

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RE- LATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

NONDEPARTMENTAL WITNESSES

[The following testimonies were received by the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for inclusion in the record. The submitted materials relate to the fiscal year 2010 budget request for programs within the subcommittee's jurisdiction.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AD HOC COALITION

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, this statement is respectfully submitted on behalf of the ad hoc coalition composed of the organizations listed below. The coalition supports sustained funding for our Nation's food aid programs, including Titles I and II of Public Law 480, and therefore strongly opposes all proposals to divert funding away from these important programs.

FOOD AID'S UNIQUE ROLE

The donation of American commodities as food aid has been the cornerstone of United States and global foreign assistance programs since their inception. However, food aid has evolved in important ways over the years. Food aid began as an outgrowth of American farm policy that generated sizeable surpluses and American foreign policy characterized by a Cold War competition for the hearts and minds of impoverished populations across the globe. Since then, American farm policy has evolved away from surpluses, and therefore food can no longer be mischaracterized as "dumping" of excess commodities. Indeed, the United States now purchases commodities for donation on the open market. In today's economic climate, the need to provide societal stability, avoid failed States, prevent terrorist breeding grounds, and bolster America's image abroad has never been more important.

In recent years, debate in the foreign assistance community has at times questioned the role of food aid. Led by European Union trade negotiators who have complained about American food aid as a smokescreen to shield their own protectionist agriculture policies, some have bemoaned the potential distorting effects that food donations might have on local agriculture where U.S. food is disbursed. Other opponents of food aid have suggested that perhaps we would be better off if we did not donate commodities, but instead relied solely on agricultural development and local purchases. Like others in the aid community, we look forward to the day when food aid is no longer needed, but we are nowhere near that goal today. Our in-kind food aid programs are needed now more than at any time in their history.

Donated food aid is the most reliable means of introducing food to needy communities in order to combat hunger and save lives. This is not to say that other, creative means available under the Foreign Assistance Act or elsewhere have no role. To the contrary, these are an important part of the aid "tool kit", which can and should be employed to further developmental goals, including food self-sufficiency among food aid recipients and to address unforeseeable breaks in the food aid pipe-

line. But those that paint food aid as unnecessary and even harmful exhibit shortsightedness that does a great disservice to those we all strive to help.

The need for food aid today is stronger than ever. Hunger is a powerful destabilizing force, and America faces a convergence of terrorist and other security threats from failed and unstable states that feed on ill will toward our Nation. The U.N. WFP tells us that in recent years the food insecure have been hit by a “perfect storm of increases in food prices coupled with export restrictions imposed by traditional regional and local food exporters. Here at home, the economy has lost 5.1 million jobs since December 2007. U.S. food aid programs not only further our humanitarian and food security goals by allowing Americans to contribute to the needy in a tangible way, but the programs also provide stable jobs for Americans. These programs help us get more from our aid dollars both here and abroad.

THE SHARP DECLINE IN FOOD AID

Despite the broad, bipartisan support that food aid has long enjoyed, shipments declined by 71 percent, from 9.1 million tons in 1999 to a low of 2.7 million tons in 2007. These shipment levels are less than one-third of what they were a decade ago even though the most fragile communities now find themselves in the grip of an unprecedented food crisis. Therefore, we respectfully request that this steady erosion of food aid be reversed, and that funding be at least maintained at the \$2.5 billion level appropriated in fiscal year 2008 to ensure the continued effectiveness and stability of these important and historically successful programs.

FOOD AID VERSUS CASH DONATIONS FOR “LOCAL AND REGIONAL PURCHASES”

Food for Peace, which provides farm products grown in the United States to millions overseas in bags marked “From the American People,” is a clear and tangible sign of America’s concern and generosity to its recipients. This same “in-kind” composition generates important economic benefits to our Nation—vital jobs in many industries, farm income, markets for agriculture processors, and revenue for American transportation providers and ports. It also generates Federal, State, and local tax revenues, as well as secondary economic effects, such as farm equipment purchases and farm family spending in our broader economy. For these reasons, a strong domestic constituency for food aid, in good economic times and bad, has sustained America’s food aid programs through decades of competing funding priorities. As Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack said during the 2009 International Food Aid Conference, “[O]ur capacity to meet this extraordinary need [of global hunger] must start with a commitment to build a strong economy here in the United States. Without that strong economy, we cannot make a strong commitment to International Food Aid.”

Furthermore, for decades American agriculture interests have provided a dependable source of high-quality nutritious food that is not always reliably available to local or regional markets. Given the ongoing food crisis for many nations, in terms of price, availability, and quality, and considering the recent actions by some food-exporting nations to halt food exports when domestic shortages occur, the amount and dependability of U.S.-produced food aid in Public Law 480 is crucial to our humanitarian assistance effort.

Using American taxpayer dollars to purchase foreign agricultural commodities would forego the unique benefits of U.S. food aid, such as predictable food aid supply and good American jobs, when our country and food-deficit areas need them most. Nevertheless, additional resources have already been directed to so-called “local and regional purchases”: USAID was recently provided new funding of \$125 million under the Foreign Assistance Act through the International Disaster and Famine Assistance Account and Congress also established a \$60 million CCC-funded USDA pilot program in the 2008 Farm Bill to examine the potential dangers and benefits of this approach before considering further expansion of its use in conjunction with a strong in-kind food aid program centered around American commodities.

RESTORATION OF TITLE I/FOOD FOR PROGRESS

Recent focus has been upon Title II emergency food aid, but the Title I concessional sales food aid program is also an important tool in the aid “toolbox”. In order to ensure that countries with the most dire need have sufficient donated food aid, the coalition recommends that USDA offer the Title I concessional sales program to countries that can afford it. Title I allows us to leverage our aid dollars, helping more people in need with our limited budget resources.

To the extent that the Title I funding truly cannot be used for concessional sales, it may be converted to donations on full grant terms through the Food for Progress (“FFP”) program. There is strong demand for Title I funding channeled through

FFP: For fiscal year 2007, 100 proposals were submitted by PVOs and 16 by governments, but only 11 new proposals were approved.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Chairman, the coalition is committed to maintaining the funding for America's food aid programs to meet humanitarian needs, enhance the potential for economic growth in recipient countries, and stimulate the economy here at home. Our recommendation is to increase, over time, annual food assistance with a blend of programs supported by direct appropriations and CCC program authorities. Specifically, the coalition respectfully recommends the following:

- Full funding of Title II at the \$2.5 billion authorized by law, which is consistent with the fiscal year 2008 appropriation level.
- Title I/Food for Progress program levels should be restored to responsible levels so that the unique efficiencies of the program are not lost and more people can be fed.
- In committee report language, the Committee should reiterate its fiscal year 2003 directive to the administration to make greater use of existing CCC authorities to expand food aid to regions in critical need.

Public Law 480 Food for Peace is the world's most successful foreign assistance program, and has saved countless lives. Its straightforward delivery of American food to the hungry fills a clear and immediate need overseas, and its unique architecture has made it a successful program here at home that has endured for over fifty years. While we support creative efforts to address the root causes of hunger, we cannot emphasize enough that now, more than ever, the world needs Public Law 480 food aid.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

America Cargo Transport Corp.	National Association of Wheat Growers
American Maritime Congress	National Corn Growers Association
American Maritime Officers	National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
American Maritime Officers'	National Oilseed Processors Association
Service American Peanut Council	National Potato Council
American Soybean Association	Seafarers International Union
Global Food and Nutrition Inc.	Sealift, Inc.
International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots	Tosi Maritime Consultants, LLC
Liberty Maritime Corporation	Transportation Institute
Maersk Line, Ltd.	United Maritime Group, LLC
Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association	U.S. Dry Bean Council
Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial Development	U.S. Dry Pea & Lentil Council
	U.S. Wheat Associates, Inc.
	USA Rice Federation

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) has identified five general areas for increased emphasis and funding for United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs in the fiscal year 2010 agriculture spending bill. They are:

- Programs that strengthen rural communities;
- Programs that improve USDA efficiency;
- Programs that enhance and improve food safety and protection;
- Programs that expand export markets for agriculture; and
- Programs that insure the availability of crop protection tools for food production.

Within these categories, we would like to call your attention to specific programs deserving of your support.

Programs that Strengthen Rural Communities

The lack of high-speed, modern telecommunications systems in rural America hinders its residents' access to educational, medical and business opportunities, and therefore the economic growth of rural America. We support \$1.3 billion for loans and grants administered by the Rural Utilities Service to increase rural broadband capacity and telecommunications services and to fund the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program.

Rural entrepreneurs often lack access to the capital and technical assistance necessary to start new businesses. These new ventures are needed for rural communities to sustain themselves and contribute to our national economy. AFBF supports funding for USDA Rural Development (RD) programs that foster new business de-

velopment in rural communities. These programs include Value-Added Agricultural Production Grants, Business and Industry Direct and Guaranteed Loans, and the Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program.

Many rural communities lack access to the tax base necessary to provide modern community facilities like fire stations. We support funding for RD's Community Facility Direct and Guaranteed Loans, which finance the construction, enlargement or improvement of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns with populations of less than 20,000.

Renewable energy production holds great promise as a means to help America's farmers and rural communities contribute to our national economy and enhance our national security. We support increasing funding for the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Program (REEP) by \$250 million. REEP offers grants, guaranteed loans and combination grant/guaranteed loans to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses purchase and install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements in rural areas.

The Revolving Fund (RFP) Grant Program helps communities acquire safe drinking water and sanitary, environmentally sound waste disposal facilities. With dependable water facilities, rural communities can attract families and businesses that will invest in the community and improve the quality of life for all residents. We support funding for this important program.

AFBF supports funding for and opposes any effort to eliminate the Resource Conservation and Development program. This vital program supports economic development and resource protection. This program, in cooperation with rural development councils, helps local volunteers create new businesses, form cooperatives, develop marketing and agri-tourism activities, improve water quality and flood control, improve leadership and other business skills and implement renewable energy projects.

We support full funding for Agriculture in the Classroom, a national grassroots program coordinated by the USDA. This worthy program helps students gain a greater awareness of the role of agriculture in the economy and society, so that they may become citizens who support wise agricultural policies.

Programs that Improve USDA Efficiency

Farm Bureau strongly supports providing an additional \$250 million to USDA to improve computer technology in the Farm Service Agency (FSA). FSA currently operates on the oldest technology system within USDA and one of the oldest systems in the entire Federal Government. These outdated systems create enormous inefficiencies throughout the department, and it is unclear how long these antiquated systems can continue to support increasingly complex farm programs. Systems across agencies under USDA jurisdiction cannot communicate with each other, which could lead to improper payments and often requires duplicative paperwork and additional labor hours. Upgrading FSA computer technology now will lead to greater efficiencies down the road and could prevent a future system failure.

Programs that Enhance and Improve Food Safety and Protection

Americans spend more than \$1 trillion annually on food—nearly half of it in restaurants, schools and other places outside the home. Consumers have a reasonable expectation that the food products they buy are safe. The continued safety of food is crucial to consumers, as well as production agriculture and the food industry. AFBF believes that sufficient, reliable Federal funding for the government's food and feed safety and protection functions is vital to this effort.

Therefore, we recommend that funding be increased for food protection at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and at the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and directed to:

- Increased education and training of inspectors;
- Additional science-based inspection, targeted according to risk;
- Research and development of scientifically based rapid testing procedures and tools;
- Accurate and timely responses to outbreaks that identify contaminated products, remove them from the market and minimize disruption to producers; and
- Indemnification for producers who suffer marketing losses due to inaccurate government-advised recalls or warnings.

We also support authorized funding of \$2.5 million for the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank (FARAD). FARAD aids veterinarians in establishing science-based recommendations for drug withdrawal intervals, critical for both food safety and animal health. No other government program provides or duplicates the food safety information FARAD provides to the public. Without the critical FARAD pro-

gram, producers may be forced to euthanize animals or dispose of meat, milk and eggs due to the lack of withdrawal information.

Programs that Expand Export Markets for Agriculture

AFBF supports funding at authorized levels for:

- Public Law 480 programs which serve as the primary means by which the United States provides needed foreign food assistance through the purchase of U.S. commodities. In addition to providing short-term humanitarian assistance, the program helps to develop long-term commercial export markets.
- The International Food for Education Program which is an effective platform for delivering severely needed food aid and educational assistance.

The Market Access Program, the Foreign Market Development Program, the Emerging Markets Program and the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops program are effective export development and expansion programs. These programs have resulted in record increases in demand for U.S. agriculture and food products abroad and should be fully funded.

As trade increases between countries, so too does the threat of new invasive and noxious pests that can destroy America's agricultural and natural resources. Therefore, we support full funding for the following Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) programs:

- The APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine personnel and facilities, especially the plant inspection stations, are necessary to protect U.S. agriculture from costly pest problems that enter the United States from foreign lands.
- APHIS trade issues resolution and management activities are essential for an effective response when other countries raise pest and disease concerns (i.e., sanitary and phytosanitary measures) to prohibit the entry of American products. APHIS must be active at U.S. ports and in overseas locations to monitor pest and disease conditions, negotiate trading protocols and to intervene when foreign officials wrongfully prevent the entry of American imports.
- APHIS Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) play an important role in overseeing the permit, notification and deregulation process for products of biotechnology. BRS personnel and activities are essential to ensure public confidence and international acceptance of biotechnology products.

Full funding for the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) is urgently needed to maintain services in an agency that has been significantly depleted in recent years. We urge continued support for the Office of the Secretary for cross-cutting trade negotiations and biotechnology resources.

The U.S. Codex Office is essential to developing harmonized international standards for food and food products. Codex standards provide uniformity in food rules and regulations by allowing countries to adopt similar levels of safety protection for consumers while concurrently facilitating transparency in food trade.

Programs that Insure the Availability of Information on Crop Protection Tools Used for Food Production

Farmers need access to reliable and affordable crop protection chemicals. Farm Bureau supports \$8.4 million be provided to the National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS), specifically for the continuation of agricultural chemical-use surveys for fruits, vegetables, floriculture and nursery crops. NASS surveys provide current and relevant data about the use of agricultural chemicals involved in the production of food, fiber and various horticultural products. The information collected helps USDA to conduct reliable analysis of product use and EPA to characterize the potential theoretical risks associated with agricultural chemical products. Only with reliable data can USDA and EPA accurately access the economic benefits of agricultural chemicals and make responsible decisions about product registration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN HONEY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Chairman Kohl and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Kenneth Haff, and I currently serve as President of the American Honey Producers Association ("AHPA"). I am pleased today to submit the following statement on behalf of the AHPA, a national organization of commercial beekeepers actively engaged in honey production and crop pollination throughout the country. The purpose of this statement is to bring to your attention the continued threats faced by American beekeepers and the billions of dollars in U.S. agriculture that rely upon honeybee pollination services. With those threats in mind, we respectfully request an appropriation of at least \$20 million to combat CCD and to conduct other essential honeybee research through the ARS and other agencies at the Department of Agriculture, as provided for in the 2008 Farm Bill.

As I speak to you today, U.S. beekeepers are facing the most extraordinary of challenges. Colony Collapse Disorder (“CCD”) has continued to ravage bee colonies across the United States, moving from one hive to another in unpredictable patterns. The result has been the death of up to 90 percent of the bee colonies in affected apiaries. In early 2007, the National Research Council at the National Academy of Sciences characterized the beekeeping industry as being in “crisis mode”—a point echoed and re-emphasized in last year’s USDA action plan regarding honeybee threats. Hundreds of news articles and many in-depth media reports have continued to chronicle the looming disaster facing American beekeepers and the producers of over 90 fruit, vegetable and fiber crops that rely on honeybee pollination. However, despite extensive and coordinated work by experts from government, academia and the private sector, the definitive causes of and solutions for CCD have yet to be identified.

The emergence of CCD shines a bright light on the inadequacies of current honeybee research, particularly on the lack of capacity to address new challenges and to take long-term steps to assure honeybee health. In saying this, we do not mean to diminish the vital, ongoing work of ARS and other honeybee scientists. They do their job and they do it very well. In recent years, however, honeybee research has become largely confined to four ARS laboratories that provide the first line of defense against exotic parasitic mites, Africanized bees, viruses, brood diseases, pests, pathogens and other conditions. Universities and the private sector have substantially scaled back their efforts due to a lack of available funds. Moreover, ARS laboratories lack sufficient resources even for current honeybee research priorities. For example, we understand that ARS currently lacks funds even to test high priority CCD samples that ARS scientists have already collected.

In past fiscal years, this Subcommittee has supported the beekeeping industry through funding for agricultural research activities. As you know, in the fiscal year 2003 cycle, the Subcommittee rejected a proposal that would have resulted in the elimination of three ARS laboratories that are indispensable to the survival of our industry. Again, in the fiscal year 2009 omnibus appropriations bill, Congress preserved funding for the Weslaco, Texas ARS research facility despite a recommendation in President Bush’s fiscal year 2009 budget proposal to close that facility. Those were wise decisions. Without these labs, the American honeybee may not have survived the various above-mentioned threats, and the infrastructure would not exist today upon which an aggressive research campaign may continue to be built.

For fiscal year 2009, Congress appropriated an additional \$800,000 in research funding specifically designated to combat CCD. We appreciate and support the increased funding for CCD research, and we sincerely thank this Subcommittee for its diligent attention to the crises before us. However, we believe strongly that an increase in \$800,000 does not come close to meeting the growing demands imposed by CCD and other threats to honeybee health. Instead, to meet the needs of the American beekeeper and to stave off a pending agricultural crisis for growers and consumers, we respectfully urge the Subcommittee to appropriate \$20 million in new research funds dedicated toward CCD and other honeybee health research projects. As you know, the 2008 Farm Bill included an authorization of \$100 million over five years for such initiatives. A \$20 million appropriation in fiscal year 20010 would reflect that authorization, and would provide government, academic and private sector researchers with the vital resources needed to combat CCD and other emerging threats and assure long-term honeybee health. Such funding would be a prudent investment in the U.S. farm infrastructure, which, along with U.S. consumers, derives tens of billions of dollars of benefit directly from honeybee pollination. Finally, in addition to the new and significant additional funding proposed for CCD research needs, we specifically suggest increased funding in the amount of at least \$250,000 for promising honeybee genome research at the ARS laboratory in Baton Rouge. Genome research is likely to be central to resolving mysterious threats such as CCD and to ensuring bee health and productivity for generations to come.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HONEYBEES TO U.S. AGRICULTURE

Honeybees are an irreplaceable part of the U.S. agricultural infrastructure. Honeybee pollination is critical in the production of more than 90 food, fiber, and seed crops and directly results in more than \$15 billion in U.S. farm output. The role of pollination is also vital to the health of all Americans given the dietary importance of fruit, vegetables and nuts, most of which are dependent on pollination. Honeybees are necessary for the production of such diverse crops as almonds, apples, oranges, melons, blueberries, broccoli, tangerines, cranberries, strawberries,

vegetables, alfalfa, soybeans, sunflower, and cotton, among others. In fact, honeybees pollinate about one-third of the human diet.

The importance of this pollination to contemporary agriculture cannot be understated. In fact, the value of such pollination is vastly greater than the total value of honey and wax produced by honeybees. More than 140 billion honeybees, representing 2 million colonies, are transported by U.S. beekeepers across the country every year to pollinate crops.

The importance of honeybees—and the U.S. honey industry which supplies the honeybees for pollination—is illustrated by the pollination of California’s almond crop. California grows 100 percent of the Nation’s almond crop and supplies 80 percent of the world’s almonds. Honeybees are transported from all over the Nation to pollinate California almonds, which are the largest single crop requiring honeybee pollination. More than one million honeybee hives are needed to pollinate the 600,000 acres of almond groves that line California’s Central Valley. Thus, nearly half of the managed honey-producing colonies in the United States are involved in pollinating California almonds in February and March.

Many other U.S. agriculture producers require extensive honeybee pollination for their crops, including blueberry, avocado, and cotton growers. Cattle and farm-raised catfish industries also benefit from honeybee pollination, as pollination is important for growing alfalfa, which is fodder for cattle and farm-raised fish. As OnEarth magazine has noted, the fate of California’s almond crop rests “on the slender back of the embattled honeybee.”

THREATS TO U.S. HONEYBEES

Since 1984, the survival of the honeybee has been threatened by continuing infestations of mites, pests and other conditions for which appropriate controls must continually be developed by scientists at the four ARS laboratories and other highly qualified research institutions. These longstanding and worsening infestations have caused great strain on the American honeybee to the point where some U.S. honey producers have felt the need—for the first time in over 80 years—to import bees from New Zealand and Australia for pollination. Ironically, scientists and industry leaders have since concluded that there is likely a correlation between the introduction of foreign bees and the emergence of CCD, the newest and greatest challenge to the survival of American honeybees.

However, the specific cause of CCD and treatments for it remain elusive to both beekeepers and scientists. The research is complex, as there are a wide range of factors that—either alone or in combination—may be causes of this serious condition. Areas for research include the stress from the movement of bees to different parts of the country for extensive commercial pollination, the additional stress of pollinating crops, such as almonds, that provide little honey to the bees, and the impact of certain crop pesticides and genetic plants with altered pollination characteristics. Continuing infestations of the highly destructive Varroa mite, combined with other pests and mites, are also thought to compromise the immune systems of bees and may leave them more vulnerable to CCD. At the same time, researchers will need to focus on the many reported instances in which otherwise healthy, pest-free, stationary bee colonies are also suffering collapse or problems with reproduction.

While researchers continue in their exhaustive effort to isolate the specific causes of CCD, the AHPA strongly urges the Congress to work with the Department of Agriculture to ensure that exotic bees and the threats they pose are restricted from importation into the United States. Under current law, the Department of Agriculture has the duty to refuse a shipment’s entry into the United States where the export certificate identifies a bee disease or parasite of concern to the United States or an undesirable species or subspecies of honeybee, including the Oriental honeybee or “*Apis cerana*” (7 CFR § 322.6(a)(2) (2004)). In the case of Australian honeybees, officials in that country have detected the presence of the *Apis cerana* honeybee throughout their country, a species known to harbor parasitic mites and possibly viruses that do not currently exist in the United States. At the time of discovery, officials tracked a large number of *Apis cerana* bees, indicating that the species had been in Australia for some time without detection. While Australian officials claim to have quarantined these bees and destroyed hives known to contain them, we have heard reports that new discoveries have taken place since such claims by Australian officials, indicating an insufficient capacity by Australian officials to accurately assess risks. AHPA believes that this development allows no other conclusion but for the Department to suspend entry of Australian honeybees.

ONGOING AND NEW CRITICAL RESEARCH

AHPA, other industry officials, and leading scientists believe that an important contributing factor in the current CCD crisis is the longstanding, substantial underfunding of U.S. bee research. In recent years, the Federal Government has spent very modest amounts at each ARS Honeybee Research Laboratory—for a sector that directly contributes \$15 billion per year to the U.S. farm economy. Worse still, funding amounts have not been increased to account for growing bee health concerns. USDA honeybee researchers remain underfunded. As noted above, current funding shortages have caused important CCD-related bee samples to go untested. Additionally, despite their ability to provide significant and innovative new research on emerging bee threats, researchers in the academic and private sectors also lack the necessary financial resources for these vital tasks. With the emergence of CCD, there is a serious gap between the threats faced by U.S. honeybees and the capacity of our researchers to respond. Closing this gap will require significant new resources. It is estimated that each new scientist, technician and the support materials that they need will cost an additional \$500,000 per year.

