice vote on April 13 and was marked up in the full Appropriations Committee on April 19.

At a Glance...

- **The House bill would provide the Economic Research Service with \$86 million, slightly above the FY 2016 level of \$85.4 million.** The Administration had proposed a 6.9 percent increase.
- **Under the House bill, the National Agricultural Statistics Service receive flat funding of \$168.4 million for FY 2017.**
- **The House bill includes \$1.3 billion (1.1%) for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.** The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative would receive a \$25 million increase.

Summarized below are the House Appropriations Committee's proposals for Economic Research Service, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

The Committee's full report can be found [here](#), and a webcast of the markup is posted on the Committee [website](#).

Economic Research Service and National Agricultural Statistics Service

Overall, the bill provides flat funding or very modest increases to USDA research and science agencies. The Economic Research Service (ERS), one of the Department of Agriculture's two statistical agencies, would receive \$86 million, or 0.7 percent above FY 2016 but 5.8 percent below the Administration's request. The entirety of the \$627,000 increase is directed for cooperative agreements on groundwater modeling and drought resilience. The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) would receive flat funding at \$168.4 million, \$8.2 million below the amount requested by the President. The Census of Agriculture, which NASS will conduct in 2017, would see a cut of \$306,000.

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

The bill would provide the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) with a \$14.7 million increase over FY 2017, bringing it to a total of \$1.3 billion, though the amount is \$32.9 million below the Administration's requested level. Expectedly, appropriators chose to reject the President's proposal to double funding for USDA's premiere competitive grants program, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), using a combination of discretionary and mandatory funds. However, the bill would give AFRI a \$25 million increase above FY 2016—bringing it to \$376 million—which is level with the

discretionary amount proposed in the budget request. Funding for research at State Agricultural Experiment Stations under the *Hatch Act* would remain flat.

The Committee report includes the following language related to AFRI-funded research on childhood obesity:

“Within the funds made available for AFRI, the Committee encourages NIFA to support innovative efforts to address the unique challenges faced in addressing childhood obesity through a combination of family education and clinical studies focused on early life influences on obesity risk; the development of eating behavior during infancy and early childhood; the role of sleep in the development of childhood obesity; and obesity prevention strategies for low-income children in childcare and educational settings.”

The report also instructs NIFA to develop a plan for ensuring AFRI research meets the needs of the U.S. organic agriculture sector and is not duplicative of other efforts; to support research, development, education, and training related to the deployment of unmanned aircraft systems (i.e. drones) for improved agriculture and environmental stewardship; and to ensure it is adequately addressing the research needs of urban agriculture producers.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	House vs. FY 2016	House vs. Request
Economic Research Service	85.4	91.3	86.0	0.7%	-5.8%
National Agricultural Statistics Service	168.4	176.6	168.4	0.0%	-4.7%
Census of Agriculture	42.2	42.2	41.9	-0.8%	-0.8%
National Institute of Food and Agriculture	1326.5	1374.0	1341.2	1.1%	-2.4%
Agricultural and Food Research Initiative	350.0	375.0	375.0	7.1%	0.0%
Hatch Act	243.7	243.7	243.7	0.0%	0.0%

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