

March 12, 2008

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comment on behalf of the AFRI Coalition.

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) is the largest of several interrelated competitive grants programs administered by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The AFRI Coalition is a group of scientific societies and science advocacy organizations with diverse research interests who support a full appropriation of AFRI at \$700 million dollars per year.

We ask that you keep AFRI on your radar because we believe that robust funding of AFRI shows strong commitment to America's farmers, consumers, researchers, and food and rural entrepreneurs, bringing them the tools necessary to maintain the country's competitiveness.

We submit that work performed under AFRI helps to protect the natural resource base and environment, enhance human nutrition, improve our fundamental understanding of plants and animals, and foster vibrant rural communities.

AFRI COALITION MEMBERS:

1. American Phytopathological Society
2. American Society for Horticultural Science
3. American Society for Microbiology
4. American Society for Nutrition
5. American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers
6. American Society of Agronomy
7. American Society of Animal Science
8. American Society of Plant Biologists
9. Aquatic Plant Management Society
10. Biotechnology Industry Organization
11. Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics
12. Crop Science Society of America
13. Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology
14. Federation of Animal Science Societies
15. Institute of Food Technologists
16. Iowa State University
17. Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
18. National Association of Plant Breeders
19. National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
20. National Organic Coalition
21. National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
22. North Central Weed Science Society
23. Northeastern Weed Science Society
24. Society of Nematologists
25. Soil Science Society of America
26. Southern Weed Science Society
27. The Rodale Institute
28. Union of Concerned Scientists
29. Weed Science Society of America
30. Western Society of Weed Science