To address these challenges, the AHPA respectfully requests an appropriation of at least \$20 million to combat CCD and conduct other essential honeybee research. These funds should be allocated in accordance with authorizations provided in the 2008 Farm Bill. Specifically, the funds should be divided among the following Department of Agriculture agencies and programs: (1) the four ARS Bee Research Laboratories for new personnel, facility improvement, and additional research; (2) the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to conduct a nation-wide honeybee pest and pathogen surveillance program; (3) the ARS Area Wide CCD Research Program divided evenly between the Beltsville, MD and the Tucson, Arizona research laboratories to identify causes and solutions for CCD in affected States; (4) the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service at the Department of Agriculture to fund extension and research grants to investigate the following: honey bee biology, immunology, and ecology; honey bee genomics; native bee crop pollination and habitat conservation; native bee taxonomy and ecology; pollination biology; sublethal effects of insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides on honey bees, native pollinators, and other beneficial insects; the effects of genetically-modified crops, including the interaction of genetically-modified crops with honey bees and other native pollinators; honey, bumble, and other native bee parasites and pathogens effects on other native pollinators; and (5) the additional ARS research facilities in New York, Florida, California, Utah, and Texas for research on honey and native bee physiology, insect pathology, insect chemical ecology, and honey and native bee toxicology.

Since the beekeeping industry is too small to support the cost of needed research, publicly-funded honeybee research by the four ARS bee laboratories is absolutely key to the survival of the U.S. honey and pollination industry. For example, the pinhead-sized Varroa mite is systematically destroying bee colonies and prior to CCD was considered the most serious threat to honeybees. Tracheal mites are another contributing factor to the loss of honeybees. Tracheal mites infest the breathing tubes of adult honeybees and also feed on the bees' blood. The mites essentially clog the bees' breathing tubes, blocking the flow of oxygen and eventually killing the infested bees.

The industry is also plagued by a honeybee bacterial disease that has become resistant to antibiotics designed to control it, and a honeybee fungal disease for which there is no known treatment. These pests and diseases, especially Varroa mites and the bacterium causing American foulbrood, are now resistant to chemical controls in many regions of the country. Further, we have seen that these pests are building resistance to newly-developed chemicals more quickly than in the past, thereby limiting the longevity of chemical controls.

As previously mentioned, the cause or causes of CCD are unknown. Thus, pest, viral and bacterial disease research takes on added significance. First, pest, viral and bacterial disease research may itself provide insight into the discovery of CCD's root causes. Second, whether pests and bacterial diseases are directly a factor in CCD or not, they nonetheless continue to threaten bee population health and vitality. Given CCD's particularly devastating impact on bee populations, even greater emphasis must be placed on mitigating known threats in order to achieve the overall goal of ensuring adequate honey production and pollination capacity.

In addition to pest and bacterial disease research, the sequencing of the honeybee genome in 2006 at Baylor University has opened the door to creating highly effective solutions to bee health and population problems via marker-assisted breeding. Marker-assisted breeding would permit the rapid screening of potential breeders for specific DNA sequences that underlie specific desirable honeybee traits. The

sequenced honeybee genome is the necessary key that will allow scientists to discover the important DNA sequences. Additional funding for the ARS research laboratory at Baton Rouge will assure that this critically important work goes forward.

Because of the sequenced honeybee genome, it is now possible to apply molecular biological studies to the development of marker-assisted breeding of honeybees. Marker-facilitated selection offers the first real opportunity to transform the beekeeping industry from one that has been dependent upon a growing number of expensive pesticides and antibiotics into an industry that is free of chemical inputs and that is economically viable in today's competitive global marketplace. Additionally, this new sequencing capacity may prove central to identifying both the causes of and solutions to CCD. New pathogens have recently been identified in the United States that are thought to be associated with CCD. Genetic research can be utilized to determine whether a comparative susceptibility to such pathogens exists among various bee populations, and if so, can serve to facilitate breeding with enhanced resistance.

The four ARS Honeybee Research Laboratories work together to provide research solutions to problems facing businesses dependent on the health and vitality of honeybees. The key findings of these laboratories are used by honey producers to protect their producing colonies and by farmers and agribusinesses to ensure the efficient pollination of crops. Each of the four ARS Honeybee Research Laboratories (which are different in function from the ARS Wild Bee Research Laboratory at Logan, Utah) focuses on different problems facing the U.S. honey industry and undertakes research that is vital to sustaining honey production and assuring essential pollination services in this country. Furthermore, each of the four ARS Honeybee Research Laboratories has unique strengths and each is situated and equipped to support independent research programs which would be difficult, and in many cases impossible, to conduct elsewhere. Given the multi-factor research capacity needed to address the scourge of CCD, it is important that each research laboratory is permitted to continue and expand upon its unique strengths.

And while to date the four ARS Research Laboratories have been the backbone of American Honeybee research, we do not believe that those four facilities alone—even when fully funded—will have the capacity to meet today's research needs. This is why last year, after analyzing the new and serious threats to U.S. honeybees, Congress, representatives of the farm sector and leading researchers developed the research priorities that were incorporated into both the House and Senate versions of the Farm Bill and in separate House and Senate pollination legislation. In addition to increased resources for ARS research, these experts pressed for new funding, through CSREES, for government, academic and private sector research. They also urged new bee surveillance programs through the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to address the alarming lack of accurate information about the condition of U.S. bee colonies.

One particularly effective way of adding needed capacity and innovative expertise in the effort to ensure honeybee health would be to reinvigorate private sector and university bee research initiatives. For many years, these sectors played a vital role in honeybee research, and many leading universities have significant bee research capabilities. In recent years, non-federal agency research has substantially declined due to a lack of support for such initiatives. Funding the 2008 Farm Bill authorization of \$10.26 million for the Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Services (CSREES) would go a long way toward achieving this goal.

CSREES is tasked with advancing knowledge for agriculture by supporting research, education, and extension programs. Funds may be channeled through the Department to researchers at land-grant institutions, other institutions of higher learning, Federal agencies, or the private sector. The requested funding for CSREES would provide important flexibility in allocating badly needed Federal dollars among government, private sector and university researchers. The recipients would provide more widespread research on honeybee biology, immunology, ecology, and genomics, pollination biology, and investigations into the effects on honeybees of potentially harmful chemicals, pests, other outside influences, and genetically modified crops. The result of such funds would be to ensure flexible financing with a comprehensive plan for battling CCD, pests, and other ongoing and future honeybee threats.

Additionally, the same coalition of experts identified a need for a honeybee pest and pathogen surveillance program. Although significant data exists on American honey production, comparably less and lower quality data exists on beekeepers and bees. Providing \$2.31 million under the 2008 Farm Bill authorizations to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service at the Department of Agriculture would allow the Department to utilize such data to better respond to pest and disease outbreaks, and to compile data that may better enable prediction of new threats. Given the

roughly \$15 billion added to the U.S. farm economy each year by honeybees, this is certainly a worthwhile investment in the honeybee and pollinator industry.

INDUSTRY WORKFORCE VULNERABILITIES

Beekeeping is a highly skilled trade that requires extensive training before workers are able to handle, monitor, and treat bees. For nearly ten years, American beekeepers have relied heavily on Nicaraguan workers hired through the H-2A visa program to staff complex honey production and pollination operations.

Commercial beekeeping has become increasingly challenging in recent years with the emergence of new diseases and pests that threaten bee health, including American foul brood, tracheal and varroa mites, chalkbrood, and most recently, Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Nicaraguan H-2A beneficiaries are trained to identify these threats and to treat the bees skillfully and appropriately. Additionally, commercial beekeepers place hives on farms and ranches in hundreds of locations throughout multiple towns and counties, often in hard-to-find back road areas. Training new workers to find these hives and to comply with the requirements of landowners can alone take months. Finally, Nicaraguan workers are trained on a wide variety of equipment necessary to the industry, including honey extractors, forklifts, and large trucks used to haul equipment and bees to and from warehouses and apiaries.

Unfortunately, on December 18, 2008, the Department of Homeland Security published a final rule that changed existing law so that H-2A visa "petitions may only be approved for nationals of countries that the Secretary of Homeland Security has designated as participating countries." The list, published without advance warning names 28 "participating countries", including Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Absent from the list is Nicaragua. And although the rule provides the Secretary of Homeland Security with discretionary authority to approve nationals from non-participating countries if it is "in the U.S. interest", this discretion has yet to be exercised with respect to beekeeper petitions. Without sufficient guidance on the "U.S. Interest" test, the effect will be to ensure that no Nicaraguan worker petitions are approved in 2009, forcing some beekeepers to close down operations.

The AHPA does not wish to question broader national security or immigration policy rationales for restricting the participating country list. However, in this instance, Nicaraguan workers have provided an invaluable service to America's honey production and pollination industries for nearly ten years. In all cases, the workers have returned to their home country at the end of the pollination season and the beekeepers who employ them have taken great strides to ensure that they comply with immigration and labor laws in petitioning the government for H-2A visas. Refusing approval this year will seriously limit America's pollination capacity, directly threatening \$15 billion in U.S. agricultural interests.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we wish to thank you again for your past support of honeybee research and for your understanding of the critical importance of these ARS laboratories. By way of summary, in fiscal year 2010, the American Honey Producers Association strongly encourages at least \$20 million in new funding for CCD and other honeybee research spread among the four ARS Honeybee Research Laboratories, other ARS research facilities across the country, the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service at the Department of Agriculture, and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. AHPA also opposes importation of Australian honeybees and unnecessary denial of H-2A workers from Nicaragua. Only through critical research can we have a viable U.S. beekeeping industry and continue to provide stable and affordable supplies of bee-pollinated crops, which make up fully one-third of the U.S. diet. I would be pleased to provide answers to any questions that you or your colleagues may have.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and the 32 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) that compose the list of 1994 Land Grant Institutions, thank you for this opportunity to share our funding requests for fiscal year 2010.

This statement is presented in three parts: (a) a summary of our fiscal year 2010 funding recommendations, (b) a brief background on Tribal Colleges and Universities, and (c) an outline of the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions' plan

for using our land grant programs to fulfill the agricultural potential of American Indian communities, and to ensure that American Indians have the skills and support needed to maximize the economic potential of their resources.

SUMMARY OF REQUESTS

We respectfully request the following funding levels for fiscal year 2010 for our land grant programs established within the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and the Rural Development mission area. In CSREES, we specifically request: \$5.0 million for the 1994 Institutions' competitive extension grants program; \$3.0 million for the 1994 Institutions' competitive research grants program; \$3.342 million for the higher education equity grants; \$12 million payment into the Native American endowment fund; and in the Rural Development—Rural Community Advancement Program (RCAP), that \$5.0 million be provided for each of the next 5 fiscal years for the TCU Essential Community Facilities Grants Program. The grants help to address the critical facilities and infrastructure needs at the colleges to increase our capacity to participate fully as land grant partners.

BACKGROUND ON TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The first Morrill Act was enacted in 1862 specifically to bring education to the people and to serve their fundamental needs. Today, 147 years after enactment of the first land grant legislation, the 1994 Land Grant Institutions, as much as any other higher education institutions, exemplify the original intent of the land grant legislation, as they are truly community-based institutions.

The Tribal College Movement was launched in the past 40 years with the establishment of Navajo Community College, now Diné College, serving the Navajo Nation. Rapid growth of the TCU Movement soon followed, primarily in the Northern Plains region. In 1972, six tribally controlled colleges established the American Indian Higher Education Consortium to provide a support network for member institutions. Today, AIHEC represents 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities—32 of which compose the current list of 1994 Land Grant Institutions located in 12 States. Our institutions were created specifically to serve the higher education needs of American Indian students in Indian Country. They serve many thousands of Indian full- and part-time students and community members from over 250 federally recognized tribes.

The 1994 Land Grant Institutions are accredited by independent, regional accreditation agencies and like all institutions of higher education, must undergo stringent performance reviews to retain their accreditation status. TCUs serve as community centers by providing libraries, tribal archives, career centers, economic development and business centers, public meeting places, and child and elder care centers. Despite their many obligations, functions, and notable achievements, TCUs remain the most poorly funded institutions of higher education in this country. The vast majority of the 1994 Land Grant Institutions is located on Federal trust territory. Therefore, states have no obligation, and in most cases, provide no funding to TCUs. In fact, most States do not even provide funds to our institutions for the non-Indian state residents attending our colleges, leaving the TCUs to assume the per student operational costs for non-Indian students enrolled in our institutions, accounting for approximately 20 percent of our student population. This is a significant financial commitment on the part of TCUs, as they are small, developing institutions and cannot, unlike their state land grant partners, benefit from economies of scale—where the cost per student to operate an institution is reduced by the comparatively large size of the student body.

As a result of 200 years of Federal Indian policy—including policies of termination, assimilation and relocation—many reservation residents live in conditions of poverty comparable to those found in Third World nations. Through the efforts of Tribal Colleges and Universities, American Indian communities are availing themselves of resources needed to foster responsible, productive, and self-reliant citizens. It is essential that we continue to invest in the human resources that will help open new avenues to economic development, specifically through enhancing the 1994 Institutions' land grant programs, and securing adequate access to information technology.

1994 LAND GRANT PROGRAMS—AMBITIOUS EFFORTS TO REACH ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

In the past, due to lack of expertise and training, millions of acres on our reservations lie fallow, under-used, or have been developed through methods that have caused irreparable damage. The Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994 is addressing this situation and is our hope for future advancement.

Our current land grant programs remain small, yet very important to us. It is essential that American Indians explore and adopt new and evolving technologies for managing our lands. With increased capacity and program funding, we will become even more significant contributors to the agricultural base of the nation and the world.

Competitive Extension Grants Programs.—That The 1994 Institutions' extension programs strengthen communities through outreach programs designed to bolster economic development; community resources; family and youth development; natural resources development; agriculture; as well as health and nutrition education and awareness.

In fiscal year 2009, \$3,321,000 was appropriated for the 1994 Institutions' competitive extension grants. The 1994 Institutions' ability to maintain existing programs and to respond to emerging issues such as food safety and homeland security, especially on border reservations, is severely limited without adequate funding. Increased funding is needed to support these vital programs designed to address the inadequate extension services that have been provided to Indian reservations by their respective state programs. It is important to note that the 1994 extension program does not duplicate the Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program, formerly the Indian Reservation Extension Agent program. 1994 Tribal College Land Grant programs are very modestly funded. The 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions have applied their ingenuity for making the most of every dollar they have at their disposal by leveraging funds to maximize their programs whenever possible. Some examples of 1994 extension programs include: Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College in Wisconsin is strengthening the household economies of local reservation communities by offering financial education curriculum in managing budgets, saving for the future, and understanding the credit basics. Sitting Bull College, which serves reservation communities in both North and South Dakota, offers an equine extension program to help youth learn about the historical role of horses in American Indian Tribal life, while teaching them important leadership skills necessary to succeed in today's world. These are just two examples of the innovative programs being conducted at 1994 Institutions. To continue and expand these successful programs, we request that the subcommittee support this competitive program by appropriating \$5.0 million to sustain the growth and further success of these essential community-based extension programs.

1994 Competitive Research Program.—As the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions enter into partnerships with 1862/1890 land grant institutions through collaborative research projects, impressive efforts to address economic development through natural resource management have emerged. The 1994 Research Program illustrates an ideal combination of Federal resources and tribal college-state institutional expertise, with the overall impact being far greater than the sum of its parts. We recognize the severe budget constraints under which Congress is currently functioning. However, the \$1,610,000 appropriated in fiscal year 2009 is grossly inadequate to develop capacity and conduct necessary research at our institutions. The 1994 Research Program is vital to ensuring that TCUs may finally be recognized as full partners in the Nation's land grant system. Many of our institutions are currently conducting applied research, yet finding the resources to conduct this research to meet their communities' needs is a continual challenge. This research authority opens the door to new funding opportunities to maintain and expand the research projects begun at the 1994 Institutions, but only if adequate funds are secured and sustained. A total research budget of \$1,610,000, for which all 32 of the 1994 Institutions compete for research dollars, is clearly insufficient. Priority issue areas currently being studied at the 1994 Institutions include: sustainable agriculture and forestry; biotechnology and bioprocessing; agribusiness management and marketing; plant propagation, including native plant preservation for medicinal and economic purposes; animal breeding; aquaculture; human nutrition (including health, obesity, and diabetes); and family, community, and rural development. The College of Menominee Nation in Wisconsin is collecting and analyzing data concerning forest health and sustainability that will help its tribal forest managers meet the growing demand for forest products while protecting the woodlands environment for future generations. Turtle Mountain Community College in North Dakota is studying the spread of West Nile virus, which causes serious diseases in animals and people. Results of the study will assist tribal efforts in the surveillance, prevention, and control of the mosquito-borne virus. These are just two examples of 1994 Research projects. We strongly urge the subcommittee to fund this program at a minimum of \$3.0 million to enable our institutions to develop and strengthen their research capacity.

1994 Institutions' Educational Equity Grant Program.—This program is designed to assist 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions with academic programs.

Through the modest appropriations first made available in fiscal year 2001, the TCU Land Grant Institutions have begun to support courses and to conduct planning activities specifically targeting the unique educational needs of their respective communities.

The 1994 Institutions have developed and implemented courses and programs in natural resource management; environmental sciences; horticulture; forestry; and food science and nutrition. This last category is helping to address the epidemic rates of diabetes and cardiovascular disease that plague American Indian reservations. We request that the subcommittee appropriate a minimum of \$3,342,000 to allow the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions to build upon their course offerings and successful activities that have been launched.

Native American Endowment Fund.—Endowment installments that are paid into the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions' account remain with the U.S. Treasury. Only the annual interest yield, less the USDA's administrative fee, is distributed to the institutions. The latest gross annual interest yield for the 1994 Institutions Endowment was \$3,929,412 and after the USDA takes its standard four-percent administrative fee, \$3,772,236 should be available for distribution to the eligible 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions by statutory formula. While the Department has not yet shared the breakdown of funds to be distributed to each of the 1994 Institutions for this year, last year the USDA administrative fee was larger than the amount paid to all but nine of the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions or in other words the USDA claims a fee that is higher than 70 percent of the 1994 Institutions' payments. Once the distribution amounts are determined for this year's disbursement, we fully expect similar results.

Just as other land grant institutions historically received large grants of land or endowments in lieu of land, this endowment assists 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions in establishing and strengthening their academic programs in such areas as curriculum development, faculty preparation, instruction delivery, and to help address critical facilities and infrastructure issues. Many of the colleges have used the endowment in conjunction with the Education Equity Grant funds to develop and implement their academic programs. As earlier stated, TCUs often serve as primary community centers and although conditions at some have improved substantially, many of the colleges still operate under less than satisfactory conditions. In fact, most of the TCUs continue to cite improved facilities as one of their highest priorities. Several of the colleges have indicated the need for immediate new construction and substantial renovations to replace buildings that have long exceeded their effective life spans and to upgrade existing facilities to address accessibility and safety concerns.

Endowment payments increase the size of the corpus held by the U.S. Treasury and thereby increase the annual interest yield disbursed to the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions. These additional funds would continue to support faculty and staff positions and program needs within 1994 agriculture and natural resources departments, as well as to help address the critical and very expensive facilities needs at these institutions. Currently, the amount that each college receives from this endowment is not adequate to address both curriculum development and instruction delivery, and completely insufficient to address the necessary facilities and infrastructure projects at these institutions. In order for the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions to become full partners in this Nation's great land grant system, we need and, through numerous treaty obligations, are due the facilities and infrastructure necessary to fully engage in education and research programs vital to the future health and well being of our reservation communities. We respectfully request the subcommittee fund the fiscal year 2010 endowment payment at \$12.0 million—returning the payment amount to the pre across-the-board rescission level imposed each year on nondefense appropriated funding. We also request that the subcommittee review the USDA's administrative fee and consider reducing it for the Native American Endowment so that more of these already limited funds can be utilized by the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions to conduct vital community based programs.

Tribal College Essential Community Facilities Program (Rural Development).—In fiscal year 2009, \$3,972,000 of the Rural Development Advancement Program (RCAP) funds appropriated for loans and grants to benefit federally recognized American Indian tribes was targeted for essential community facility grants at Tribal College Land Grant Institutions. This level of funding is a decrease of about half of a million dollars from fiscal year 2007, when the program was appropriated \$4.5 million—reduced to \$4,419,000 by the across the board cut. We urge the subcommittee to designate \$5.0 million each year of the next five fiscal years to afford the 1994 Institutions the means to aggressively address critical facilities needs, thereby allowing them to better serve their students and respective communities.

CONCLUSION

The 1994 Land Grant Institutions have proven to be efficient and effective vehicles for bringing educational opportunities to American Indians and the promise of self-sufficiency to some of this Nation's poorest and most underserved regions. The modest federal investment in the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions has already paid great dividends in terms of increased employment, access to higher education, and economic development. Continuation of this investment makes sound moral and fiscal sense. American Indian reservation communities are second to none in their potential for benefiting from effective land grant programs and, as earlier stated, no institutions better exemplify the original intent of the land grant concept than the 1994 Land Grant Institutions.

We appreciate your support of the 1994 Tribal College Land Grant Institutions and recognition of their role in the Nation's land grant system. We ask you to renew your commitment to help move our students and communities toward self-sufficiency. We look forward to continuing our partnership with you, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the other members of the Nation's great land grant system—a partnership with the potential to bring equitable educational, agricultural, and economic opportunities to Indian Country.

Thank you for this opportunity to present our funding proposals to the subcommittee. We respectfully request your continued support and full consideration of our fiscal year 2010 appropriations recommendations.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC POWER ASSOCIATION

The American Public Power Association (APPA) is the national service organization representing the interests of over 2,000 municipal and other state and locally owned utilities throughout the United States (all but Hawaii). Collectively, public power utilities deliver electricity to one of every seven electricity consumers (approximately 45 million people), serving some of the nation's largest cities. However, the vast majority of APPA's members serve communities with populations of 10,000 people or less.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this statement outlining our fiscal year 2010 funding priorities within the jurisdiction of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Subcommittee.

Department of Agriculture: Rural Utility Service Rural Broadband Grants and Loans

APPA was pleased with the funding level of \$2.5 billion in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for "grants, loans and loan guarantees, for broadband infrastructure in any area of the United States." APPA urges the Subcommittee to fully fund the Rural Utilities Service's (RUS) rural grant and loan programs at or above the stimulus levels.

APPA believes it is important to provide incentives for the deployment of broadband to rural communities, many of which lack broadband service. Increasingly, access to advanced communications services is considered vital to a community's economic and educational development. In addition, the availability of broadband service enables rural communities to provide advanced health care through telemedicine and to promote regional competitiveness and other benefits that contribute to a high quality of life. Approximately one-fourth of APPA's members are currently providing broadband service in their communities. Several APPA members are planning to apply for RUS broadband loans to help them finance their broadband projects.

Department of Agriculture: Title IX Programs

APPA supports full funding of programs authorized in Title IX of the 2008 Farm Bill for energy efficiency, renewable energy and biofuels. APPA requests the full fiscal year 2010 funding level of \$60 million for the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), \$5 million for the Rural Energy Self-Sufficiency program, and \$5 million for the Community Wood Energy Program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MICROBIOLOGY

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) is pleased to submit the following testimony on the fiscal year 2010 appropriation for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) research and regulatory programs. The ASM is the largest single life science organization in the world with about 42,000 members. The ASM mission is

to enhance the science of microbiology, to gain a better understanding of life processes, and to promote the application of this knowledge for improved health and environmental well-being. The ASM recommends an appropriation of \$2.25 billion for the FDA in fiscal year 2010, a \$386 million increase over the fiscal year 2009 budget.

The FDA is responsible for the evaluation of domestic and foreign foods and consumer products to protect the public health and safety. Funding levels for sometime have significantly fallen below amounts needed to enable the FDA to fulfill its growing oversight for nearly one-quarter of the U.S. Gross National Product. The ASM appreciates the estimated \$1 billion for food safety anticipated in the President's proposed fiscal year 2010 budget. However, serious budget shortfalls in the past have diluted FDA's ability to respond to escalating, often unmet demands on its personnel and resources not only in food safety, but also across the agency. Each year, the Nation spends nearly \$1.5 trillion on FDA regulated goods. It is essential that FDA have state-of-the-art scientific capabilities and a fully staffed contingent of scientists if the United States is to maintain its economic competitiveness. FDA's mission is not only to ensure product safety but to also stimulate and facilitate innovation.

Since January, the FDA has approved new drugs for diabetes and malaria, a rapid diagnostic test to detect the avian influenza H5N1 virus in minutes rather than hours, and the first approved drug made with materials from genetically engineered animals. Threats to public health persist, including sporadic food borne illnesses linked to everyday foods like tomatoes, peanuts, and recently, alfalfa sprouts. FDA's regulatory responsibilities cover the bulk of U.S. domestic and imported foods, plus medical devices, drugs, food additives, blood and vaccine products, and cosmetics. Since 2001, its mission has also expanded to counterterrorism and homeland security. Several external reviews of FDA performance have confirmed in recent years that inadequate funding for the agency has undermined efforts to protect public health in the United States.

A SAFE AND SECURE U.S. FOOD SUPPLY DEPENDS ON FDA EXCELLENCE

Regulating food in the United States is an enormous task. Food expenditures exceed \$1.1 trillion annually. In the past 5 years, the volume of imported products has doubled, with 60 percent categorized as food or food-related products, and is predicted to triple by 2015. Yet the FDA examined less than 1 percent of the 7.6 million fresh produce lines imported from fiscal years 2002 to 2007. This year, the Nation will import agricultural products worth an estimated \$81 billion, continuing the steady trend of rising U.S. consumption of imported food. The number of identified food borne disease outbreaks has tripled since the early 1990s. Each year, about 76 million people contract a food borne illness in the United States, about 325,000 require hospitalization, and about 5,000 die. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates medical costs and lost wages associated with just five of the major food borne illnesses reach \$6.9 billion annually, and total costs are likely much higher. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has enumerated more than 250 different food borne diseases and more causative agents continue to be found. FDA actions thus far this year have included the current recall of Salmonella-contaminated pistachio products; a consumer warning about certain cheeses that could contain *Listeria monocytogenes*, bacteria that can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections; and advisories to food preparers about possible norovirus in some domestic oysters.

As food moves from farm to table it encounters innumerable points for possible contamination, either accidental or deliberate. To mitigate failures in our highly complex food supply, the FDA's ongoing Protecting America's Food Supply initiative integrates food safety and food defense. In November 2007, the FDA launched its Food Protection Plan with a three-pronged strategy of expanded prevention, improved intervention, and more rapid response to events like disease outbreaks. The FDA also participates in the multiagency Action Plan for Import Safety, publishing in March its final rule on required prior notice of foreign food shipments arriving at U.S. ports. Unfortunately, these and other FDA food safety programs have been consistently underfunded to the detriment of public health.

The following are examples of FDA's enormous responsibilities:

- The FDA regulates about 80 percent of the U.S. food supply, responsible for \$417 billion worth of domestic food and \$49 billion in imported food annually.
- In the United States, the agency oversees more than 136,000 registered domestic food facilities (over 44,000 food manufacturers and processors, plus roughly 113,000 warehouses that include storage tanks and grain elevators).

- FDA personnel collaborate with staff at other Federal agencies and State and local authorities to regulate more than 2 million farms, 935,000 restaurants and institutional food facilities, and 114,000 supermarkets, grocery stores, and other food outlets.
- Over 300 U.S. ports receive products from more than 150 countries/territories. In the last decade, the number of food entry lines has tripled, shipped from approximately 200,000 FDA registered foreign facilities that manufacture, process, pack, or store food consumed in the United States.

In 2008, the CDC concluded that the incidence of the most common food borne illnesses had changed very little in the previous 3 years, a grim plateau in preventing diseases caused by Salmonella, Escherichia coli and other food borne pathogens. The disturbing report joined other official reports, expert committee reviews, and publicized disease investigations that abundantly demonstrate the importance of improving food safety in the United States. In November 2007, FDA's own Science Advisory Board published a highly critical report concerning the state of science at FDA and the ability to undertake its massive mission. Last September, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) published its negative review of the FDA's oversight of domestic and imported fresh produce, citing funding shortages and too few FDA inspectors as contributing factors.

Nationwide outbreaks of food-related illness grab headlines, exact high costs for the food industry, and force health officials to scramble to conduct the scientific detective work and implement preventive strategies to contain the problem. These outbreaks absorb significant FDA resources and personnel, like the far-reaching fallout from Salmonella-contaminated peanut products that is still rippling through the U.S. food industry. Health officials have reported more than 600 cases of disease tied to consumption of the suspect products, leading to the voluntary recall of more than 2,100 products in 17 categories by more than 200 companies, and the list continues to grow. In January, the FDA expanded the recall list to include pet food products that contain peanut paste made by the company, which has declared bankruptcy. The large number of products and brands, magnified by the large quantities of some products, makes this one of the most complex food recalls in U.S. history.

FDA OVERSIGHT OF DRUGS, VACCINES, AND DIAGNOSTICS PROTECTS U.S. CONSUMERS

Just as FDA's responsibilities in food safety have increased enormously over the past decade, so has its responsibility in other areas, especially drug safety, including adverse events as well as contamination both from microbial and chemical sources. We share the concerns detailed in the 2006 Report on Drug Safety and the Science Board Report.

The steady release of new therapeutic drugs, vaccines, and diagnostic tests by the U.S. private sector helps protect the Nation from infectious and other types of diseases. Several divisions within the FDA focus on evaluating both new and on-the-market products, assuring product safety and efficacy on behalf of health care providers, their patients, and the general public. Limited FDA budgets in recent years have not fully met the massive volume of responsibilities involved in this wide-ranging oversight, which includes detailed science-based lab analyses of new and established products, data assessment of incident reports, guidance statements and product alerts to the public and to health care providers, recall of unsafe products, and more.

Recent shortages of vaccines commonly used against rabies and Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) have underscored the importance of FDA-approved vaccines regulated by the agency's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER). Before development of Hib conjugate vaccines, about 20,000 U.S. children had Hib infections each year, including 12,000 cases of bacterial meningitis of which about 5 percent died. Since the Nation's Hib immunization program began in the early 1990s, incidence has decreased 99 percent. In developing countries, Hib remains a major cause of respiratory infections in infants and children. Unfortunately, a voluntary recall of Hib vaccine by a U.S. manufacturer in December 2007 resulted in shortages that have since been implicated in small Hib outbreaks in Minnesota and Pennsylvania. In June 2008, a French supplier of rabies vaccine temporarily halted production to upgrade its facilities, prompting U.S. officials to issue alerts regarding priority use of limited vaccine supplies. To maintain adequate immunization coverage, the FDA not only monitors already approved vaccines, but also evaluates the latest vaccine technologies. This March, the agency approved a vaccine to prevent Japanese encephalitis (JE) that was developed using cell culture technology, making it the only JE vaccine available in the United States. Found mainly in Asia, the viral disease affects about 30,000 to 50,000 people each year, resulting in 10,000 to

15,000 deaths. It is rarely seen in the United States, but there have been cases among those traveling to Asia.

FDA scientists who evaluate new products must be able to assess leading-edge product development methodologies. For example, CBER researchers just completed a “proof-of-concept” study of a test using nanotechnology to detect quickly the smallest amount of anthrax toxin. Based on research at the Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH), the FDA approved in March the first DNA test that identifies the two types of human papillomavirus (HPV) responsible for the majority of cervical cancers among U.S. women. HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States, causing more than 6 million new cases each year. The Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER) assures that all prescription and over-the-counter drugs are safe and effective, overseeing a regulatory portfolio of many thousands of products. In 2007 alone, CDER approved nearly 80 drugs and biologics, a laborious process that demands singular scientific capabilities.

The FDA also plays a key role in addressing the issue of antimicrobial resistance through its initiatives on monitoring and surveillance of antimicrobial resistance, facilitating the appropriate use of products and tests for infectious diseases, educating the public and health professionals about safe and effective use of antimicrobials, and assuring accurate product labeling.

SCIENCE AT FDA NEEDS MORE RESOURCES, TRAINED PERSONNEL

The ASM is very concerned about the perceived weaknesses in FDA science and the possible negative impacts on the Nation’s health. The 2007 Science Board report conducted a thorough external review of science and technology across the agency. It identified several problem areas within the agency where FDA science was not keeping pace with the private sector, for example, the expertise necessary to evaluate products related to nanotechnology, robotics, systems biology, and especially genomics. The report also indicted inadequate computing capabilities used for surveillance and incident reporting, and a dwindling workforce of those trained in science-based investigation and research. In the 2008 GAO report on FDA’s oversight of fresh produce, the agency acknowledged that it lacks resources for funding crucial extramural or internal research to understand produce contamination by pathogens such as *E. coli* O157:H7 or *Salmonella*. The FDA remains the Nation’s foremost regulatory agency, but optimal oversight of increasingly complex products and systems requires fully equipped FDA laboratories with leading-edge capabilities. This is of particular concern with regard to tissue based products and screening for adventitious infectious agents.

Research programs within the FDA focus on supporting the agency’s regulatory role with the necessary science and technology tools. Understanding the latest advances in multiple scientific disciplines is essential for FDA regulators, evidenced by the agency’s conclusion last year that meat and milk from clones of cattle, swine and goats are safe to eat, based on years of FDA study and analysis. The Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) conducts food, cosmetic, and color additive safety research to protect the public from illnesses, contaminants, or other threats from consumer goods. Its scientists study the emergence or re-emergence of food borne microbial pathogens and evaluate or develop new lab methods needed to investigate outbreaks. The Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA) also funds research activities to inform policy and regulation, plus contributing to the Nation’s food defense efforts. ORA-supported research includes validation of detection methods for potential bioterrorism agents like *Clostridium botulinum* neurotoxin. The FDA has identified critical areas of needed research that include rapid test kit development, confirmatory methods, virology, biotechnology, in-vitro testing, and laboratory enhancement. To remedy these technological gaps, increased funding for FDA research is needed. As detailed in the 2007 Science Board Report, the continued underfunding of the Critical Path Initiative to bring FDA science into the 21st Century is a particular problem.

Last year, additional funding in the fiscal year 2009 budget did add more than 1,300 new skilled employees. The second hiring phase, with a target of 1,400 additional staff, is underway, including chemists, microbiologists, and medical officers. However, critical personnel needs still remain, especially in the field of genomics, information technology, and risk communication. The agency also leverages resources through partnering with other stakeholders, for example, the National Center for Food Safety and Technology, a research consortium whose members investigate new molecular tools to study antimicrobial resistance among pathogens and other emerging food safety issues. In September, the FDA awarded \$5.2 million in grants to various State and local agencies to enhance food and feed safety including the first Rapid Response Team cooperative agreements with six U.S. States to cre-

ate RRT teams able to respond to all food hazard incidents in the farm-to-table continuum. Also included were grants to upgrade chemistry labs to better analyze food samples collected by the FDA or other agencies, part of the ongoing effort to boost the surge capacity of State health department laboratories. However, this level of research funding is woefully inadequate given the cost of this type of research and the unfunded research priorities across the agency.

ASM RECOMMENDS A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN FDA FUNDING

The ASM urges Congress to support the irreplaceable role of the Food and Drug Administration in protecting public health and safety. Repeated cautionary reports have warned of besieged and deteriorating FDA capabilities in the face of soaring imports, new product lines, and issues about drug safety. The ASM recommends \$2.25 billion for the FDA appropriation in fiscal year 2010.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MICROBIOLOGY

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) is pleased to submit the following testimony on the fiscal year 2010 appropriation for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) research and education programs. The ASM is the largest single life science organization in the world with more than 40,000 members. The ASM mission is to enhance the science of microbiology, to gain a better understanding of life processes, and to promote the application of this knowledge for improved health and environmental well-being.

The science based missions of the USDA, fueled by its research and education programs, are essential to human, environmental and animal health. The ASM strongly urges Congress to appropriate at least \$1.24 billion for the Agriculture Research Service in fiscal year 2010, \$1.24 billion for the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, and to provide \$300 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). Agriculture research plays an important role in the improvement of food safety, the environment, and animal and plant health but also contributes to the economic well-being of the nation. In a September 2007 report entitled: "Economic Returns to Public Agriculture Research," the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) found that the average rate of return from public investment in agriculture research is an impressive 45 percent on the dollar. In reviewing more than thirty-five economic studies on the social rate of return, the ERS also found that such a high rate of return is shared by all levels of the agricultural continuum, from the producer to the consumer.

THE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH SERVICE (ARS)

The core research arm of the USDA, the ARS is divided into four National Programs that focus on critically important areas of agricultural research:

- Nutrition, Food Safety/Quality
- Animal Production and Protection
- Natural Resources and Sustainable Agricultural Systems
- Crop Production and Protection

Agricultural research is critically important to human and animal health. The ARS has funded a number of cooperative research projects related to zoonotic viruses including a study evaluating influenza vaccines in pigs and the establishment of a pig model from the 1930 H1N1 swine influenza. The ARS works to understand the biology of animal pathogens including the H1N1 swine virus to combat such outbreaks at the animal level and reduce the risk to humans. The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) also works extensively with zoonotic virus monitoring which contributes to the knowledge base of the ARS.

The ASM urges Congress to fund the ARS with \$1.24 billion in fiscal year 2010, a 4 percent increase from the fiscal year 2008 level.

Food Safety

The ASM supports the Administration's pledge to increase funding for food safety. The first step to ensuring a safe and plentiful national food source is to maintain a successful research platform.

Despite advances, food safety remains a serious and complex issue. Recent outbreaks of Salmonella Saintpaul demonstrate how quickly and severely pathogens can spread through the population. Understanding the cause of foodborne illness is an important step towards a better understanding of the ways to treat and prevent future outbreaks. According to the CDC, in the United States there are an estimated 76 million cases of foodborne illness each year, resulting in 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths. Agricultural research is an irreplaceable tool in the

fight against foodborne illness as researchers supported by the USDA work to understand and prevent the transference of some types of bacteria from the food supply.

Recently, the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report stated that: "None of the Healthy People 2010 targets for reduction of foodborne pathogens were reached in 2008. The lack of recent progress points to gaps in the current food safety system and the need to continue to develop and evaluate food safety practices as food moves from the farm to the table." Increased funding for the ARS is critical to the prevention, treatment and understanding of foodborne illness, both current and future outbreaks.

Antimicrobial Resistance

The prevalence of antimicrobial resistance remains a threat to human and animal health as foodborne and other bacterial pathogens are increasingly changing and evolving to adapt to new antimicrobial agents. The USDA has supported a number of important research projects that bring together basic and applied research to combat this very real threat. Adequate funding for the USDA is vital to ensure such research continues as the occurrence of antimicrobial resistance increases.

Climate Change

The ARS supports projects that work to ensure the effects of global change on agriculture are understood and ways to mitigate risks are developed. The impact of global climate change and global warming trends on agricultural yields could be severe. Without adequate funding for the ARS, the impact of climate change on food production and plant health could be neglected, with disastrous results. Current research projects related to climate change include:

- Crop and Weed Responses to Increasing Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide
- Evaluating Effects of Nitrogen Deposition and Ambient Ozone on an Invasive Plant in the National Capitol Region
- Soil Carbon in Urban Environments

The ARS's Global Change National Program conducted a 5 year cycle of study from 2002—2007 to explore the effects of Global Change in depth. The programs' accomplishment report, conducted by non-ARS scientists, released in 2008 stated: "The ARS is poised as a leader in the field of global change research to help understand the impacts of global change on agriculture, enable agriculture to adapt to global change and reduce the impact of agriculture on factors affecting global change." The report also emphasized the need for continued and future research to combat the evolving and complex problems that arise with climate change. Continued and sustainable funding for the ARS will help to ensure that other such crucial research can be completed to further the understanding of climate change.

Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES)

Soon to become the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), CSREES works with land-grant universities, public and private organizations and supports research that increases understanding and knowledge of the unique link between the environment, agriculture and human health. Supporting research at the local and state level allows the CSREES to fund programs that impact not only scientific research, but local economies as well. The ASM urges Congress to appropriate at least \$1.24 billion for the CSREES in fiscal year 2010, a 4 percent increase from the fiscal year 2008 level.

CSREES supports a number of important areas of interest categorized as National Emphasis Areas:

- Agricultural Systems
- Animals
- Biotechnology & Genomics
- Economics & Community Development
- Education
- Families, Youth & Communities
- Food, Nutrition & Health
- International
- Natural Resources & Environment
- Pest Management
- Plants
- Technology & Engineering

Climate Change

The effects of climate change are almost guaranteed to impact all life forms, and the research funded by the CSREES works to ensure that the best science is presented to offset such impacts. Supporting universities as well as public and private

organizations lends opportunity for the best science and research to become a part of the larger solution.

The buildup of CO₂ in the atmosphere has caused considerable concern as the negative effects of climate change are studied and understood. The Consortium for Agricultural Soils Mitigation of Greenhouse Gases, funded by the CSREES, is working to develop the technologies and strategies to successfully implement soil carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reduction programs. Such initiatives are at the forefront of the race to find ways to combat the negative effects of global climate change. The CSREES support of such successful programs sends the message that climate change is an issue that needs collaboration from all science concentrations, especially from agricultural research.

Biofuels

Proven to be the most resourceful and sustainable alternative to fossil fuels, biofuels bring the promise of a cleaner and more efficient source of energy. Much like fossil fuels however, biofuels create a substantial amount of waste called Glycerin that is difficult to break down. The creation of waste has slowed the implementation of biofuels as a mainstream, alternative to traditional fossil fuels. A project funded by the CSREES however, has developed a fermentation technology that combines *E. coli* with glycerin to create a high value chemical reducing the existence of waste, as the chemical created can be used as a commodity on the domestic market. Such projects, as supported by the CSREES, are providing real-life solutions to problems once considered too daunting to tackle.

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)

AFRI was established in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 as a competitive grants program aimed to support research, education and the extension of our nation's food and agricultural systems. Formerly operating as the National Research Initiative program (NRI), AFRI is the foundation of competitive grants within the USDA, supporting a focus on six core areas within the food and agricultural sciences:

- Plant Health and Production
- Animal Health
- Food Safety, Nutrition and Health
- Renewable Energy, Natural Resources and Environment
- Agriculture Systems and technology
- Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities

AFRI moves the work of scientists past research and into development, implementation, education, and extension. Investments by the NRI in this type of research have resulted in a number of advances in critical issue areas such as, food safety, food security, sustainable fuel production and ecosystem health services. The importance of these programs on the overall health of the Nation cannot be underestimated. AFRI supports essential research with far reaching impacts into human, environmental and plant health, the basis of life.

Currently authorized at \$700 million per year, the ASM strongly urges Congress to fund AFRI with at least \$300 million for fiscal year 2010.

Education and Workforce

Investing in research at the USDA ensures that coming generations of researchers, educators and students have the opportunity to stay within the agricultural sciences and keep the Nation competitive on a global scale. Reduced or stagnant funding sends the detrimental message to the Nation's students and research scientists that agricultural and biological research is not a worthwhile field to pursue. This risks a very real and problematic "brain drain" compromising the status of the United States as a world leader in cutting edge scientific research. Ensuring funding for competitive grants programs and basic research will help to send the positive message that investing in agricultural and biological sciences is worthwhile.

Conclusion

The ASM urges Congress to increase research and education funding in the USDA budget, and provide at least \$1.24 billion for the ARS, \$1.24 billion for the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, and \$300 million for AFRI in fiscal year 2010. Research in the agricultural and biological sciences is imperative to combat current and future threats to human, environmental, plant and animal health. The research supported by the USDA should be a priority that deserves steady, predictable and sustainable funding by the Federal Government. The future of our agricultural systems, a basis for human health, relies on it.

The ASM appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony and would be pleased to assist the Subcommittee as it considers the fiscal year 2010 appropriation for the USDA.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR NUTRITION (ASN)

The American Society for Nutrition (ASN) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony regarding fiscal year 2010 appropriations for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and specifically, its research programs. ASN is the professional scientific society dedicated to bringing together the world's top researchers, clinical nutritionists and industry to advance our knowledge and application of nutrition to promote human and animal health. Our focus ranges from the most critical details of research to very broad societal applications. ASN respectfully requests \$1.377 billion for ARS, with \$120 million of the total allocated to the Human Nutrition Research program. We request \$300 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative in fiscal year 2010.

Basic and applied research on nutrition, food production, nutrient composition, food processing and nutrition monitoring is critical to American health and the U.S. economy. Awareness of the growing epidemic of obesity and the contribution of chronic illness to burgeoning health care costs has highlighted the need for improved information on dietary intake and improved strategies for dietary change. Demand for a safer and more nutritious food supply continues to increase. Preventable chronic diseases related to diet and physical activity cost the economy over \$117 billion annually, and this cost is predicted to rise to \$1.7 trillion in the next 10 years. Nevertheless, funding for food and nutrition research at USDA has not increased in real dollars since 1983! This decline in our national investment in agricultural research seriously threatens our ability to sustain the vitality of food, nutrition and agricultural research programs and in turn, threatens the future of our economy and the health of our Nation.

USDA historically has been identified as the lead nutrition agency and the most important Federal agency influencing U.S. dietary patterns. Through the nutrition and food assistance programs, which form roughly 60 percent of its budget, USDA has a direct influence on the dietary intake (and ultimately the health) of millions of Americans. It is important to better understand the impact of these programs on the food choices, dietary intake, and nutritional status of those vulnerable populations which they serve. Research is the key to achieving this understanding, and it is the foundation upon which U.S. nutrition policy is built.

USDA is in full or in part responsible for the development and translation of Federal dietary guidance, implementation of nutrition and food assistance programs and nutrition education; and, national nutrition monitoring. The USDA Human Nutrition Research programs ensure nutrition policies are evidence-based, ensure we have accurate and valid research methods and databases, and promote new understanding of nutritional needs for optimal health.

ARS Human Nutrition Research Program

USDA has built a program of human nutrition research, housed in six centers (HNRCs)¹ geographically disperse across the Nation and affiliated with the ARS, which links producer and consumer interests and forms the core of our knowledge about food and nutrition. These unique centers are working closely with a wide variety of stakeholders to determine just how specific foods, food components, and physical activity can act together during specific life-stages (e.g. prior to conception, in childhood, in older adult years) to promote health and prevent disease. The HNRCs are a critical link between basic food production and processing and health, including food safety issues. The center structure adds value by fully integrating a multitude of nutritional science disciplines that cross both traditional university department boundaries and the functional compartmentalization of conventional funding mechanisms.

An important basic premise of research in the HNRCs is that many chronic diseases, such as diabetes and obesity, can be prevented by lifestyle issues, the most important of which are: consuming appropriate amounts of a well-balanced, healthful diet; and regularly engaging in adequate levels of physical activity. Using state-of-the-art facilities and a concentration of critical scientific teams, the HNRCs are conducting the highest quality translational research. Also of importance are the

¹Of the six HNRCs, three are fully administered by ARS and are located in Davis, CA, Beltsville, MD, and Grand Forks, ND. The other three are administered through cooperative agreements with Baylor University Medical Center in Houston, TX; Tufts University in Boston, MA; and, the University of Arkansas in Little Rock.

long-term experiments involving the derivation of dietary reference intake values and nutrient requirements of individuals. Often compared to the intramural program at the National Institutes for Health, these centers tackle projects that are unlikely to be funded through other means, such as through competitive grants or by industry.

The flat-funding of ARS in fiscal year 2009, coupled with flat-funding of the Human Nutrition Research program for over 6 years, seriously jeopardizes the future of the centers, their important research projects, and the critical infrastructure provided by the USDA from which the HNRCs and scientists benefit. An estimated \$10 million in additional funds is needed across the six HNRCs to ensure they can continue current research projects and to restore purchasing power lost to inflation over years of flat budgets.

Another example of the unique nutrition research at ARS is the nutrition monitoring program, "What We Eat in America" (WWEIA). This program allows us to know not only what foods Americans are eating, but also how their diets directly affect their health. Information from the survey guides policies on food safety, food labeling, food assistance, military rations, pesticide exposure and dietary guidance. In addition to having an impact on billions of dollars in Federal expenditures, the survey data leverages billions of private sector dollars allocated to nutrition labeling, food product development and production. Despite this, WWEIA has been flat-funded at \$11.5 million for over 13 years. The USDA budget for WWEIA must be increased two-fold to \$23 million. Otherwise, we risk losing this national treasure if we do not restore lost funding and strengthen it for the future.

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 established the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), a new competitive grants program authorized at \$700 million annually, for research, extension, and education in support of our nation's food and agricultural systems within the soon-to-be-established National Institute of Food and Agriculture at USDA. This unique program, the successor to USDA's National Research Initiative (NRI) and the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS), takes research and innovation beyond the development phase, into implementation through contemporary education and extension programs.

AFRI now includes programs aimed to improve the Nation's nutrition and health which were previously funded by other mechanisms. The nutrition- and health-related research focuses on two objectives: (1) improving human health by better understanding an individual's nutrient requirements and the nutritional value of foods; and (2) promoting research on healthier food choices and lifestyles. For example, USDA-funded projects funded by the Human Nutrition and Obesity program have led to a better understanding of the behavioral and environmental factors that influence obesity, and to the development and evaluation of effective interventions. Specifically, USDA competitive grants have funded nutrition education interventions focusing on the reduction of childhood obesity in low-income families.

While ASN believes the program should be funded at its full authorization level of \$700 million, we understand that in the current fiscal climate, that is unlikely. However, with the Nation and world facing unprecedented health, food security and nutrition challenges, now is the time to renew investment in our Nation's agricultural research enterprise. A strong commitment to AFRI of \$300 million in fiscal year 2010 (exclusive of any funding identified for the former Section 406 programs), with a goal of \$500 million in total funding by fiscal year 2015, will provide America's agriculture, food and nutrition scientists, land managers and farmers with the tools necessary to solve problems and keep the country competitive, while also protecting the natural resource base and environment, enhancing human nutrition and fostering vibrant rural communities.

The AFRI and the Human Nutrition Research Program under ARS are symbiotic programs that provide the infrastructure and generation of new knowledge that allow for rapid progress towards meeting national dietary needs. These programs allow USDA to make the connection between what we grow and what we eat. And through strategic nutrition monitoring, we learn more about how dietary intake affects our health.

ASN thanks your Committee for its support of the ARS and the AFRI Competitive Grants Program. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Mary Lee Watts, ASN Director of Science and Public Affairs, at (301) 634-7112 or mwatts@nutrition.org.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLANT BIOLOGISTS

On behalf of the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB) we submit this statement for the official record in support of increased funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture, specifically funding the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative at \$300 million. This testimony highlights the importance of biology, particularly plant biology, as the Nation seeks to address vital issues including a sustainable food supply, climate change and energy security. We would like to thank the Subcommittee for its consideration of this testimony.

The American Society of Plant Biologists is an organization of more than 5,000 professional plant biologists, educators, graduate students, and postdoctoral scientists. A strong voice for the global plant science community, our mission—which is achieved through engagement in the research, education, and public policy realms—is to promote the growth and development of plant biology and plant biologists and to foster and communicate research in plant biology. The Society publishes the highly cited and respected journals *Plant Physiology* and *The Plant Cell*, and it has produced and supported a range of materials intended to demonstrate fundamental biological principles that can be easily and inexpensively taught in school and university classrooms by using plants.

FOOD, FUEL, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND HEALTH: PLANT BIOLOGY RESEARCH AND AMERICA'S FUTURE

Plants are vital to our very existence. They harvest sunlight, converting it to chemical energy for food and feed; they take up carbon dioxide and produce oxygen; and they are almost always the primary producers in the Earth's ecosystems. Indeed, basic plant biology research is making many fundamental contributions in the areas of fuel security and environmental stewardship; the continued and sustainable development of better foods, fabrics, and building materials; and in the understanding of basic biological principles that underpin improvements in the health and nutrition of all Americans. To go further, plant biology research can help the Nation both predict and prepare for the impacts of climate change on American agriculture, and it can make major contributions to our Nation's efforts to combat global warming.

In particular, plant biology is at the center of numerous scientific breakthroughs in the increasingly interdisciplinary world of alternative energy research. For example, interfaces among plant biology, engineering, chemistry, and physics represent critical frontiers in both basic biofuels research and bioenergy production. Similarly, with the increase in plant genome sequencing and functional genomics, the interface of plant biology and computer science is essential to our understanding of complex biological systems ranging from single cells to entire ecosystems.

Plant biology also has much to offer to our basic understanding of biology. Many common biological problems can best be addressed using plants. For example, plants cells are totipotent and, unlike animal cells, can be regenerated to whole plants. Many genetic studies are best done in plants due to the ability to analyze large numbers of individuals. Fundamental biological discoveries (e.g., the discovery of gene silencing) derive from initial studies in plants.

Despite the fact that plant biology research—the kind of research funded by USDA—underpins so many vital practical considerations for our country, the amount invested in understanding the basic function and mechanisms of plants is relatively small when compared with the impact it has on multibillion dollar sectors of the economy like energy, agriculture, health and nutrition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ASPB, as a spokesperson for the plant science community, is in an excellent position to articulate the Nation's plant science priorities as they relate to agriculture. Our recommendations, in no particular order, are as follows:

—With the new Farm Bill and a new research structure, it is ASPB's hope that USDA will have an elevated role to play as part of the expanding Federal research landscape. USDA already funds research that is intended to provide a foundation for creating sustainable food and new energy supplies; however, much higher investment in competitive funding is needed if the Nation is to continue to make ground-breaking discoveries. ASPB strongly encourages the appropriation of at least \$300 million in fiscal year 2010 for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). ASPB encourages the full funding of \$700 million to AFRI within 5 years. AFRI, authorized at \$700 million, will play a vital

role in maintaining America's food and energy security through funding innovative research.

- Climate change is real and will have significant impacts on agriculture and our way of life for the foreseeable future. There are significant questions that must be answered as to how climate change will impact food production and the environment. There are also clear opportunities to use biological systems to ameliorate and respond to climate change, such as through carbon sequestration or modification of plants to resist environmental stress. Therefore, ASPB calls for additional funding focused on studies of the effect of climate change on agricultural cropping systems, basic studies of its effects on plant growth and development, and targeted research focused on modification of plants to resist climate change and for use in carbon sequestration.
- Current estimates predict a significant shortfall in the needed scientific and engineering workforce as the demographics of the U.S. workforce changes. For example, there is a clear need for additional scientists in the area of energy research and, also, plant breeding. USDA has not traditionally been a major funding agency for education and training, other than that which occurs through the funding of individual investigator and center grants. Given the expected need for additional scientists and engineers who are well-grounded in agriculture research and development activities, ASPB calls for funding of specific programs (e.g., training grants) that are targeted to provide this needed workforce over the next 10 years and to adequately prepare these individuals for careers in the agricultural research of the future.
- Considerable research interest is now being paid to the use of plant biomass for energy production. Progress in this area has been strongly affected by the “fuel vs. food” debate, which arose from the current emphasis on the use of corn for ethanol production. A response to this debate has been to switch the focus to plant species that can be grown exclusively for biomass (e.g., switchgrass, miscanthus, etc). However, if these crops are to be used to their full potential, considerable effort must be expended to improve our understanding of their basic biology and development, as well as their agronomic performance. These novel crops have not benefitted from many years of improvements in crop management and breeding that have been bestowed upon our current major crops (e.g., soybean, corn)—improvements that, among other things, have vastly increased yield and agronomic efficiency. Although efforts to improve targeted bioenergy crops are just beginning, very aggressive goals have been established for the use of these crops to meet the Nation's fuel needs. Therefore, ASPB calls for additional funding that would be targeted to efforts to increase the utility and agronomic performance of bioenergy crops.
- Although USDA has done some quality work with private foundations and other federal agencies such as the Department of Energy, more can be done. Earlier this year the National Science Foundation announced a partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on “Basic Research to Enable Agricultural Development (BREAD),” which will support basic research relevant to problems of agriculture in developing countries.

Because USDA should be at the forefront of agricultural discovery, ASPB would like to see USDA create similar programs and be a part of similar endeavors with either private foundations or other research agencies in the future.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony on behalf of the American Society of Plant Biologists. Please do not hesitate to contact the American Society of Plant Biologists if we can be of any assistance in the future. For more information about the American Society of Plant Biologists, please see www.aspb.org.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF AGRONOMY, CROP SCIENCE
SOCIETY OF AMERICA, AND SOIL SCIENCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

The American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) are pleased to submit the following funding recommendations for fiscal year 2010. ASA, CSSA, and SSSA understand the challenges the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies faces with the tight budget for fiscal year 2010. We also recognize that the Agriculture Appropriations bill has many valuable and necessary components. We applaud the subcommittee's efforts to fund mission-oriented, critical research through the USDA-Cooperative State, Research, Education and Extension Service, its intramural research portfolio funded through the Agricultural Research Service as well as the conservation programs supported through the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

ASA, CSSA, and SSSA are particularly grateful to the subcommittee for funding the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), the new competitive grants program for research, extension, and education within USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service at \$201.5 million in the fiscal year 2009 Omnibus Appropriations bill. In fiscal year 2010, at a time when our Nation needs to respond rapidly to challenges which threaten our ability to safely produce and distribute food, feed, fuel, and fiber, we believe it is essential to continue to build our competitive research programs. For this reason, we recommend funding AFRI at \$300 million in the fiscal year 2010 agriculture appropriations bill. We believe that funding AFRI at this level would be a strong step in support of these important systems, enabling effective development and distribution of information which will achieve the goals of agricultural production (thereby maximizing the benefits of agroecosystem processes) and environmental stewardship.

For the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), ASA, CSSA, and SSSA thank Congress for providing the agency with the much-needed investment of \$176 million for buildings and facilities in the 2009 economic stimulus bill (Public Law 111-5). For fiscal year 2010, we recommend a funding level of \$1,268 million or a 7 percent increase over the fiscal year 2009 enacted funding level. The ARS ensures that our Nation has a safe, reliable, and adequate supply of high quality food, feed, fiber and fuel.

For the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES), ASA, CSSA, and SSSA recommend a funding level of \$1,444 million for fiscal year 2010, roughly an 18 percent increase over fiscal year 2009. Within CSREES we recommend an fiscal year 2010 funding level of \$300 million for AFRI.

For fiscal year 2010, ASA, CSSA, and SSSA support a 7 percent or \$75.5 million increase over fiscal year 2009 enacted funding level of \$1,036 million for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which would bring total funding for NRCS to \$1,108 million.

With more than 25,000 members and certified professionals, ASA, CSSA, and SSSA are the largest life science professional societies in the United States dedicated to the agronomic, crop and soil sciences. ASA, CSSA, and SSSA play a major role in promoting progress in these sciences through the publication of quality journals and books, convening meetings and workshops, developing educational, training, and public information programs, providing scientific advice to inform public policy, and promoting ethical conduct among practitioners of agronomy and crop and soil sciences. ASA and SSSA certified professionals—Certified Crop Advisers (CCA), Agronomists (CPAg) and Soil Scientists (CPSS)—are specialists who work in the field with farmers, providing technical advice about the agronomic practices—types and rates of fertilizer application, plant hybrid and variety selection, soil conservation, nutrient management, and integrated pest management—most appropriate to optimize crop yield and minimize environmental impact.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS)

ASA, CSSA, and SSSA applaud the Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) ability to respond quickly to rapidly changing national needs. ARS's 2,100 scientists located at 100 research locations accomplish scientific discoveries that help solve problems in crop and livestock production and protection and human nutrition, and ensure a sustainable interaction of agriculture and the environment. ARS National Programs focus on the importance, impact, and quality of ARS research in (1) Nutrition, Food Safety/Quality, (2) Animal Production and Protection, (3) Natural Resources and Sustainable Agricultural Systems, and (4) Crop Production and Protection. Increasingly, ARS through Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADA) between Federal laboratories and businesses forms partnerships that help move new technologies to the marketplace. These partnerships are especially important to leverage during a time when our Nation's economy remains vulnerable and Federal funding is constrained. Such cooperative research and development helps foster American businesses and enhances the position of the United States as a global leader in food, feed, fiber, and fuel production.

ASA, CSSA, and SSSA find that research and technology transfer resulting from ARS programs ensures high-quality, safe food and other agricultural products; assesses the nutritional needs of Americans; helps to sustain a competitive agricultural economy; enhances the natural resource base and the environment; and provides economic opportunities for rural citizens, communities, and society as a whole. Again, ASA, CSSA, and SSSA recommend an ARS funding level of \$1,268 million for fiscal year 2010, a 7 percent increase above the fiscal year 2009 enacted.

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES)

ASA, CSSA, and SSSA find that the need has never been greater to enhance investment in Hatch and McIntire-Stennis formula funding. Therefore, ASA, CSSA, and SSSA recommend that both Hatch and McIntire-Stennis receive a 10 percent increase over the fiscal year 2009 enacted level of funding, bringing the combined funding level to \$258 million for fiscal year 2010. If we are to maintain the research capacity at our Nation's Land Grant Universities and Colleges of Agriculture necessary to keep American agriculture and forestry competitive, while recognizing the potential of our managed systems to provide beneficial ecosystem services, we need concerted investment in capacity building at our institutions.

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI).—ASA, CSSA, and SSSA strongly endorse a 49 percent increase in funding for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. The AFRI, established in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA), is the successor to USDA's National Research Initiative (NRI) and the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS). ASA, CSSA, and SSSA find that funding AFRI at \$300 million in the fiscal year 2010 agriculture appropriations bill (exclusive of any funding identified for Section 406 programs) will show a strong commitment to America's farmers and rural entrepreneurs.

Bioenergy Feedstock Research.—ASA, CSSA, and SSSA support funding of the Agricultural Bioenergy Feedstock and Energy Efficiency Research and Extension Initiative (Section 7207) of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) at \$25 million for fiscal year 2010. Section 7207 is a new program which closes the critical research gap between fundamental biological discovery and the reliable expression of new traits in the field. The research and extension projects under Section 7207 are critical to the future of the United States, and will improve agricultural biomass production using field observations. This is a nearly priceless step in translation of basic research. Furthermore, we applaud Congress for including \$118 million in mandatory funding during the life of the FCEA for the Biomass Research and Development Initiative (BRDI). We are excited about the mandatory funding of the USDA portion of BRDI at \$28 million for fiscal year 2010 and suggest that an additional \$10 million in discretionary funding (it is authorized at \$35 million) be placed towards this critical program for fiscal year 2010.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Programs.—ASA, CSSA, and SSSA find the SARE Professional Development Program to be an effective program and support funding for the program at \$4.92 million for fiscal year 2010. Additionally, we urge the Subcommittee to consider an increase in SARE core funding to bring total funding to \$15.7 million for fiscal year 2010.

Higher Education.—ASA, CSSA, and SSSA urge the Subcommittee to fund the Institution Challenge Grants at \$6.22 million for fiscal year 2010. We strongly support a fiscal year 2010 level of \$4.24 million in funding for the Graduate Fellowships Grants; these grants enable us to train the next generation of scientific innovators.

Cooperative Extension Service.—Extension forms a critical part of research, education and extension program integration, a feature unique to CSREES. Unfortunately, recently the Smith Lever 3(b) and 3(c) account has been flat-funded (in constant dollars this account has seen a gradual erosion in funding). ASA, CSSA, and SSSA support \$309 million in appropriations for fiscal year 2010, a \$20 million increase over fiscal year 2009 enacted, for the continuing education and outreach activities supported by Smith-Lever 3(b) & (c) formula funds.

New Technologies for Ag Extension (NTAE).—eXtension is a national web-based information and education delivery system that provides direct public access to science-based educational resources. ASA, CSSA, and SSSA find that internet-facilitated outreach through extension and other New Technologies for Ag Extension (NTAE) programs provide invaluable consolidation and streamlining of information. These communication technologies help to highlight appropriate management, expediting the voluntary adoption of the best practices. ASA, CSSA, and SSSA recommend a 10 percent increase in appropriation for fiscal year 2010 for this program, bringing funding to \$1.65 million.

Integrated Research, Education, and Extension Competitive Grants Program.—Section 406 was initially authorized in the Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998. Since its inception this program has proven to be an indispensable part of water and pest management and numerous other issues. ASA, CSSA, and SSSA support a funding increase of 7 percent for programs under Section 406, which would bring total funding to \$44.92 million. Furthermore, we strongly suggest that the International Science and Education (ISE) Grants Program also receive a 7 percent increase, bringing ISE funding to \$3.21 million for fiscal year 2010, and increasing the funding of total integrated activities to \$60 million for fiscal year 2010.

Organic Farming Transition Program.—ASA, CSSA, and SSSA urge the Subcommittee to fund the Organic Farming Transition Program at \$1.97 million in fiscal year 2010, an increase over fiscal year 2009 of 7 percent.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

For fiscal year 2010, ASA, CSSA, and SSSA support a 7 percent increase over the fiscal year 2009 enacted funding level of \$1,036 million for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. This would bring total NRCS funding to \$1,108 million.

Conservation Security Program.—The Conservation Security Program provides financial and technical assistance to producers who advance the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on Tribal and private working lands. ASA, CSSA, and SSSA applaud Congress for passing the FCEA which keeps this important working lands conservation program as an uncapped mandatory program. Further, ASA, CSSA, and SSSA encourage the Subcommittee not to cap appropriations for this program.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program.—The Environmental Quality Incentives Program provides technical assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, air, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. ASA, CSSA, and SSSA support funding of this essential program at \$1,337 million for fiscal year 2010.

In Summary

A balance of funding mechanisms for research, including intramural, competitive and formula funding, is essential to maintain the capacity of the United States to conduct both basic and applied agricultural research to improve crop and livestock quality, and deliver safe and nutritious food products, while protecting and enhancing the Nation's environment and natural resource base. In order to address these challenges and maintain our position in an increasingly competitive world, we must continue to support research, education and extension programs funded through the Agricultural Research Service and Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, and conservation programs supported by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Congress must enhance funding for these programs to ensure that Americans have access to a safe and nutritious food supply and to provide for the next generation of research scientists, extension agents and educators. According to the USDA Economic Research Service (Agricultural Economic Report Number 735), publicly funded agricultural research has earned an annual rate of return of 35 percent. This rate of return suggests that additional allocation of funds to support research in the food and agricultural sciences would be highly beneficial to the U.S. economy. Finally, we must ensure support for CSREES-funded extension programs to guarantee that these important new tools and technologies reach and are utilized by producers and other stakeholders.

As you lead the Congress in deliberation on funding levels for agricultural research, extension, education and conservation programs, please consider American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America, and Soil Science Society of America as supportive resources. We hope you will call on our membership and scientific expertise whenever the need arises. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our requests. For additional information or to learn more about the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and Soil Science Society of America (ASA–CSSA–SSSA), please visit www.agronomy.org, www.crops.org or www.soils.org or contact ASA–CSSA–SSSA Director of Science Policy Karl Glasener (kglasener@agronomy.org, kglasener@crops.org, or kglasener@soils.org) or 202–408–5382.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE

USDA/APHIS/Animal Care (AC)/Animal Welfare Act (AWA) Enforcement

AWI Request: \$22,275,270 (near-level funding)

Over the past decade, the subcommittee has responded to the urgent need for increased funding for Animal Care to improve its inspections of nearly 16,000 sites, including animal dealers, commercial breeders, laboratories, zoos, circuses, and airlines, to ensure compliance with Animal Welfare Act standards. AC now has 111 inspectors (with 5 vacancies in the process of being filled), versus 64 inspectors at the end of the 1990s. During fiscal year 2008, they conducted 15,600 inspections, including required annual visits to all research facilities that alone house over 1 million animals covered by the act. Moreover, AC inspectors engaged in extended, time-consuming follow-up with licensees/registrants regarded as problems because of the nature and frequency of their violations.

It is important to sustain the progress that has been made. This budget request of \$22,275,270 provides a minimal increase over fiscal year 2009 to cover pay costs as well as the added responsibilities associated both with the growing number of licensed/registered facilities, and with enforcing the new Congressional ban on imports from foreign puppy mills.

APHIS/Emergency Management Systems/Disaster Planning for Animals

AWI Request: \$1,001,000 (level funding)

In addition to their AWA inspections, Animal Care personnel help plan and coordinate disaster response efforts for companion and service animals. In 2008, they assisted with pet evacuation and recovery during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike and the California wildfires. These efforts are required by law—laws enacted in recognition of the implications for disaster response, as learned during Hurricane Katrina, when people refuse to evacuate because no plans have been made for their companion animals. This is an important effort, and the additional funding is needed so that it does not come at the expense of AC's other programs.

Agricultural Research Service/National Agricultural Library (NAL)/Animal Welfare Information Center (AWIC)

AWI Request: \$1, 978,400

We very much appreciate the Subcommittee's strong support for the Animal Welfare Information Center, including placing it within the NAL's budget as a line item. AWIC's services are integral to the Nation's biomedical research enterprise, as well as to other regulated entities, because they facilitate compliance with Federal animal welfare regulations and policies governing animal-related research. The AWIC helps to improve the conduct of research, including the care provided to the animals who are used, thereby ensuring a reduction in variables that can skew the research. Better science is the end result.

Congress established AWIC under the Improved Standards for Laboratory Animals Act (the 1985 amendment to the Animal Welfare Act) to serve as a clearinghouse, training center, and educational resource for institutions using animals in research, testing, and teaching. The Center is the single most important resource for helping research personnel at more than 1,200 United States research facilities meet their responsibilities under the AWA. Supported by a modest funding level, its services are available to everyone at these institutions, including animal technicians, research investigators, attending veterinarians, IACUC representatives, and the Institutional Official, as well as to other industries and regulated entities, USDA inspectors, and the general public.

AWIC provides data on the following: alleviating or reducing pain and distress in experimental animals (including anesthetic and analgesic procedures); reducing the number of animals used for research where possible; identifying alternatives to the use of animals for specific research projects; and preventing the unintended duplication of animal experiments. The Center collects, updates, and disseminates material on humane animal housing and husbandry, the responsibilities of Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUCs), animal behavior, improved methodologies, psychological well-being of primates, and exercise for dogs. Through the resources it provides to the research community and other animal industries, such as zoos, AWIC contributes significantly to science-based decision-making in animal care.

AWIC's website (<http://awic.nal.usda.gov/>) is one of the most accessed sites at the NAL, with an average of over 340,000 page-views per month in fiscal year 2008, a 12 percent increase over fiscal year 2007. It provides valuable information on issues of importance not only to the science community but also to the agriculture and public health communities, including BSE and avian influenza, two of the top areas of inquiry for visitors to its website. In fiscal year 2008, in addition to hundreds of millions of kbytes of information downloaded from the website, more than 82,000 hard copies (paper and CD) were distributed, an increase of 17 percent over fiscal year 2007. This includes the distribution of the AWIC Bulletin to over 7,000 requestors. AWIC staff provided over 2,000 personal reference services; conducted 7 sessions of its workshop "Meeting the Information Requirements of the Animal Welfare Act" at universities, pharmaceutical/research firms, and NAL itself; and conducted 22 exhibitions and/or presentations at various professional and scientific meetings, as well as for several visiting delegations at NAL.

AWIC expertise is also needed to address continuing deficiencies in IACUC oversight within research institutions. First identified some years ago in an OIG audit, USDA found IACUC-related violations 45 times in fiscal year 2007, and the primate abuse documented at the New Iberia Research Facility in 2008 provides fresh evidence of these problems. AWIC needs the funds to conduct more of its workshops,

and to achieve a long-sought objective of holding a symposium on AWA requirements for IACUC nonaffiliated members (i.e., members from the community charged with representing the communities' concerns for the animals).

Likewise, increased funding is necessitated by the expansion of AWIC's mandate to serve the broader industry regulated under the AWA: animal dealers, carriers and handlers, zoos and other exhibitors. Animal Care's veterinary medical officers and animal care inspectors are able to utilize the full range of AWIC's services to better fulfill their responsibilities. The AWIC works closely with Animal Care and with Emergency Veterinary Services on emerging crises such as the highly pathogenic avian influenza, and it also quickly responded to the current health emergency by adding a variety of information resources on the H1N1 virus to its website, its blog, and through Twitter.

Among other endeavors, the \$1.978 million would be used as follows: The addition of two much-needed specialists to expand the content of the Center's database and make it more user-friendly and searchable; development of web-based training modules to provide online delivery of training opportunities; workshops, in conjunction with Animal Care, to assist licensees and registrants frequently cited for AWA violations; acquisition of, including electronic access to, data, including certain veterinary publications (the receipt of which was discontinued due to budget shortfalls); restoration of a grants program that could be used to update essential publications and manuals and translate them into Spanish for the growing number of Spanish-speaking animal care personnel in labs and zoos; and the overhead that must be provided to the Agricultural Research Service and the National Agricultural Library. (It should be noted that, after salaries and benefits, the largest single expense AWIC has is its overhead costs to ARS and NAL, which comprise over 13 percent of this funding request. This large expense substantially reduces the funds available for AWIC to conduct programs and provide services.)

AWIC's indispensability not only in assisting with compliance with the AWA but also in providing up-to-date information on a range of issues, from BSE to primate enrichment to the H1N1 virus, that are critical to the scientific and agricultural communities and the general public, justifies this modest proposed increase in its budget to enable it to meet growing demand for its expertise on multiple fronts.

Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)/Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA) Enforcement

AWI Request: Sufficient Funds to Ensure Strengthened Enforcement of HMSA

We greatly appreciate Congress' past efforts to address USDA's egregious failure to enforce the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act. Despite these efforts, USDA has made no improvement in this area. This failure jeopardizes both animal welfare and consumer welfare.

Since 2001, Congress has provided millions in additional funds for humane slaughter enforcement, in part to be used to hire new in-plant employees to work full-time on HMSA enforcement only. However, to date, none have been hired solely to handle this responsibility.

An AWI report found that enforcement of humane slaughter law is a low priority within USDA. (Crimes without Consequences: The Enforcement of Humane Slaughter Laws in the United States. www.awionline.org/farm/pdf/SlaughterReport.pdf) Not much has changed since 2004, when the Government Accountability Office issued a report citing widespread animal welfare issues under USDA's watch. It appears that the agency ignored the report.

Between 2002 and 2005, only 42 enforcement actions beyond deficiency reports for noncompliance with humane slaughter laws were taken in the United States. But whistleblower accounts and undercover videotape documentation from inside slaughterhouses reviewed in the report suggest that the current low level of humane enforcement is not due to a lack of violations. Instead, crimes are either not observed or recognized by inspection personnel, not reported through the proper channels, or the appropriate remedial measures are not taken.

In 2008, undercover video obtained by an investigator from an animal protection group revealed abhorrent acts of cruelty to livestock at the Westland/Hallmark Meat Packing Company in Chino, Calif., raising both ethical and food safety issues.

In the wake of this case, suggestions have been made regarding the installation of video cameras as a deterrent. AWI urges Congress to reject any attempt by the department to use cameras in lieu of inspectors.

Inspectors must be able to observe animals from the time the truck arrives and animals are unloaded and moved, through the stunning and slaughter process, until the last animal on the vehicle is killed. Under the law, when an inspector sees an apparent violation, he/she is authorized to stop the line on the spot.

AWI is concerned with USDA's lack of commitment to enforcement. Congress must provide enough funding to allow FSIS to assign as many inspectors as needed to fully enforce the HMSA at all slaughter plants, but then it must exercise its oversight power to make sure that those inspectors are in fact tasked only with HMSA enforcement, are adequately trained, and that they understand their mission: To enforce the law and to ensure the humane and safe treatment of animals killed for human consumption, as mandated by the HMSA.

Office of Inspector General (OIG)/Animal Fighting Enforcement

AWI Request: \$87,910,150 (near-level funding)

In 2007, violations of the AWA's animal fighting provisions, as well as the possession of related implements, became felonies. AWI supports funding OIG sufficiently to allow it to pursue animal fighting cases vigorously. Animal fighting is often associated with other violent crimes, thus posing a threat to the welfare of both animals and our communities. This level of funding is also needed to enable OIG to carry out audits and investigations to improve compliance with the Animal Welfare Act, the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, the Horse Protection Act, and the downed animal rules.

APHIS/Animal Care/Horse Protection Act (HPA) Enforcement

AWI Request: \$1 million

The goal of the Horse Protection Act, passed in 1970, is to end the cruel practice of soring, by which unscrupulous owners and/or trainers primarily of Tennessee Walking Horses intentionally inflict pain on the legs and hooves of horses, through the application of chemical and mechanical irritants, to produce an exaggerated gait. In 2008, the American Association of Equine Practitioners condemned soring as "one of the most significant welfare issues faced by the equine industry." Three Girl Scouts bravely documented the brutality of this crime in their video "See it through my eyes." (Available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqFeYu1CrjU)

Throughout its history, however, the law has been openly flouted and inadequate funding has hampered enforcement. Through a separate, joint statement with the Humane Society of the United States and others, we support a request for \$1 million for HPA enforcement. This sum would allow government oversight at many more horse shows and greater investment in technologies (gas chromatography/mass spectrometry and thermography) that improve detection of sore horses. It should be noted that in fiscal year 2007, the use of GC/MS, which detects foreign substances used to sore horses, resulted in positive findings in 50 percent of the animals tested.

APHIS/Investigative and Enforcement Services (IES)

AWI Request: \$14,036,350 (near-level funding)

The Investigative and Enforcement Services division of APHIS is essential to meaningful enforcement of the AWA and HPA. Among other things, it investigates alleged violations of the AWA and undertakes appropriate enforcement action. It handles more animal welfare cases as new facilities become licensed and registered and Animal Care conducts more inspections. Moreover, IES has seen an increase in its workload involving HPA-related activities.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE

Re: Request of \$1,978,400 for the Animal Welfare Information Center

Dear Chairman Kohl and Ranking Member Cochran: Thank you for your interest in and efforts on behalf of the Animal Welfare Information Center (AWIC) at the National Agricultural Library (NAL). Previous efforts to eliminate AWIC have failed as a result of Congress' appreciation of the agency's value to the research community and its support for its programs.

The AWIC was established in 1986 in response to a mandate in the Improved Standards for Laboratory Animals amendment to the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). The Center serves as a clearinghouse, training center, and education resource for those involved in the use of animals for research, testing, and teaching (as well as other entities covered by the AWA), and the need and demand for its services continue to outstrip its resources. AWIC provides training and compiles, distributes, and posts on its website information resources from the scientific literature to assist researchers who use animals. The subjects covered include husbandry, handling, and care of animals; personnel training; animal behavior; alternatives; improved methodologies; environmental enrichment of non-human primates; and pain control

via anesthesia and analgesia. It also serves as a resource for the wider scientific and agricultural communities by providing access to material on zoonotic diseases such as avian influenza, transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, tuberculosis, and now the H1N1 virus. Its activities contribute significantly to science-based decision-making in animal care.

In fiscal year 2008, staff conducted seven sessions of AWIC's workshop, "Meeting the Information Requirements of the Animal Welfare Act" (evaluations of which are overwhelmingly positive, with participants indicating a high degree of new information acquisition), and presented 22 exhibitions and presentations. The AWIC website (<http://awic.nal.usda.gov/>) is one of the most accessed sites at NAL, with an average of over 340,000 page-views each month in fiscal year 2008, a 12 percent increase over fiscal year 2007. Many improvements to the website have been made in the past year, and more information on more subjects through more outlets is available.

Today we write in support of an appropriation of \$1,978,400, which is urgently needed to fund, in addition to salaries and other expenses, AWIC's services and its ongoing efforts to improve their delivery:

- \$50,000—Develop web-based training modules, including interactive modules, in order to provide online delivery of training opportunities.
- \$36,000—Present workshops in cooperation with Animal Care to assist licensees/registrants frequently cited for AWA violations.
- \$20,500—Internet services
- \$13,900—AWIC staff training
- \$200,000—Resume acquisition of veterinary publications that NAL discontinued 5 years ago, and increase the pace of indexing all such publications.
- \$270,000—Overhead to ARS and NAL
- \$50,000—Meet Congressional mandate to digitize more materials; in particular, scanning AWA-related documents going back to 1966
- \$50,000—Restore a grants program that could be used to update Essentials for Animals in Research, as well as certain animal care manuals, and then translate them into Spanish; develop training DVDs, etc. In the past, this program yielded useful products, including the original Essentials for Animal Research: A Primer for Research Personnel (which was also translated into Spanish and is still among the top ten downloaded documents); a video on normal animal behaviors; and a training video on using animals in research. It also provided support for the first World Congress on Animal Use in the Life Sciences, and for the proceedings of conferences for the Scientists Center for Animal Welfare.
- \$10,000—Convene a stakeholders meeting to assess AWIC's services and recommend steps for the future.
- \$5,000—Translate the AWA and its regulations, and other documents, into Spanish.

The growing numbers of Spanish-speaking animal-care personnel in U.S. research facilities and zoos, as well as increasing interest on the part of scientific communities in Central and South America, have made the availability of Spanish-language materials a priority.

We hope that the new Administration recognizes how vitally important the AWIC's services are to the nation's biomedical research enterprise, and how essential it is to have a budget sufficient to support these services and technological improvements in their delivery. AWIC facilitates compliance with specific requirements of federal animal welfare regulations and policies governing animal-related research. In addition, it provides extensive research services for us, thereby greatly benefiting our work on animal research issues. We appreciate and look forward to a continued working relationship with the Animal Welfare Information Center and hope you will support our modest request for appropriations.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY CONTROL FORUM

The Congress concluded that the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (Program) should be implemented in the most cost-effective way. The Program is funded by EQIP, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's (BOR) Basinwide Program, and a cost share for both of these programs provided by the Basin States. Realizing that agricultural on-farm strategies were some of the most cost-effective strategies, the Congress authorized a program for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through amendment of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act (Act) in 1984. With the enactment of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (FAIRA), the Congress directed that the Program should continue to be implemented as one of the components of the Environmental Quality Incentives Pro-

gram (EQIP). Since the enactment of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act (FSRIA) in 2002, there have been, for the first time in a number of years, opportunities to adequately fund the Program within the EQIP. In 2008, Congress passed the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (FCEA). The FCEA addresses the cost sharing required from the Basin Funds. In so doing, the FCEA named the cost sharing requirement as the Basin States Program (BSP). The BSP will provide 30 percent of the total amount that will be spent each year by the combined EQIP and BSP effort.

The Program, as set forth in the act, is to benefit Lower Basin water users hundreds of miles downstream from salt sources in the Upper Basin as the salinity of Colorado River water increases as the water flows downstream. There are very significant economic damages caused by high salt levels in this water source. Agriculturalists in the Upper Basin where the salt must be controlled, however, don't first look to downstream water quality standards but look for local benefits. These local benefits are in the form of enhanced beneficial use and improved crop yields. They submit cost-effective proposals to the State Conservationists in Utah, Wyoming and Colorado and offer to cost share in the acquisition of new irrigation equipment. It is the act that provides that the seven Colorado River Basin States will also cost share with the Federal funds for this effort. This has brought together a remarkable partnership.

After longstanding urgings from the States and directives from the Congress, the USDA has concluded that this program is different than small watershed enhancement efforts common to the EQIP. In the case of the Colorado River salinity control effort, the watershed to be considered stretches more than 1,200 miles from the river's headwater in the Rocky Mountains to the river's terminus in the Gulf of California in Mexico and receives water from numerous tributaries. The USDA has determined that this effort should receive a special funding designation and has appointed a coordinator for this multi-state effort.

In recent fiscal years, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has directed that about \$19 million of EQIP funds be used for the Program. The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum) appreciates the efforts of the NRCS leadership and the support of this subcommittee. The plan for water quality control of the Colorado River was prepared by the Forum, adopted by the States, and approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council has taken the position that the funding for the salinity control program should not be below \$20 million per year. Over the last 3 fiscal years, for the first time, funding almost reached the needed level. State and local cost-sharing is triggered by the Federal appropriation. In fiscal year 2009, it is anticipated that the States will cost share with about \$8 million and local agriculture producers will add more than \$7 million. Hence, it is anticipated that in fiscal year 2009 the State and local contributions will be about 45 percent of the total program cost.

Over the past few years, the NRCS has designated that about 2.5 percent of the EQIP funds be allocated to the Colorado River salinity control program. The Forum believes this is the appropriate future level of funding as long as the total EQIP funding nationwide is more than \$1 billion. Funding above this level assists in offsetting pre-fiscal year 2003 funding below this level. The Basin States have cost sharing dollars available to participate in funding on-farm salinity control efforts. The agricultural producers in the Upper Basin are waiting for their applications to be considered so that they might improve their irrigation equipment and also cost share in the Program.

Overview

The Program was authorized by the Congress in 1974. The Title I portion of the act responded to commitments that the United States made, through a Minute of the International Boundary and Water Commission, to Mexico specific to the quality of water being delivered to Mexico below Imperial Dam. Title II of the act established a program to respond to salinity control needs of Colorado River water users in the United States and to comply with the mandates of the then newly-enacted Clean Water Act. This testimony is in support of funding for the Title II program.

After a decade of investigative and implementation efforts, the Basin States concluded that the act needed to be amended. The Congress agreed and made a major revision to the act in 1984. That revision, while keeping the Department of the Interior as lead coordinator for Colorado River Basin salinity control efforts, also gave new salinity control responsibilities to the USDA. The Congress has charged the Administration with implementing the most cost-effective program practicable (measured in dollars per ton of salt controlled). It has been determined that the agricultural efforts are some of the most cost-effective opportunities.

Since Congressional mandates of more than three decades ago, much has been learned about the impact of salts in the Colorado River system. The BOR has conducted studies on the economic impact of these salts. The BOR recognizes that the damages to United States' water users alone are hundreds of millions of dollars per year.

The Forum is composed of gubernatorial appointees from Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. The Forum has become the seven-State coordinating body for interfacing with Federal agencies and the Congress in support of the implementation of the Salinity Control Program. In close cooperation with the EPA and pursuant to requirements of the Clean Water Act, every 3 years the Forum prepares a formal report evaluating the salinity of the Colorado River, its anticipated future salinity, and the program elements necessary to keep the salinity concentrations (measured in Total Dissolved Solids—TDS) at or below the levels measured in the river system in 1972 at Imperial Dam, and below Parker and Hoover Dams.

In setting water quality standards for the Colorado River system, the salinity concentrations at these three locations in 1972 have been identified as the numeric criteria. The plan necessary for controlling salinity and reducing downstream damages has been captioned the "Plan of Implementation." The 2008 Review of water quality standards includes an updated Plan of Implementation. In order to eliminate the shortfall in salinity control resulting from inadequate Federal funding for a number of years from the USDA, the Forum has determined that implementation of the Program needs to be accelerated. The level of appropriation requested in this testimony is in keeping with the agreed upon plan. If adequate funds are not appropriated, significant damages from the higher salt concentrations in the water will be more widespread in the United States and Mexico.

Concentrations of salts in the river cause well over \$300 million in quantified damages and significantly more in unquantified damages in the United States and result in poorer quality water being delivered by the United States to Mexico. Damages occur from:

- a reduction in the yield of salt sensitive crops and increased water use for leaching in the agricultural sector,
- a reduction in the useful life of galvanized water pipe systems, water heaters, faucets, garbage disposals, clothes washers, and dishwashers, and increased use of bottled water and water softeners in the household sector,
- an increase in the use of water for cooling, and the cost of water softening, and a decrease in equipment service life in the commercial sector,
- an increase in the use of water and the cost of water treatment, and an increase in sewer fees in the industrial sector,
- a decrease in the life of treatment facilities and pipelines in the utility sector,
- difficulty in meeting wastewater discharge requirements to comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit terms and conditions, and an increase in desalination and brine disposal costs due to accumulation of salts in groundwater basins, and
- increased use of imported water for leaching and cost of desalination and brine disposal for recycled water.

State Cost Sharing and Technical Assistance

The authorized cost sharing by the Basin States, as provided by FAIRA, was at first difficult to implement as attorneys for the USDA concluded that the Basin States were authorized to cost share in the effort, but the Congress had not given the USDA authority to receive the Basin States' funds. After almost a year of exploring every possible solution as to how the cost sharing was to occur, the States, in agreement with Reclamation, State officials in Utah, Colorado and Wyoming and with NRCS State Conservationists in Utah, Colorado and Wyoming, agreed upon a program parallel to the salinity control activities provided by the EQIP wherein the States' cost sharing funds are being contributed and used. We now have several years of experience with that program and with the passage of FCEA we now have a clear authority for this program that is now known as the BSP.

The act designates that the Secretary of the Interior provide the coordination for the Federal agencies involved in the salinity control program. That responsibility has been delegated to the BOR. The BOR administers the Basin States cost sharing funds that have been used in the Parallel Program. The BOR requested that there be enacted clearer authority for the use of these funds.

With respect to the use of Basin States' cost sharing funds in the past, the Basin States felt that it was most essential that a portion of the Program be associated with technical assistance (TA) and education activities in the field. Without this necessary support, there is no advanced planning, proposals are not well prepared, as-

sertions in the proposals cannot be verified, implementation of contracts cannot be observed, and valuable partnering and education efforts cannot occur. Recognizing these values, the BSP designates 40 percent of the funds available on these needed TA activities made possible by contracts with the NRCS.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE COLORADO RIVER BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

This testimony is in support of funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with respect to its on-farm Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program for fiscal year 2010. This program has been carried out through the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act (Public Law 93–320), since it was enacted by Congress in 1974. With the enactment of the Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act (FAIRA) in 1996 (Public Law 104–127), specific funding for salinity control projects in the Colorado River Basin were eliminated from the Federal budget and aggregated into the Department of Agriculture’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) as one of its program components. With that action, Congress concluded that the salinity control program could be more effectively implemented as one of the components of the EQIP.

The Program, as set forth in the act, benefits both the Upper Basin water users through more efficient water management and the Lower Basin water users, hundreds of miles downstream from salt sources in the Upper Basin, through reduced salinity concentration of Colorado River water. California’s Colorado River water users are presently suffering economic damages in the hundreds of million of dollars per year due to the River’s salinity.

The Colorado River Board of California (Colorado River Board) is the State agency charged with protecting California’s interests and rights in the water and power resources of the Colorado River system. In this capacity, California along with the other six Colorado River Basin states through the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum), the interstate organization responsible for coordinating the Basin States’ salinity control efforts, established numeric criteria in June 1975 for salinity concentrations in the River. These criteria were established to lessen the future damages in the Lower Basin States of Arizona, California, and Nevada, as well as assist the United States in delivering water of adequate quality to Mexico in accordance with Minute 242 of the International Boundary and Water Commission.

The goal of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program is to offset the effects of water resources development in the Colorado River Basin after 1972 as each state develops its Colorado River Compact apportionments. In close cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and pursuant to requirements of the Clean Water Act (Public Law 92–500), every 3 years the Forum prepares a formal report analyzing the salinity of the Colorado River, anticipated future salinity, and the program elements necessary to keep the salinity concentrations (measured in Total Dissolved Solids—TDS) at or below the levels measured in the Colorado River system in 1972 at Imperial Dam, and below Parker and Hoover Dams. The latest report was prepared in 2008 titled: 2008 Review, Water Quality Standards for Salinity, Colorado River System (2008 Review). The plan necessary for controlling salinity and reducing downstream damages has been captioned the “Plan of Implementation.” The 2008 Review includes an updated Plan of Implementation.

Concentrations of salts in the River annually cause about \$376 million in quantified damage in the United States (there are significant un-quantified damages as well). For example, damages occur from:

- A reduction in the yield of salt sensitive crops and increased water use for leaching in the agricultural sector;
- A reduction in the useful life of galvanized water pipe systems, water heaters, faucets, garbage disposals, clothes washers, and dishwashers, and increased use of bottled water and water softeners in the household sector;
- An increase in the use of water for cooling, and the cost of water softening, and a decrease in equipment service life in the commercial sector;
- An increase in the use of water and the cost of water treatment, and an increase in sewer fees in the industrial sector;
- A decrease in the life of treatment facilities and pipelines in the utility sector;
- Difficulty in meeting wastewater discharge requirements to comply with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit terms and conditions, and an increase in desalination and brine disposal costs due to accumulation of salts in groundwater basins, and fewer opportunities for recycling due to groundwater quality deterioration; and

—Increased use of imported water for leaching and the cost of desalination and brine disposal for recycled water.

For every 30 milligram per liter increase in salinity concentrations, there are \$75 million in additional damages in the United States. Although the Program, thus far, has been able to implement salinity control measures that comply with the approved plan, recent drought years have caused salinity levels to rise in the River. Predictions are that this will be the trend for the next several years. This places an added urgency for acceleration of the implementation of the Program.

Enactment of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 provided an opportunity to adequately fund the Salinity Program within EQIP. The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Advisory Council has taken the position that the USDA portion of the effort be funded at 2.5 percent of the EQIP funding but at least \$20 million annually. Over the past few years, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has designated 2.5 percent of EQIP funds be allocated to the Colorado River Salinity Control program. The Forum suggests that this is an appropriate level of funding as long as it does not drop below \$20 million. The Colorado River Board supports the recommendation of the Forum and urges this Subcommittee to support funding for the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program for 2010 at this level.

These Federal dollars will be augmented by the State cost sharing of 30 percent with an additional 25 percent provided by the agricultural producers with whom USDA contracts for implementation of salinity control measures. Over the past years, the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control program has proven to be a very cost effective approach to help mitigate the impacts of increased salinity in the Colorado River. Continued Federal funding of this important Basin-wide program is essential.

In addition, the Colorado River Board recognizes that the Federal Government has made significant commitments to the Republic of Mexico and to the seven Colorado River Basin States with regard to the delivery of quality water to Mexico. In order for those commitments to continue to be honored, it is essential that in fiscal year 2010, and in future fiscal years, that Congress continues to provide funds to USDA to allow it to provide needed technical support to agricultural producers for addressing salinity control in the Basin.

The Colorado River is, and will continue to be, a major and vital water resource to the 18 million residents of southern California as well as throughout the Colorado River Basin. As stated earlier, preservation and improvement of the Colorado River water quality through an effective salinity control program will avoid the additional economic damages to users of Colorado River water in California, Arizona, and Nevada.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
A PROPOSAL FOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY—AN INVESTMENT IN GEOSPATIAL
INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE BUILDING A NATIONAL GIS¹

Summary

We respectfully request the Subcommittee's support for a multi-year, government-wide effort to build a national Geospatial Information System (GIS), led by the Secretary of Interior through his role as chairman of the Federal Geographic Data Committee under OMB circular A-16, and the United States Geological Survey. The total cost of the program, as detailed below, is expected to be approximately \$1.2 billion spread over 3 years. For fiscal 2010, we urge the Subcommittee to provide \$40.1 million for the portions of this project within your jurisdiction.

Proposal

The Stimulus Plan recently approved by Congress and the incoming Obama Administration is an enormous undertaking to revive the American economy. Potentially, it will involve thousands of infrastructure and other projects intended to create jobs and restart economic growth while producing things of lasting value to American taxpayers. The challenge to properly manage and execute this effort will be daunting, requiring unprecedented access to data and information at all levels of government and the private sector.

This is the moment for America to build a national Geographic Information System (GIS), that is, a unified, up-to-date, publicly-accessible national digital map, en-

¹A vision for a National Geographic Information System, by Jack Dangermond and Anne Hale Migliarese.

riched with data from all available sources, and supported by GIS technology. This system can be built quickly, immediately creating high tech jobs, and will serve as a public resource for project planners to support transportation infrastructure, alternative energy research, and project siting. It will also provide a foundation for monitoring the U.S. economic recovery across our communities, allowing activities to get underway as soon as possible and leaving a legacy for the future.

The benefits of a national GIS are universal. The Western Governor's Association declared GIS a key component of our national critical infrastructure. The National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) adopted a set of transition recommendations that represent a broad consensus among the key public and private stakeholders in the geospatial technology field and form a principal basis for this proposal.

Why a National GIS Should be Completed

Agencies have been laying the foundation for national GIS for years. It falls within umbrella names like Imagery for the Nation, The National Map, the National Spatial Data Infrastructure, and the pioneering work of by the U.S. Geological Survey, the Department of Commerce Census Bureau and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Departments of Homeland Security, Agriculture, and Interior, among others. It is supported by technical studies from the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC), the National Research Council, the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC), and the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC). Now is the time to pull them together.

GIS technology is uniquely capable of providing unity both to the complex new Stimulus Plan as well as other ongoing initiatives. GIS can integrate data from agencies across all levels of government, providing decision makers a powerful tool to marshal knowledge on items as diverse as personnel, finance, economics, infrastructure, and resources, all organized within maps or images showing geographic basics such as topography, roads, parcels, buildings, utility networks, landmarks, soil types, and political and physical land divisions. It brings together all key national datasets to support action—which is why it is considered a must for emergency response organizations across the country. A national GIS will place at our fingertips a comprehensive description of our nation's assets, resources and operations, all linked geographically. Once completed, it will be a priceless national resource and an indispensable tool for planners and business alike.

A national GIS can be built immediately, engaging hundreds of private firms. It will speed the start of job-rich infrastructure projects. Its biggest impact will be on projects critical to energy development, homeland security, defense, climate change, health care delivery, telecommunications, transportation, and the environment. Without national GIS as a management tool, efforts will be haphazard and project planners will be hamstrung. A National GIS must be a cornerstone program funded by the Stimulus Plan, a fulcrum to wring the greatest result for each dollar spent.

Technical fundamentals of a National GIS

A GIS system integrates information from many sources and authors using standardized protocols so that information can be harmonized and incorporated into a consistent framework to support multiple missions at all levels of government and private business. It can be built and maintained largely using on-going business processes such as The National Map initiative of Interior Department's Geological Survey (USGS), and it can rely heavily on existing software, hardware, and networks, integrated by a lead organization setting standards and protocols. Existing modern GIS server technology, together with open standards and Services Oriented Architecture (SOA), can provide enabling components for a national GIS immediately. This architecture maximizes collaboration among government and private entities. Guarantees of privacy, confidentiality, protection of proprietary financial data, and similar concerns can be built in at the foundation and at every level. This national system will result in the following:

- A series of standard geographic datasets (framework layers described below);
- A series of workflows that transactionally maintain (update) these datasets;
- A system for data management responsibility (FGDC governance);
- A suite of tailored applications;
- A designated Federal entity to oversee the effort;
- The necessary technology to support a National GIS system.

Leadership and cost for a National GIS

Both the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) and the Department of Interior have developed detailed recommendations on how to build a National GIS. A key first step is to implement fully the Imagery for the Nation initiative, an intergovernmental plan to create a full Federal-level GIS based on nationwide

aerial imaging and mapping, participation by agencies across the Federal landscape, and technological consistency.

Next, a comprehensive national updating of mapping and topographical information is essential to create a complete current portrait of America—what is referred to as The National Map. This step, along with outreach to incorporate key additional databases maintained by State and local governments and the private sector, and elements such as Parcels, Transportation, Hydro, Elevation, Critical Habitat and Boundaries, will be needed to make the system most effective for project decision-makers and infrastructure planners. We anticipate the total cost to be approximately \$1.2 billion, spread over 3 years. We can provide detailed cost breakdowns upon request.

In order to create a national GIS it is necessary to update and integrate the many currently-existing individual agency map layers into a consistent, integrated whole. USGS would lead this effort and combine information into a consistent geospatial foundation. This component will, over the next 3 years, require an additional \$200 million spread over a variety of Federal Departments and Agencies.

Interagency plans, contracts, and management systems are already in place today to implement this initiative. Overall management could be provided by the Secretary of the Interior, who chairs the Federal Geographic Data Committee, with significant involvement from USDA, DOC and DHS/FEMA. In addition, program funding can be leveraged through cooperative efforts with partners in State and local government and the private sector. The National Geospatial Advisory Committee can provide ongoing strategic and recommendations program design and implementation.

A National GIS: Key Framework Data and System Technology

We propose focusing on the development of five key digital layers or initiatives as initial steps toward a National GIS: Imagery, Parcel Data, Elevation, and Wildlife Habitat, and Recovery.gov.

—*Imagery.*—Imagery for the Nation (IFTN) is an intergovernmental initiative to address the Nation's basic business needs for aerial images. Imagery is used for countless applications in all levels of government and the private sector, embraced by the public through online tools such as Google Earth and Microsoft Virtual Earth. Partnerships between levels of government to acquire imagery data have lowered costs, reduced duplication, and allowed greater data standardization. IFTN will maximize the impact of taxpayer investments through a coordinated national acquisition program. The IFTN initiative was originated by the National States Geographic Information Council, been endorsed by the FGDC and the NGAC, and involves a heavy investment from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The approximate 3-year total cost for this activity is \$140 million, equally split between the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture. For fiscal year 2010, we urge the subcommittee to provide \$23.4 million for Agriculture's component.

—*A GIS-based Recovery.Gov.*—President Obama has insisted that Stimulus spending be subject to maximum transparency and accountability, enabling citizens to understand how their funds are being spent and how their communities will be affected. Recovery.gov, the web-based tool being launched by OMB for this purpose, must provide complete, understandable, authoritative and actionable information and analysis to elected and appointed officials, and to ordinary citizens. We propose that Recovery.gov be equipped with interactive maps and geospatial analytic tools that will substantially improve understanding and effectiveness of Recovery Act execution. An interactive map provides an intuitive foundation to understand, integrate, and interrogate this disparate and overwhelming amount of information, and to support better and timelier analysis and decisions. The application of GIS technology would allow public users to access and view Recovery Act spending patterns against established goals and underlying local and national conditions. In this way, it will allow the public to evaluate whether the government is making the right choices on where money is spent, and whether spending is yielding the right results. The approximate 3-year total cost for this activity is \$250 million across the Departments of the Interior (\$100 million), Agriculture (\$50 million), Commerce (\$50 million), and Homeland Security (\$50 million). For fiscal year 2010, we urge the subcommittee to provide \$16.7 million for Agriculture's component.

—*Parcel Data.*—Based on the National Academies of Science, National Research Council (NRC) recent report "National Land Parcel Data: A Vision for the Future," the land parcel data layer (also known as cadastral data) is used by governments to make decisions on land development, business activities, regulatory compliance, emergency response, and law enforcement. The NRC report con-

cludes that nationally-integrated land parcel data is necessary, feasible, and affordable. Development of a national land parcel system would also provide an invaluable analytical tool to help manage the mortgage crisis. The NGAC endorsed the recommendations in the NRC report in October. The approximate 3-year total cost for this activity is \$200 million for the Department of the Interior.

- Elevation.*—Today, high density digital elevation models are produced by a technology called LiDAR and IfSAR, an aerial mapping technology that provides highly accurate mapping of ground elevations. FEMA currently uses LiDAR data for flood mapping whenever such data are available. LiDAR data are also being utilized extensively in natural resource management, and new uses are being demonstrated for emergency response and homeland security purposes. An investment in a national Elevation initiative would produce consistent elevation dataset encompassing the entire country. The approximate 3-year total cost for this activity is \$300 million, equally split between the Department of the Interior and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- Wildlife Corridor/Crucial Habitat.*—The pressure for rapid economic development and increased energy production threatens our natural resources. The Western Governors' Association has recommended a Wildlife Corridor and Crucial Habitat Decision Support System. This system will support informed decisions on community growth, alternative energy expansion, biodiversity preservation, and resolving water resource issues. This effort will produce a consistent nationwide wildlife map and GIS management system. The approximate 3-year total cost for this activity is \$110 million for the Department of the Interior.

Conclusion

The key step is to get it done now. America's financial crisis today, the worst since the end of World War II, will force difficult actions and decisions. Large expenditures of taxpayer money must be designed to yield products of long-term benefit to the country. America has an information economy, and a robust geospatial infrastructure (system of digital maps and tools) is just as vital to its continued development as was the physical infrastructure to the industrial economy. A National GIS, properly designed and effectively implemented, providing public access and using best technologies, will speed economic recovery by producing jobs and putting shovels in the ground more quickly. It will also leave the country with a public utility, a modern geospatial information system, that itself can become a foundation for new generations of industries and technologies in the future.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Florida State University is requesting \$5,000,000 in fiscal year 2010 for the Risk Reduction for Agricultural Crops Program from the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service/Research and Education Activities/Federal Admin. Account.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and the Members of the Subcommittee for this opportunity to present testimony before this Committee. I would like to take a moment to briefly acquaint you with Florida State University.

Located in Tallahassee, Florida's capitol, FSU is a comprehensive Research university with a rapidly growing research base. The University serves as a center for advanced graduate and professional studies, exemplary research, and top-quality undergraduate programs. Faculty members at FSU maintain a strong commitment to quality in teaching, to performance of research and creative activities, and have a strong commitment to public service. Among the current or former faculty are numerous recipients of national and international honors including Nobel laureates, Pulitzer Prize winners, and several members of the National Academy of Sciences. Our scientists and engineers do excellent research, have strong interdisciplinary interests, and often work closely with industrial partners in the commercialization of the results of their research. Florida State University had over \$200 million this past year in sponsored research awards.

Florida State University attracts students from every State in the Nation and more than 100 foreign countries. The University is committed to high admission standards that ensure quality in its student body, which currently includes National Merit and National Achievement Scholars, Rhodes and Goldwater Scholars, as well as students with superior creative talent. Since 2005, FSU students have won more than 30 nationally competitive scholarships and fellowships including 3 Rhodes Scholarships, 2 Truman Scholarships, Goldwater, and 18 Fulbright Fellowships.

At Florida State University, we are very proud of our successes as well as our emerging reputation as one of the Nation's top public research universities.

Mr. Chairman, let me summarize our primary interest today. The current drought in the southeastern USA, the worst in recent history, has had significant impacts on the water resources. It has reemphasized the vulnerability of the citizens to climate variability and climate extremes. The Federal Government can reduce these risks by using modern technologies such as climate models, which can predict future climate, and decision support tools to help mitigate some of these uncertainties and provide adaptation strategies for the agricultural and environmental sectors. The Southeast Climate Consortium (SECC), which includes Florida State University, the University of Florida, the University of Miami, the University of Georgia, Auburn University, the University of Alabama at Huntsville, North Carolina State University and Clemson University, has been at the forefront of research and extension for the application of climate predictions to risk reduction for agriculture and natural resources. With support from USDA and NOAA, the SECC has developed new methods to predict the consequences of climate variability for agricultural crops, forests, and water resources in the southeastern USA. In recent real-life tests, these methods have been applied to the problems that farmers raising specialty crops face arising from variable rainfall, temperature, and wild fires. This program has strong support of extension in all States. The new tasks that can be accomplished with the funds requested are to develop improved methods to forecast droughts and other extreme climate events. These forecasts will be incorporated into decision support systems to help agricultural, forest, and natural resource managers to reduce risks of losses and environmental damage. The SECC will develop new partnerships and methods for incorporating climate forecasts into agricultural and water policy decisions and will continue the development of a decision support system to provide seasonal and multi-year projections to water resources managers, especially for agricultural water use. Lastly, the SECC will initiate research to determine risks and appropriate agricultural responses to longer term trends in climate. We are requesting \$5,000,000 for this project.

Mr. Chairman, this project will have a great impact on our country and I appreciate your consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRIENDS OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH—BELTSVILLE, INC.

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to present our statement regarding funding for the Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and especially for the Agency's flagship research facility, the Henry A. Wallace Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), in Maryland. Our organization—Friends of Agricultural Research—Beltsville—promotes the Center's current and long-term agricultural research, outreach, and educational missions.

Before going to the heart of our testimony, please allow us to note for the record that during fiscal year 2010 the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center will mark a great historical milestone, a milestone to celebrate the many great and small accomplishments that BARC research has contributed to the Nation's agricultural bounty and to the overall march of scientific progress. A full century will have passed since 1910, the year research in Beltsville began with the assembly of a dairy cattle herd for research purposes. The ensuing BARC story is by all rights a national story—a story of world-class accomplishment. BARC Director Joseph Spence and his staff are planning a series of worthy events to commemorate the centennial year.

The Friends of Agricultural Research-Beltsville (FAR-B) is honored to be both a participant in the centennial planning process and a contributor to coming events. We would be pleased, Mr. Chairman, to answer any questions, to collect any information or citations the Subcommittee might wish regarding the centennial or our testimony.

We now turn to the specifics of our testimony for fiscal year 2010:

Under-Funded Salary Growth.—\$1,700,000

First, we appreciate the restoration of items that were recommended for termination in the president's proposed budget for fiscal year 2009. We would hope that the fiscal year 2010 budget does not identify additional program terminations at BARC, and we would hope that there will be much needed funding increases. In the fiscal year 2009 budget, there was only about half of the needed funding for salary increases that went into effect at the beginning of the year. An unfortunate result of recent annual increases in Federal salaries—without offsetting funding in-

creases—is a negative growth in funding available for discretionary spending on research. This situation has continued for several years now, and it has had a significant negative impact on ARS research.

FAR-B strongly recommends funding adjustments to offset the almost yearly decline of net research funding resulting from under-funded salary increases.

Research Initiatives

While it is unclear at this time if the fiscal year 2010 budget includes funding for additional research at BARC, it is important to point out that BARC conducts many areas of research and that the research is of the highest national priority. BARC research presents many compelling opportunities to reward agriculture, the environment, and the consumer.

Food Safety—\$500,000.—The Beltsville Area recently established the largest single food safety unit in ARS. This research unit will focus on a number of issues, including safety of fruits and vegetables and food safety issues related to organic agriculture. The ability exists at BARC to raise crops and animals under farm conditions, and then to process, store, and package the resulting products. A unique feature of the food safety research program at BARC is the ability to propose and test interventions that greatly reduce pathogen exposure in foods, and ultimately in people.

Genomic Prediction—\$1,500,000.—The promise of understanding the genome of plants and animals is being fully exploited at Beltsville. In groundbreaking research conducted here, scientists have been able to quickly and accurately identify dairy bulls that will produce daughters capable of producing the most milk. Now a simple test at birth can predict at twice the accuracy and at a cost of about \$250 the potential of a bull to sire high producing cows. Traditionally, bull prediction methods have required farmers to obtain production records of 50 to 100 daughters per bull to determine his genetic merit, at a cost up to \$50,000 per bull. The potential for developing and expanding this breakout technology is huge and at great savings to dairy farmers and consumers alike.

Climate Change—\$1,500,000.—BARC has truly unique growth chambers that can measure and observe plant growth at every stage from root to stem, and under every conceivable atmospheric condition. BARC is using these chambers to measure the effects of increasing atmospheric CO₂ and changes in environmental temperatures. Studies are underway not only on agronomically important crops, but also on invasive weeds. Research shows that environmental changes may enhance the rapid growth of invasive plants, thus threatening to exacerbate already costly problems for American agriculture.

Obesity Prevention—\$500,000.—Obesity negatively impacts the health and productivity of the American public. Moreover, obesity comes with greatly increased risk of chronic diseases that dramatically add to the economic costs of health care. The Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center (BHNRC) is researching barriers and facilitators to help the American public follow Federal dietary guidelines. A major research emphasis is to prevent obesity through a better understanding of why people make the food choices they do. This research also will help USDA design and implement more effective food assistance programs.

Waste Utilization—\$1,000,000.—Because it is a working farm and has research scientists who have expertise in animal science, conversion technologies, and environmental science, BARC is an ideal place to study the utilization of farm-generated waste products. Farm-generated waste products can be environmentally harmful, have little or no value to the farmer, and disposal can be costly. Work at Beltsville has led to the effective development of technologies and products that take waste by-products and convert them to valuable new products. Examples include biofuels and plastics made without petroleum.

Trade Enhancement and Global Competitiveness—\$2,000,000.—BARC maintains and expands the Federal Government's unique collections of materials and organisms that are of utmost importance in identifying pests and for ensuring that unwanted pests are prevented from entering the United States and producing destruction of animals and plants of economic importance. These unique and irreplaceable collections include the Germplasm Resource Information Network, and invaluable reference collections of insects, nematodes, parasites, and fungi. These world-class collections attract leading experts from around the world who study and use them for their own purposes. The collections are absolutely critical to identifying and preventing exotic pest problems from entering the United States through imports or by international travelers as well as demonstrating that our exports are safe. The continued availability of research in this general area of systematics is essential for trade, for homeland security, and for the protection of American agriculture.

Chesapeake Bay Improvement—\$500,000.—BARC scientists are working with farmers on Maryland's Eastern Shore to learn how to improve on-farm conservation practices that will improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. The research goals—targeting the entire range of Eastern Shore farming practices—include reducing fertilizer and pesticide usage. A central goal is to create agronomic and animal waste management practices that will reduce fertilizer usage and control pollution runoff. Biocontrol studies are searching out ways to minimize the need for pesticides. Scientists also are using advanced remote sensing and hydrological technologies to protect the health of the Chesapeake watershed.

FAR-B strongly recommends continued funding for these high-value, critically needed research initiatives.

Facilities.—\$30 Million

Ongoing facility needs at BARC are a reflection of the age of many of the buildings and infrastructure at BARC. As the program and the number of employees has decreased over time due to lack of funding, the burden of maintaining a large research facility has taken its toll in terms of routine and ongoing maintenance. It is essential that additional funding be provided for general facility maintenance and that plans for facility consolidation move forward.

With talk of greatly increased expenditures of the Federal Government for facilities projects that are “shovel-ready”, it is our hope that the Beltsville Area will be the recipient of a significant amount of those funds. Several projects at BARC are fully designed and ready for construction to begin almost immediately. These include the final phase of construction of the Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center (BHNRC), in which existing building 307 will be gutted and rebuilt. This will allow BARC to relocate the entire BHNRC—now spread out at three separate locations—to one location and also free up space for other needed research activities. The completion of this important building renovation is urgently needed at BARC because many of the proposed space consolidations, which will greatly reduce the operating costs at the Center, are dependent on this project.

Other projects that are fully designed and ready to go include three projects at the U.S. National Arboretum (USNA). The relocation of the USNA entrances from R Street and New York Avenue to Bladensburg Road is a major project that needs to move forward and will greatly improve public access while relieving traffic congestion on New York Avenue. Finally, the trash abatement project for the cleanup of Hickey Run needs to move forward. Rain runoff produces a great volume of trash as the result of inadequate storm water control by the District of Columbia. This trash accumulates on the property of the USNA. This project is urgently needed to prevent trash from washing onto the arboretum grounds, which now occurs with almost any significant rainfall. This project is also critically important environmentally and for helping clean up the Anacostia River. The project has been completely designed and, while funds have been appropriated to the D.C. government and to ARS for this project, funding is not adequate to start construction on this project.

FAR-B strongly recommends funding to complete these long delayed, urgently needed facility improvements.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes our statement. We again thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony and for your interest and support.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

The Izaak Walton League of America appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning appropriations for fiscal year 2010 for various agencies and programs under the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee. The League is a national, non-profit organization founded in 1922. We have more than 36,000 members and nearly 300 chapters and state divisions nationwide. Our members are committed to advancing common sense policies that safeguard wildlife and habitat, support community-based conservation, and address pressing environmental issues. The League has been a partner with farmers and a participant in forming agriculture policy since the 1930s. The following pertains to conservation programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (FCEA) of 2008 was enacted with a prominent commitment to increased mandatory conservation spending. We urge the Subcommittee to maintain the mandatory spending levels for conservation programs as provided in the act. The fiscal year 2010 budget is important to carrying out the changes in the 2008 bill and implementing new initiatives. These conservation programs are critical to working with farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to un-

dertake or improve conservation practices. These programs benefit producers through improved soil quality and productivity of their land, and the broader community through cleaner air and water and healthy habitat.

Previous Farm Bills have included increased conservation authorizations that the League supported and fought hard to achieve. That pattern was certainly repeated with the new law, which contains a \$25 billion investment in conservation programs overall. Although the authorization is important, the country will only realize the true benefit of conservation policies if appropriations match the authorized levels. As documented in our research on prior Farm Bill funding:¹

“Congress has also cut the funding committed to conservation programs in the previous [2002] Farm Bill. More than \$5 billion promised to conservation has been withheld. This despite the fact that as many as three-fourths of the eligible farmers and ranchers seeking conservation programs are turned away due to lack of funds. No similar caps have been applied to the unlimited crop payment programs.”

We are disappointed that the President’s budget continues the unfortunate pattern of cutting conservation programs below mandatory levels established in the Farm Bill. The League is especially concerned about proposed cuts to the Wetland Reserve Program and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. Demand for participation in both far outstrips available funding, and this proposal will only exacerbate that problem as well as undermine conservation on-the-ground. It is critical that authorized levels for vital programs are met and maintained in fiscal year 2010 and all subsequent budget cycles for the life of the legislation. Specifically, the League believes achieving the following mandatory levels is essential:

- Meeting the Wetland Reserve Program’s full 3.041 million acre, \$1.2 billion allocation over the life of FCEA will require \$473 million in fiscal year 2010 according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) March 2009 baseline. The President has proposed only \$391 million and reduced the program acreage by 139,000 acres.
- Adding 1.22 million acres to the Grassland Reserve Program by 2012, scored at \$300 million for the life of FCEA, with a CBO baseline of \$78 million for fiscal year 2010. The Administration believes \$54 million will fully fund the Farm Bill authorization for fiscal year 2010.
- Maintaining the 32 million acre enrollment in the Conservation Reserve Program, scored at \$9.8 billion over the life of FCEA, and \$1.944 billion for fiscal year 2010. The Administration’s budget proposes full funding for CRP.
- Achieving \$85 million annually for the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. The budget proposed by the President cuts the program by more than half in fiscal year 2010 to \$42 million.

Additionally, the League worked to expand the Conservation Stewardship Program. Accompanying the positive revisions to better focus the program on higher environmental standards was an increase in authorized funding to support enrollment of approximately 13 million acres per year. The March 2009 CBO baseline places fiscal year 2010 mandatory funding at \$752 million. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has scored funding full authorization at \$681 million. With the numerous environmental challenges facing U.S. agriculture, including climate change, soil quality deficiencies, declining pollinator health, and huge water quality and quantity issues, we strongly urge the Subcommittee to provide the full baseline amount in its bill.

Furthermore, effective implementation of Farm Bill conservation programs depends upon adequate technical resources to work with landowners in addressing their unique environmental concerns. Although conservation programs are available, under-investment in technical assistance limits agency support to assist farmers and ranchers in selecting and optimizing appropriate programs for their operations. Resource concerns and conservation practices vary throughout the country, and the technical assistance provided to program participants is necessary to address specific environmental concerns. The technical expertise of the Natural Resource Conservation Service and partners that assist in the delivery of programs and technical assistance directly to landowners is necessary for the adoption and maintenance of conservation practices. We request that the subcommittee support the mandatory levels of conservation program funding as provided in FCEA to enable robust technical resources to implement those programs successfully.

Finally, the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program is a very successful competitive grant program that funds farmer-driven research, edu-

¹ Redlin, Gupta, and Wiegand. 2007. *The 2007 Farm Bill: Stewardship, Prosperity, and Fairness*. Izaak Walton League of America. http://www.iwla.org/publications/agriculture/Farm_Bill_2007_WEB.pdf.

cation, and extension initiatives. SARE projects, and its unique regional approach, have a long record of building economic prosperity, innovation and opportunity in rural America—all integrally aligned with natural resource conservation.

Demand for SARE is growing, however, most years it has been able to fund less than 10 percent of the proposals submitted. Forty million dollars are authorized for SARE's research and education program and \$20 million for its extension education and professional development program. However, appropriations for both programs have never topped \$19 million. The League requests a minimum fiscal year 2010 appropriation for SARE of \$30 million, with \$25 million allocated to research and education and \$5 million to extension and professional development.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify in strong support of fully-funding agricultural conservation programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GOODWILL INDUSTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Dear Chair and Ranking Member: On Behalf of Goodwill Industries International (Goodwill) and its 160 local Goodwill agencies in the United States, I wanted to thank you for your inclusion of funding in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act targeted to low income workers and people with disabilities struggling in the midst of the recession.

I am writing today to urge you to provide adequate funding in fiscal year 2010 for a critical program that supports local Goodwill agencies' efforts to help your constituents through the dignity of work. Especially during such trying economic times, Goodwill understands the difficult challenge that appropriators face as they struggle to stretch limited resources to support an ever-increasing list of national priorities. We stand committed to working with you toward implementing solutions that will restore economic stability by empowering disadvantaged populations

While our agencies utilize a variety of Federal funding streams, AgrAbility is one of our highest priority programs.

Goodwill has a long history in meeting the employment and training needs of people with disabilities who live and work in rural communities, including agriculture workers who have suffered disabling injuries. Agriculture consistently ranks as one of the nation's most dangerous occupations. Each year, 90,000 agricultural workers sustain disabling injuries in work-related accidents.

AgrAbility is a small \$5 million program that consists of one National AgrAbility Project and more than 20 State/Regional AgrAbility Projects. These projects must involve a collaborative partnership between a land-grant university and one or more nonprofit organizations.

State AgrAbility projects provide free on-farm consultations during which they assess abilities and needs, make recommendations for farm site or task modifications and assistive technology, then develop an action plan that allows program participants to continue to lead successful careers in production agriculture and farming or in another chosen field. In addition, the National AgrAbility Project (lead by Purdue University in partnership with Goodwill Industries International) provides technical assistance and professional training for State AgrAbility Projects, produces resource materials, and disseminates information related to the project. This project is the cornerstone of Goodwill's efforts with rural communities.

GOODWILL urges Congress to provide adequate funding for full implementation of AgrAbility Programs in all 50 States thereby ensuring that assistance is available in all 50 States to farmers, ranchers, other agricultural workers, and family members impacted by disability.

Thanks for considering this request. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact Seth Turner, Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy, at seth.turner@goodwill.org or (240) 333-5508.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE MINOR CROP FARMER ALLIANCE

The Minor Crop Farmer Alliance is an alliance of national and regional organizations and individuals representing growers, shippers, packers, handlers, and processors of various agricultural commodities, including food, fiber, nursery, and horticultural products, and organizations involved with public health pesticides. Our members are extremely interested in the development of pest management tools and techniques that are environmentally sound. While our commodities are often called "minor crops," they are vitally important components in the diets (fruits and vegetables) of all Americans and they contribute to safe and aesthetic surroundings for our homes, schools and places of business (turf, ornamental and nursery crops). Specialty crop agriculture in the United States is valued at more than \$55 billion annu-

ally and accounts for more than 20 percent of the value of agricultural products grown in this country.

We request that \$8.4 million be provided to the National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) in fiscal year 2010 specifically for the continuation of agricultural chemical use surveys for fruits, vegetables, floriculture and nursery crops.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) discontinued its Chemical Use Surveys for these commodities and has stated that it needs \$8.4 million in funding to continue the survey program.

The chemical usage surveys are the only source of publicly available data on agricultural pesticide and fertilizer use. The surveys are used by the USDA Office of Pest Management Policy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct risk assessments and make pesticide policy decisions. Farmers, commodity organizations and the public utilize the data to monitor pesticide and fertilizer use and it is essential data for use in public policy discussions and participation in rule-making.

Proprietary data are available to verify NASS data in EPA risk assessments, but it cannot be used as the sole source of data because EPA cannot share the data with the public without violating the terms of its proprietary purchasing agreement. This proprietary data is not always gathered using appropriate sampling schemes, leaving gaps in the information even for specialty crops that are widely grown.

EPA relies on the NASS surveys to conduct pesticide risk assessments. Without the NASS survey data, EPA plans to default to 100 percent crop treated in future risk assessments. This could result in the cancellation of important crop protection tools for farmers. EPA has contacted USDA to communicate its strong support for the survey program.

The Congress included language in the fiscal year 2009 Omnibus Bill that provided \$2,450,000 to carry out the "Fruit Chemical Use Data Study." While we welcome these additional funds for NASS, we hope that in fiscal year 2010 the Congress will provide the full amount needed to continue all of these critical surveys for fruits, vegetables, nursery and floricultural crops.

Your consideration of this request is appreciated.

American Farm Bureau Federation	Michigan State Horticultural Society
American Nursery & Landscape Association	Michigan Vegetable Council Inc.
California Specialty Crops Council	National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
California Almond Board	National Onion Association
California Avocado Commission	National Potato Council
California Citrus Quality Council	North Central Washington Fieldman's Association
California Fig Advisory Board	Northwest Horticultural Council
California Grape & Tree Fruit League	Produce Marketing Association
California Processed Onion and Garlic Research Committee	Society of American Florists
California Dried Plum Board	United Fresh Produce Association
California Strawberry Commission	USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council, Inc.
California Tree Fruit Agreement	U.S. Apple Association
Cherry Marketing Institute, Inc.	U.S. Hop Industry Plant Protection Committee
Cranberry Institute	Washington Association of Wine and Grape Growers
Del Monte Foods	Washington Hops Commission
Florida Citrus Mutual	Washington State Potato Commission
Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association	Western Growers Association
Florida Tomato Exchange	Western Pistachio Association
Food Products Association	Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine
Idaho Potato Commission	

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

Dear Chairman Kohl and Ranking Member Brownback: The National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (National C-FAR) urges the Subcommittee and Committee to increase Federal investment in food and agricultural research, extension and education (RE&E) as a critical component of Federal appropriations for fiscal year 2010, including at least \$300 million for the new Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI).

President Obama has acknowledged the need for a major investment in research, saying at the annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences that the United States will "devote more than 3 percent of our GDP to research and development."

We support President Obama's goal, and advise you that food and agriculture research must be a part of his vision.

The potential payoff is enormous for both Americans' health and the nation's economy. Federal investments in food and agricultural RE&E have brought profitability to production agriculture, found solutions for difficult conservation and environmental challenges, addressed the many issues of food safety, and provided the baseline for our whole knowledge of human nutrition.

Now, RE&E must seek solutions for feeding growing populations, dealing with climate change, developing sustainable fuel production, maintaining ecosystem health, and assuring all people food security and proper nutrition. Now is the time to grow investment in our nation's agricultural research enterprise and build on the successes of the past by increasing funding for a variety of food and agricultural research, extension and education efforts, and in particular the new National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and AFRI.

National C-FAR urges the Subcommittee to increase funding for AFRI to at least \$300 million in fiscal year 2010 with a goal of funding AFRI at the fully authorized level as soon as practicable, and by fiscal year 2013 at the latest. AFRI, the successor to USDA's National Research Initiative (NRI) and the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS), is an integrated approach that takes research and innovation beyond the development phase, into implementation through contemporary education and extension programs. National C-FAR opposes taking funds from other RE&E programs in USDA to fund AFRI.

NIFA, AFRI and other recent reforms offer a new opportunity to transform USDA's RE&E mission. AFRI will support research on key problems of national and regional importance in biological, environmental, physical, and social sciences relevant to agriculture, food, and the environment on a peer-reviewed, competitive basis. Additionally, AFRI should enable USDA to continue leveraging a portion of its RE&E funds fostering the development of partnerships with other Federal agencies that advance agricultural science.

National C-FAR also supports the administration's fiscal year 2010 requests for other parts of USDA's RE&E mission, including: the remainder of the Cooperative State, Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES) beyond AFRI, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Economic Research Service (ERS) and Forest Service (FS).

The Research Title of the Farm Bill represents the nation's signature Federal investment in the future of the food and agricultural sector. Other Farm Bill titles depend heavily upon the Research Title for tools to help achieve their stated objectives. Public investment in food and agricultural research, extension and education today and in the future must simultaneously satisfy needs for food quality and quantity, resource preservation, producer profitability and social acceptability.

Tools provided through RE&E are needed to help achieve safer, more nutritious, convenient and affordable foods delivered to sustain a well nourished, healthy population; more efficient and environmentally friendly food, fiber and forest production; improved water quality, land conservation, wildlife and other environmental conditions; less dependence on non-renewable sources of energy; expanded global markets and improved balance of trade; and more jobs and sustainable rural economic development. Societal demands and expectations placed upon the food and agricultural system are ever-changing and growing.

Multiple examples, such as those highlighted below, serve to illustrate current and future needs that arguably merit enhanced public investment in research, extension and education so that the food and agricultural system can respond to these challenges on a sustainable basis:

- Strengthened bio-security is a pressing national priority. There is a compelling need for improved biosecurity and bio-safety tools and policies to protect against bio-terrorism and dreaded problems such as foot-and-mouth and "mad cow" diseases and other exotic plant and animal pests, and protection of range lands from invasive species.
- Food-linked health costs are high. Some \$100 billion of annual U.S. health costs are linked to poor diets, obesity, food borne pathogens and allergens. Opportunities exist to create healthier diets through improvements in the food supply and in consumer knowledge and implementation of dietary guidance.
- Research, extension and education are key to providing to solutions to environment and conservation challenges related to global warming, limited water resources, enhanced wildlife habitat, and competing demands for land and other agricultural resources. Rural water conservation and development of drought-resistant crops have evolved from a good idea to a necessity.
- It is a highly competitive world for food and agriculture and rural America. There was considerable debate during the last Farm Bill reauthorization about

how expanded food and agricultural research, extension and education could enhance farm income and rural revitalization by improving competitiveness and value-added opportunities.

- Energy costs are escalating, dependence on petroleum imports is growing and concerns about greenhouse gases are rising. Research, extension and education can enhance agriculture’s ability to provide renewable sources of energy and cleaner burning fuels, sequester carbon, and provide other environmental benefits to help address these challenges, and indeed generate value-added income for producers and stimulate rural economic development.
- Population and income growth are expanding the world demand for food and natural fiber and improved diets. World food demand is projected to double in 25 years. Most of this growth will occur in the developing nations where yields are low, land is scarce, and diets are inadequate. Without a vigorous response, demand will only be met at a great global ecological cost.
- Regardless of one’s views about biotechnology and genetic resources, an effective publicly funded research role is needed for oversight and to ensure public benefits.

Publicly financed RE&E is a necessary complement to private sector research, focusing in areas where the private sector does not have an incentive to invest, when (1) the pay-off is over a long term; (2) the potential market is more speculative; (3) the effort is during the pre-technology stage; and (4) where the benefits are widely diffused. Public research, extension and education help provide oversight and measure long-term progress. Public research, extension and education also act as a means to detect and resolve problems in an early stage, thus saving American taxpayer dollars in remedial and corrective actions.

The USDA, ERS September 2007 Economic Brief titled, “Economic Returns of Public Agricultural Research,” shows the average social rate of return to public investment in agricultural research is nearly 50 percent. However, Federal funding for food and agricultural research, extension and education has been essentially flat for over 20 years, while support for other Federal research has increased substantially. Public funding of agricultural research in the rest of the world during the same time period has outpaced investment in the United States, leading to competitive concerns. There also are vast areas where the public will trust only U.S. Federal investments in research—a case in point is human nutrition research.

By any measure, Federal funding for food and agricultural research, extension and education—which has declined about one-fourth since fiscal year 2003—has failed to keep pace with identified priority needs. Allowing this decline to continue is likely to irrevocably harm our responses to human needs and competitive forces. It is imperative to lay the groundwork now to respond to the many challenges and promising opportunities ahead through Federal policies and programs needed to promote the long-term health and vitality of food and agriculture for the benefit of both consumers and producers. Stronger public investment in food and agricultural RE&E is essential in producing research outcomes needed to help deliver beneficial and timely solutions on a sustainable basis.

National C-FAR serves as a forum and a unified voice in support of sustaining and increasing public investment at the national level in food and agricultural research, extension and education. National C-FAR is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, consensus-based and customer-led coalition established in 2001 that brings food, agriculture, nutrition, conservation and natural resource organizations together with the food and agriculture research and extension community.

We agree with President Obama that, “Science is more essential for our prosperity, our security, our health, our environment, and our quality of life than it has ever been.”

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NATIONAL COALITION FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH

Dear Chairman Kohl and Ranking Member Brownback: The undersigned organizations and individuals urge the Subcommittee and Committee to increase funding for the new Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) to at least \$300 million in fiscal year 2010 (exclusive of any funding identified for the former Section 406 programs) as a first step toward funding AFRI at the fully authorized level of \$700 million annually. AFRI, the successor to USDA’s National Research Initiative (NRI) and the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS), is an integrated approach that takes research and innovation beyond the development phase, into implementation through contemporary education and extension programs.

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 established the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), a new competitive grants program authorized at \$700 million annually, for research, extension, and education in support of our Nation's food and agricultural systems within USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

We support full funding of AFRI at the authorized level of \$700 million annually, and urge the Subcommittee to fully fund AFRI as soon as practicable, by fiscal year 2013 at the latest. This is consistent with President Obama's commitment to return our Nation to sound science. With the Nation and world seeking solutions for climate change, sustainable fuel production, ecosystem health, food security and nutrition challenges, now is the time to grow investment in our Nation's food and agricultural research.

Thank you for your leadership action in investing in America's food and agriculture system.

American Dietetic Association	National Oat Improvement Committee
American Feed Industry Association	National Sunflower Association
American Malting Barley Association	National Wheat Improvement Committee
American Phytopathological Society	North American Millers' Association
American Society for Nutrition	North Central Weed Science Society (NCWSS)
American Soybean Association	Northeastern Weed Science Society (NEWSS)
American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)	Southern Weed Science Society (SWSS)
Aquatic Plant Management Society (APMS)	Dr. Steven G. Pueppke, National Agricultural Biotechnology Council
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges	The Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (C-FARE)
Biotechnology Industry Organization	The Peanut Foundation
Council for Agricultural Science and Technology	Professor Robert L. Thompson, Gardner Endowed Chair in Agricultural Policy
Donald Danforth Plant Science Center	Agricultural & Consumer Economics Dept., University of Illinois
Institute of Food Technologists	U.S. Canola Association
National Association of Wheat Growers	USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
National Barley Growers Association	Weed Science Society of America (WSSA)
National Barley Improvement Committee	Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS)
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research	
National Farmers Union	

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and Subcommittee Members, thank you for this opportunity to present information regarding the USDA/FNS Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).

The National Commodity Supplemental Food Program Association (NCSFPA) requests the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee fund CSFP for fiscal year 2010 at \$203 million and include language directing the Department to utilize all available resources to supplement the CSFP food package and meet the rising demand for nutritional assistance among our vulnerable senior population.

This first effort at national food assistance began in 1969 with monthly packages designed to supplement protein, calcium, iron, vitamins A and C for low-income mothers and children (preceding WIC); nutrients shown to be lacking in the diets of low-income households. Low-income seniors added in 1983 now comprise 93 percent of all CSFP participants.

CSFP is a unique program that brings together federal and state agencies, along with public and private entities, The USDA purchases specific nutrient-rich foods at wholesale prices. State agencies providing oversight, contract with community and faith based organizations to warehouse and distribute food, certify eligibility and educate participants. The local organizations build broad collaboration among non-profits, health units, and area agencies on aging for simple, fast access to the supplemental foods (canned fruits and vegetables, juices, meats, fish, peanut butter, cereals, grain products, cheese and dairy products from American farmers) and nutrition education to improve their health and quality of life. This partnership reaches even homebound seniors in both rural and urban settings with vital nutri-

tion and remains an important “market” for commodities supported under various farm programs.

In fiscal year 2008, the CSFP provided services through 150 non-profit community and faith-based organizations at 1,800 sites located in 32 States, the District of Columbia, and two Indian Tribal Organizations (Red Lake, Minnesota and Oglala Sioux, South Dakota). On behalf of those organizations NCSFPA would like to express our gratitude for the increased fiscal year 2009 funding. However, we are disappointed that the increase in funding did not result in more seniors receiving food.

CSFP’s 40 years of service is a testimony to the power of community partnerships of faith-based organizations, farmers, private industry and government agencies. The CSFP offers a unique combination of advantages unparalleled by any other food assistance program:

- The CSFP specifically targets our Nation’s most nutritionally vulnerable populations: young children and low-income seniors—many of whom will not qualify for other nutrition assistance programs.
- The CSFP provides a monthly selection of food packages tailored to specific nutritional needs. Eligible participants are guaranteed [by law] a certain level of nutritional assistance, nutrition education, and food preparation guidance each month.
- The CSFP purchases foods at wholesale prices, directly supporting American farmers. The average food package cost is estimated at \$23.01 and the retail value is \$50.00–\$60.00.
- The CSFP involves the entire community. Thousands of volunteers and private companies donate money, equipment, and most importantly time and effort to deliver food to needy and homebound seniors. These volunteers not only bring food but companionship and other assistance to seniors who might have limited support systems. (See Attachment 1)

In a recent CSFP survey, more than half of seniors living alone reported an income of less than \$750 per month. One-half of respondents from two-person households reported an income under \$1,000 per month. 25 percent were enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and 50 percent said they ran out of food during the month. 70 percent of senior respondents said they choose between medicine and food.

The Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee has consistently supported CSFP, acknowledging it as a cost-effective way of providing nutritious supplemental foods. Last year this subcommittee and all of Congress provided funding for CSFP in direct opposition to its proposed elimination. Your support is again needed to provide adequate resources for the 473,473 mothers, children and seniors current participants; 37,500 low-income participants waiting in six new States, and 110,374 seniors waiting in current states for this vital nutrition program.

CSFP and other nutrition programs such as SNAP, are only supplemental programs by design. Together they cover a shortfall that many seniors face each month. These programs must have support to meet the increasing need as part of the “safety net”.

“The Managers fully support continued operation of this program and recognize the need for a substantial expansion of CSFP. the Managers encourage the Secretary to approve all remaining states for expansion and to expand caseload in all participating states.” Joint Statement of Managers, H.R. 2419, the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008.

“CSFP has charms worth considering in designing human service programs the program’s trademarks were its simplicity and accessibility . . . CSFP in particular represents a guaranteed source of high quality food, delivered in a balanced package.” The Role of CSFP in Nutritional Assistance to Mothers, Infants, Children and Seniors. The Urban Institute, August 2008.

The National Commodity Supplemental Food Program Association requests the following:

To continue serving the 473,473 needy seniors (93 percent of participants), women, infants and children (7 percent of participants) currently enrolled in CSFP—\$164 Million.

To meet USDA’s commodity procurement expenses—\$0.8 Million.

To respond to the needs of 37,500 eligible seniors in the 6 States with USDA approved plans: Arkansas (5,000), Delaware (2,500), Oklahoma (5,000), New Jersey (5,000), Utah (3,000) and Georgia (10,000)—\$9.3 Million.

To meet the increased demand/need of an additional 110,374 at risk seniors in 32 States per requests turned into USDA by current CSF programs nationwide—\$28.6 Million.

Appropriation needed to maximize this program's effectiveness in serving 621,347 seniors, women, infants and young children challenged by hunger and malnutrition in our Nation—\$203 Million.

A 1997 report by the National Policy and Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging at Florida International University, Miami—Elder Insecurities: Poverty, Hunger, and Malnutrition indicated that malnourished elderly patients experience 2 to 20 times more medical complications, have up to 100 percent longer hospital stays, and incur hospital costs \$2,000 to \$10,000 higher per stay. Proper nutrition promotes health, treats chronic disease, decreases hospital length of stay and saves health care dollars. America is aging. CSFP must be an integral part of Senior Nutrition Policy and plans to support the productivity, health, independence and quality of life for America's seniors, many of whom now need to continue working at least part-time beyond retirement age to afford basics.

The National CSFP Association recommends the following:

- Support and expand the program in those states that have a need and interest in the CSFP, including the 6 States that already have USDA-approved plans to operate CSFP (Arkansas, Delaware, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Utah and Georgia) and states demonstrating a willingness to expand current CSFP services to meet rising demand.
- Provide language encouraging the U.S. Department of Agriculture to utilize all available resources to meet the rising demand for this nutritional support.
- The CSFP is committed grassroots operators and dedicated volunteers with a mission to provide quality nutrition assistance economically, efficiently, and responsibly always keeping the needs and dignity of our participants first. We commend the Food Distribution Division of Food and Nutrition Service of the Department of Agriculture for their continued innovations to strengthen the quality of the food package and streamline administration.

FISCAL YEAR 2008 NATIONAL CSFP ASSOCIATION ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE/VALUE SURVEY

Programs	USDA Reim-bursed Cash	Not Reimbursed by USDA Cash	CSFP Expendi-tures Cash	Goods & Services donated to agen-cy Value	Volunteer Labor Hours Value	Annual Total Pro-gram Value	Percent Paid by USDA	Extra Goods do-nated to CSFP participants
New Hampshire	\$461,361		\$461,361		\$61,121	\$522,482	88	\$16,097
New York	1,947,032	\$2,500,000	4,447,032	\$20,700	3,984	4,471,716	44	6,500
Vermont	233,132		233,132			233,132	100	
Washington, DC	434,945	1,600,000	2,034,945	800,000	173,632	3,008,577	14	
Pennsylvania	912,209	18,637	930,846	32,169	48,259	1,011,274	90	100,000
Kentucky	980,911	64,645	1,045,556		24,577	1,070,133	92	624,093
Mississippi	437,969		437,969	30,520	199,906	668,395	66	7,104
North Carolina	75,126		75,126			75,126	100	
South Carolina	232,192		232,192		1,342	233,534	99	22,500
Tennessee ¹	840,812		840,812			840,812	100	
Illinois	869,405		869,405		25,643	895,048	97	
Indiana	269,732	25,000	294,732	25,000	68,502	388,234	69	32,189
Michigan	4,861,625	314,317	5,175,942	310,168	1,722,543	7,208,653	67	4,637,316
Minnesota	881,829	319,848	1,201,677	2,213	449,733	1,653,623	53	864,844
Red Lake, MN ¹	6,204		6,204			6,204	100	
Ohio	978,890	198,896	1,177,786	65,770	328,264	1,571,820	62	85,774
Wisconsin	316,547	50,000	366,547		275,406	641,953	49	94,610
Louisiana	4,089,578		4,089,578	330,000	1,104,420	5,523,998	74	
New Mexico	1,032,128	129,911	1,162,039	248,791	233,955	1,644,785	63	479,843
Texas	997,895	157,200	1,155,095		297,774	1,452,869	69	
Colorado	1,104,198	67,533	1,171,731	57,449	119,319	1,348,499	82	1,343,961
Iowa	216,086	353,367	569,453		13,463	582,916	37	
Kansas	328,548	7,200	335,748	10,000	83,642	429,390	77	89,519
Missouri	583,040		583,040		16,608	599,648	97	
Montana ¹	425,091		425,091			425,091	100	
Nebraska	820,898		820,898		301,447	1,238,344	66	70,479
North Dakota ¹	175,413	75,529	250,942	40,470		291,412	100	
South Dakota	176,228		176,228		26,464	202,692	88	
Ogala Sioux, SD ¹	40,360		40,360			40,360	100	
Alaska	134,803	63,000	197,803	1,015,000	104,235	1,317,038	10	
Arizona	940,739	252,000	1,192,739	2,000	184,312	1,379,051	68	2,000,000
California	3,373,339	580,027	3,953,366	35,400	1,248,232	5,201,600	65	379,140
Nevada	371,461	174,278	545,739		24,960	570,699	64	179,400
Oregon	84,166	96,573	180,739	4,436	44,317	229,492	37	5,200

Washington	228,871	7,500	236,371	208,000	90,076	534,447	43
Grand Total	29,862,763	7,063,877	36,926,640	3,238,086	7,276,137	47,440,863	63

1 No information provided Feb. 24, 2009 Client Extras incl.: flu shots, fresh produce, clothing, books, toys, health screenings, personal care items, energy efficient items, dairy, baked goods, eye exams, etc.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL COOPERATIVE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

The National Cooperative Business Association, which represents all types of cooperatives, appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony on the request for a funding level of \$8.25 million for the Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG) program in the Rural Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This request includes funds to work in areas of high national priority including helping to create worker owned enterprises, e.g., worker ownership succession of existing rural businesses; health care; renewable energy and energy efficiency; and affordable housing.

Background.—The RCDG program is a competitive grants program, administered by USDA's Rural Development, Rural Business—Cooperative Services Program. RCDG provides matching grant funding to nonprofits or institutions of higher education that operate cooperative development centers primarily serving farmers and groups seeking to form cooperatively owned businesses in rural areas.

Cooperative development centers use the grants to fund critical technical assistance for economic development, such as legal and accounting assistance, feasibility studies, business planning, board education, and other services that help ensure the success of these businesses. The centers have helped start or expand more than 400 cooperative businesses that have created over 5,800 new rural jobs in virtually every sector of the economy. Investment in these cooperatives exceeds \$900 million.

President Obama recognized the critical nature of the RCDG program in his budget outline. He included rural cooperative development grants among the five Rural Development programs needed “to spur the development of small business and value-added agriculture in rural America.”

The program, begun in 1993, is authorized at \$50 million, but has never been appropriated at more than \$6.5 annually despite the demand and cost effectiveness of the program. USDA typically receives 40–50 applications for funding annually, but historically has only been able to fund 20–25 centers. In fiscal year 2008, approximately \$4.6 million was available for RCDG grants, with a maximum grant award of \$200,000 per center. Another \$500,000 was appropriated in this section for research on the impact of cooperative businesses, and \$1.2 million for grants to minority-owned cooperatives, for a total appropriation of approximately \$6.4 million.

This program leverages a small amount of funding into much larger amounts while it promotes ownership and entrepreneurship. While the program requires a 25 percent match, centers have been leveraging dollar for dollar this funding with non-federal funding sources. The RCDG program is the only dedicated source of federal funding supporting the cooperative development centers.

The Need for Assistance From Centers.—The Centers play a critical role in identifying and assisting new businesses to gain access to public funding, especially USDA loan and grant programs. Congress recognized the need when it developed the program and stated that “the Committee hopes to link cooperatives from different communities and different sectors of the economy to strengthen the cooperative movement as a whole.” (emphasis added) Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, Conf.Rep., p. 432.

One of the ways Congress tried “to strengthen the cooperative movement as a whole” with the program was to “emphasiz[e] job creation in rural areas through the development of rural cooperatives, value added processing, and rural businesses.” (Conf.Rep., p. 431).

At a time when rural America is in desperate need of jobs, the centers are well-situated to assist in an efficient and effective disbursement of economic stimulus and other funds to rural areas in need. But in order to do this, Congress needs to increase the maximum grant for centers back closer to historic levels. Under current funding, the maximum grant request for RCDG has been reduced from \$300,000 in fiscal year 2005 to \$200,000 currently, resulting in a significant reduction in support for core center operations, compounded by the effect of inflation. To bring funding up to an adequate level, we urge this subcommittee to provide \$8.25 million for the RCDG program in this year's appropriations bill.

The Fiscal Year 2010 Request.—The request this year is for \$8.25 million, which includes the following:

- \$4.6 million for general rural cooperative development grants to centers proposing to work in any area of rural cooperative development;
- \$2.0 million to be awarded to those successful RCDG applicants who have both a demonstrated track record and that propose to conduct rural cooperative development in the following areas of high national priority: creation of worker owned enterprises, including worker or community ownership succession of existing rural businesses; health care; renewable energy and energy efficiency, and affordable housing. Such applicants may request up to \$75,000 in supple-

mental grant awards to fund work in these areas of national priority. Funds not used for these purposes may be used by USDA to fund additional RCDG grants.
 —\$450,000 for research on the economic impact of all types of cooperatives.
 —\$1.2 million for grants to minority-owned cooperatives.

This request would allow USDA to competitively award \$200,000 each to approximately 23–25 centers. Of these awardees, centers with both a track record and a proposal to work in one or more of the specified areas of national priority would be able to request an additional \$75,000, for a total award of \$275,000. Funding for minority-owned cooperatives would be funded at the same level, and funding for research would be reduced by \$50,000 from fiscal year 2008 levels.

Addressing High Priority Rural Economic Needs.—This request addresses high priority needs by providing increased support for work in areas that are critical to retaining and creating employment, improving health care, creating affordable housing, and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. Successful cooperative solutions have been demonstrated in each of these critical areas in various places throughout the country. Technical assistance is required to replicate and broadly extend those successful models.

Rural America is populated with a number of profitable companies where rural jobs are at risk of loss due to a failure of succession planning, where aging or retiring owners do not have heirs that are interested or capable of taking over the business. Transfer to employee or community ownership is a good option in these cases, as these jobs then are retained in communities instead of being outsourced to urban or foreign buyers. But there must be business assistance infrastructure available before the owner is ready to retire or the business closes. Cooperative development centers can provide this assistance.

Health care delivery is a major issue affecting rural areas, where most of America's aging population resides. Demonstrated opportunities for cooperative development include worker-owned home health care cooperatives, purchasing or shared services cooperatives for rural hospitals, and others. Harvard's Kennedy School of Government highlighted worker-owned home health care businesses as an award winning solution to providing jobs and benefits to rural workers while increasing the quality of care that allow aging rural residents to stay in their homes.

Creation of affordable rural housing is an on-going need, made even more urgent by the nation's housing and foreclosure crisis. Substantial cooperative successes have been achieved by the conversion of manufactured home parks on rented lots to resident-owned communities. These co-ops have stabilized the availability of housing, and created greater long-term security for residents.

Successful cooperative development can also be seen in response to both the need for renewable energy production (such as through ethanol and biodiesel cooperatives), and through consumer-owned energy cooperatives aimed at energy conservation and efficiency.

The 2008 farm bill made changes to the program including allowing the award of grants on a multi-year basis and a provision for USDA to conduct ongoing research on the economic impact of cooperatives. The changes are designed to make more effective and efficient use of the ongoing capacity and expertise developed by co-op development centers around the country.

Ongoing Research on Cooperatives.—The request includes \$450,000 for a cooperative research agreement between USDA and a qualified academic institution to continue research on the national economic impact of cooperatives. The research money is needed to continue tracking information on the number, type and economic impact of cooperatives across America and to assess the effectiveness of the RCDG program.

In April, the first results of the federally supported research on the economic impact of cooperatives were released, showing significant contribution of the co-op sector to the U.S. economy—73,000 firms own more than \$3 trillion in assets, generate over \$650 billion in revenues and pay more than \$75 billion in wages for 2 million jobs.

While these results are a start, the 2008 farm bill requires USDA to conduct ongoing research on the economic impact of all types of cooperatives. This research can be used to track performance of cooperatives, how much capital is recycled into local economies, the success of Federal funds targeted at cooperative development, and determining other economic as well as social benefits of cooperatives. The fiscal year 2010 RCDG appropriation should include funding for this critical research.

Funding History.—The program has received funding since 1993. Previous funding levels (including RCDG grant funding, research funding, and grant funding to minority-owned co-ops): Fiscal year 2009 \$6.18 million; fiscal year 2008 \$6.423 mil-

lion; fiscal year 2007 \$6.4 million;¹ fiscal year 2006 \$6.4 million; fiscal year 2005 \$6 million; fiscal year 2004 \$6.5 million; fiscal year 2003 \$6.5 million; fiscal year 2002 \$5.25 million; fiscal year 2001 \$4.5 million; fiscal year 2000 \$4 million; fiscal year 1999 \$1.75 million; fiscal year 1998 \$1.7 million; fiscal year 1997 \$1.7 million; fiscal year 1996 \$1.33 million; fiscal year 1995 \$1 million; fiscal year 1994 \$750,000; and fiscal year 1993 \$700,000.

Conclusion.—We appreciate this opportunity to provide information about the request for \$8.25 million for the Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program. We urge the Subcommittee to support the request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL COTTON COUNCIL

The National Cotton Council welcomes the opportunity to provide the following recommendations and requests for fiscal year 2010 appropriations funding for selected programs under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee which make important contributions to our industry's ability to compete and prosper in a world market.

We are requesting \$23.39 million for APHIS for the Joint Cotton Pests Account and sufficient funding to continue the Farm Service Agency's authority to make up to \$100 million in loans to eligible Foundations to be used in conducting activities related to the boll weevil and pink bollworm eradication programs. The industry requests an additional \$700,000 above current funding (\$1.54 million) be made available to ARS to be used to add a research position at the ARS Gin Lab located at Lubbock, TX. Adequate cost-share funding and loan authority to facilitate the successful completion of the boll weevil and the pink bollworm eradication programs; continued development of new technology through research; sufficient financial resources, personnel and computer equipment for FSA and FAS to successfully carry out their respective missions; and, funding for demand building export programs including MAP, FMD and GSM export credit guarantees are all essential to the cotton industry. The National Cotton Council also strongly supports the provisions of the 2008 farm law.

The National Cotton Council of America (NCC) is the central organization of the U.S. cotton industry representing growers, ginners, warehousemen, cottonseed interests, merchants, cooperatives and manufacturers whose primary business operations are located in 18 cotton producing States. Cotton Council International (CCI) is the overseas promotion arm of the cotton industry. NCC represents producers who cultivate between 10 and 14 million acres of cotton. Annual cotton production averaging approximately 20 million 480-lb bales is valued at more than \$5 billion at the farm gate. While a majority of the industry is concentrated in the 18 cotton-producing States, the down-stream manufacturers of cotton apparel and home-furnishings are located in virtually every State. The industry and its suppliers, together with the cotton product manufacturers, account for more than 230,000 jobs in the United States. In addition to the cotton fiber, cottonseed products are used for livestock feed, and cottonseed oil is used for food products ranging from margarine to salad dressing. Taken collectively, the annual economic activity generated by cotton and its products in the U.S. economy is estimated to be in excess of \$120 billion.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Joint Cotton Pests (APHIS).—The National Cotton Council requests \$23.39 million for APHIS to provide a Federal Cost Share for Boll Weevil Eradication and Pink Bollworm Eradication programs which were combined in fiscal year 2008 into a joint cotton pest account. As these programs near completion, the cost share funding for APHIS is even more critical to insure the complete eradication of these cotton pests for the benefit of those in post eradication maintenance areas. Additional details for the Boll Weevil Eradication Program and the Pink Bollworm Eradication Program are provided below as separate programs.

Boll Weevil Eradication (APHIS—Cotton Pests).—The National Cotton Council requests \$15.1 million for APHIS to provide a Federal cost share of approximately 30 percent to active boll weevil eradication programs underway in Texas. Cotton in the active eradication zones of Texas will require program activity in 2010 to continue progress toward full eradication. A large portion of this area is in habitats favorable to the boll weevil, primarily in the Southeast third of the State. For example, in central and south Texas, the boll weevil is especially adapted to the milder winter temperatures, longer growing seasons, and more humid summertime conditions. The

¹ \$900,000 that was appropriated to program for fiscal year 2007 in the Continuing Resolution was taken out of program to fund another program.

lack of “killing frost” permits escape cotton plants (plants growing in non-cotton field habitats like ditch, fence row, etc.) to thrive year long, thus providing a source for sustained life and reproduction of boll weevils. Extra efforts have been employed to locate and remove these escape plants. Additionally, several zones in Texas have encountered significant costs because of weevils migrating out of the zones with high weevil populations into adjacent zones with near eradication levels of weevils. Studies have indicated this movement has been enhanced by hurricane winds. Even with these significant challenges, progress toward full eradication continues to be made.

The program continues to produce documented economic and environmental benefits. Cotton in the United States was produced in 2007 with an average of only 2.78 sprays per acre for all insects. This compares to 15 to 20 applications per acre prior to adoption of Bt cotton for worm control and implementation of boll weevil eradication.

Nationally, USDA estimates that 94 percent of the U.S. cotton acreage is now free of boll weevils. Additionally, Mexico continues eradication programs in cotton areas along the U.S./Mexico border.

Adequate Federal cost-share funds are critical to timely completion, especially since eradication is within sight. APHIS should be directed to make every effort to minimize overhead and administrative expenses for boll weevil eradication to ensure maximum funding reaches field operations.

The fiscal year 2010 boll weevil request is less than fiscal year 2009 and continues the annual reduction in keeping with our commitment to reduce Federal cost-share funding as the program moves toward completion.

Boll Weevil Eradication (FSA).—The National Cotton Council requests sufficient funding to allow FSA to make at least \$100 million in loans to eligible Boll Weevil Eradication Foundations. The Council also strongly supports providing FSA with continued authority to make loans for activities associated with the pink bollworm eradication program as previously provided in the fiscal year 2005 appropriations legislation.

Pink Bollworm Programs (APHIS—Cotton Pests).—The National Cotton Council requests \$8.29 million for the APHIS pink bollworm program. This will provide \$2.14 million for indirect and direct costs to APHIS and the residual \$6.15 million “Net to Field” will be for program operations. The Pink Bollworm Eradication Program originally was planned for a three phase expansion over several years. Insufficient funding resulted in Phase III being divided into Phase III(a) and Phase III(b) to allow partial expansion in fiscal year 2007. However, data revealed mass late season migration spilled into areas in eradication from outside eradication. Fiscal year 2008 marked the first year to expand into the last remaining areas of infestation. The fiscal year 2010 request is less than the fiscal year 2009 request as a result of a reduction in sterile moth releases needed in some areas.

The Pink Bollworm Eradication Program is based predominately on the mass release of sterile insects generated by a rearing facility located in Phoenix, AZ. Although this technique is favored over conventional insecticide spray application, the rearing costs include items related to fuel to maintain facility temperature most favorable to the insect and to soybean meal, a major diet ingredient. Soybean meal has almost doubled in cost (2007 vs. 2008). Insect rearing costs alone account for over \$4 million of the budget. The shipping and mass release of these sterile insects via airplane over areas of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas has increased due to fuel price increases. Costs have also greatly increased for the plastic raw material used to manufacture the trays that contain the insects during rearing.

The Bi-National Pink bollworm eradication program has been implemented in three phases, with the final expansion started in 2008, to eliminate pink bollworm as a cotton pest in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California and adjacent cotton areas in Northern Mexico. It was expected that fiscal year 2009 would be the peak request for the program. Subsequent years are expected to require less support due to successful eradication in the earliest phases of the program. It is anticipated that fiscal year 2010 needs will meet that expectation. Mexico remains a partner in the eradication effort and continues to expand eradication programs along the border in conjunction with the United States.

The funds requested for fiscal year 2010 will enable the Phoenix Pink Bollworm Rearing Facility to rear and release up to 20 million sterile pink bollworm moths per day to supply program needs. The Phoenix Pink Bollworm Rearing Facility (PBRF) is a partnership between the California growers and APHIS. The cost share for pink bollworm is essential to provide APHIS expertise and operational coordination in mass rearing and daily area-wide aerial releases of millions of moths.

Market Access Program (MAP).—The National Cotton Council strongly supports funding levels authorized in 2008 farm law. Cotton Council International (CCI) ac-

tively promotes exports of U.S. cotton and cotton products in Asia, Europe, Africa, and Central and South America. Activities carried out using MAP (and FMD) have been responsible for increased export sales of cotton fiber and value-added cotton products. The value of U.S. cotton fiber exports exceeds \$4 billion, and exports of value-added cotton products contribute an additional \$6 billion to the overall value of cotton exports. For every \$1 in MAP and FMD funds, CCI has generated matching contributions of over \$4.00.

Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS).—The industry supports sufficient funding to ensure FAS is adequately staffed to carry out important market development and trade enhancing functions in headquarters and abroad.

Foreign Market Development (FMD).—The FMD program is used to encourage and support U.S. commodity groups to undertake long-term market development and trade servicing. FMD is currently funded at \$34.5 million and requires at least a dollar-for-dollar industry match. The industry requests that funding be continued at the same level as provided for fiscal year 2009.

Farm Service Agency (FSA).—Provide adequate funding so the agency can continue to deliver essential farm and conservation programs and services.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS).—The industry is concerned with current support provided to this agency. The agency has faced a flat budget for most of the recent past fiscal years since 2001 and when not flat, its budget has suffered cuts. We respectfully request that this agency be considered for increased overall funding to allow the valuable research conducted on behalf of all agriculture to continue at sustainable levels. We specifically urge the subcommittee to provide increased base funding for the following research facility:

Lubbock, TX Cotton Production and Processing Research Unit (Ginning Lab) of the Cropping Systems Research Laboratory (ARS)—\$2.27 million.—The request for \$2.27 million in annual operating budget represents an increase of \$700,000 from the funding levels provided in fiscal year 2008 and fiscal year 2009. This cotton ginning research facility is specifically equipped for research into the stripper harvested cotton production systems on the Texas High Plains, the largest contiguous production region in the United States. This unit is the only research unit within the ARS system that has a cotton harvesting research component of any type and while, historically, the unit's focus has been on stripper harvesting, the region's producers have in recent years been able to utilize new cultivars of upland cottons, adapted for their region, with vastly improved qualities that are best preserved if harvested by a machine picker rather than by a machine stripper. Research into best possible harvest alternatives is vital for this region's production to take advantage of international market preferences for longer, stronger cotton fiber and provide for continued profit improvements for the growers of this region.

Historically this unit has been staffed with four full time scientists (4-SY's). In recent years, however, the lab has been operating with only 3-SY's, with the harvest focused position vacant due to retirement. Currently, harvest research is being conducted by a talented post-doctoral fellow with supplemental funds provided by industry through a grant from Cotton Incorporated, which is necessary to cover his direct salary and support functions. While this is a much appreciated stop gap approach, it is imperative for the long term viability of the unit for a fourth full time scientist position to be restored with appropriate support. ARS administrators indicate that this requested funding level will support a fourth scientist, long term, as well as provide for the necessary indirect support necessary for a viable 4-SY unit.

Also included in this request is funding of critical cotton ginning particulate matter emissions research impacting all production regions which is conducted at this location. The development of this first class particulate emissions laboratory has become a valuable resource for determining and characterizing particulate emissions for many agricultural operations in addition to cotton ginning. In addition, this laboratory cooperates in research to improve Grain Sorghum Cold Tolerance, thus improving production of this valuable feed grain on the High Plains. Grain Sorghum is an important ingredient in animal feeds and as a feedstock for ethanol production.

All of these activities are in addition to the basic ginning research necessary for support of the Texas and Southwest Region's cotton production industry.

Thank you for your consideration of the cotton industry's recommendations for funding for programs under the subcommittee's jurisdiction for fiscal year 2010.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE CENTER

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony to the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies.

We request \$1.5 million for the National Drinking Water Clearinghouse (NDWC), a program that provides water infrastructure services for small communities and rural areas nationwide.

Introduction

My name is Gerald Iwan. I serve as executive director of the National Environmental Services Center (NESC), located at West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia. Previously, I was for 20 years the drinking water administrator for the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, during which time I oversaw the implementation of all regulatory aspects of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). In my present assignment with NESC, I manage a unique program with nationally recognized expertise in drinking water, wastewater, and small community infrastructure security and emergency preparedness. NESC provides specialized technical assistance and training services and is an in-depth repository of information to small and rural communities nationwide.

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Challenges

Approximately 42,000 small and rural communities across the country with populations of 3,300 or fewer people receive their drinking water from small, community-operated water systems (EPA, 2009). These systems are mandated to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act in providing reliable and safe water services. The system operators typically have limited financial, human and equipment resources. These systems account for the majority of SDWA violations. The USDA's Water and Wastewater Grants and Loans program may be the only option small system operators have to obtain funding to address necessary system improvements. Organizations such as the NDWC can provide reliable technical assistance in advising the system operators and in helping them to overcome the many challenges they face in complying with local, State and Federal regulations.

Recognizing these challenges, the USDA makes funds available through the "Rural Water and Wastewater Technical Assistance and Training (RWTA) Programs" under authorization provided in the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (the Farm Bill). The National Drinking Water Clearinghouse is one RWTA program. We have been funded by USDA for 18 years to help communities and rural areas identify and evaluate solutions to water or wastewater problems, improve facility operation and maintenance, and prepare funding applications for water or wastewater treatment facility construction projects.

Deliverables Provided by the NDWC

The NDWC serves local officials, utility managers, system operators and RWTA professionals in small and rural communities. Congressional support would enable us to provide the following deliverables to our stakeholders. Telephone callers would obtain toll-free drinking water technical assistance from our staff of certified operators, engineers, and scientists. Our quarterly publication "On Tap," a magazine for small drinking water systems, provides information about water treatment, financing, and management options and would be distributed free of charge to 26,000 subscribers. A comprehensive Web site www.NESC.wvu.edu and databases with thousands of entries will be maintained to provide "round the clock" access to contemporary information for small water systems. Training sessions customized for small and rural areas, teleconferences, and more than 600 free and low-cost educational products would be provided to give people the instruction and tools they need to address their most pressing drinking water issues. Our staff of experts will be available to visit small communities, if invited, to offer in-the-field assessments and advice to the host communities.

We anticipate an even greater need for NDWC services in 2010 due to the current recession and the federal effort to stimulate the economy through infrastructure projects. Stimulus funding in the water sector has been so far predominately directed to construction, with little or no funding directed to support water and wastewater facility operation and maintenance, or for technical assistance programs such as provided by the NDWC. Small and rural communities will need increased support from units such as ours to plan for and protect their current and future utility assets. The NDWC has accordingly expanded its scope of deliverables for fiscal year 2010 to provide additional services. It is imperative that the NDWC continues to receive funding from the Technical Assistance and Training Grants (TAT) account to assist small communities with their drinking water systems and associated concerns related to protecting drinking water supplies from contamination.

Request

In order to provide services to meet this national need, we request a congressional directed appropriation of \$1.5 million to continue and increase the NDWC pro-

gram services through the Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grants account. Thank you for considering our request.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIC COALITION

My name is Steven Etka. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the National Organic Coalition (NOC) to detail our requests for fiscal year 2010 funding for several USDA marketing, research, and conservation programs of importance to organic agriculture.

The National Organic Coalition (NOC) is a national alliance of organizations working to provide a voice for farmers, ranchers, environmentalists, consumers, cooperative retailers and others involved in organic agriculture. The current members of NOC are the Beyond Pesticides, Center for Food Safety, Equal Exchange, Food and Water Watch, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service, National Cooperative Grocers Association, Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance, Northeast Organic Farming Association-Interstate Policy Council, Rural Advancement Foundation International—USA, and the Union of Concerned Scientists.

We urge the Subcommittee's strong consideration of the following funding requests for various USDA programs of importance to organic farmers, marketers and consumers:

USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

National Organic Program—Request: \$8 million

In fiscal years 2006 and 2007, funding of \$2.026 was appropriated for the National Organic Program within the AMS budget. For fiscal year 2008, in keeping with the President's budget request for the program, \$3.18 million was appropriated for the National Organic Program. The NOP appropriation grew again in fiscal year 2009 to a funding level of \$3.867 million.

Sales of organic food and beverages continue to grow at an average rate of 20 percent per year in this country. While funding levels for USDA's National Organic Program (NOP) have grown in recent years, the growth in resources for this regulatory agency has not kept pace with the market growth of the organic sector.

For NOP to be a credible regulator and enforcer of the USDA organic label, resources must increase significantly, and long overdue policies must be established within NOP to ensure consistency in the standards, transparency in the standards setting process, and proper enforcement. If the funding for this program does not expand significantly to meet the growing needs, we fear that the important work of the NOP will suffer, the integrity of the organic standards will be jeopardized, and public confidence in the USDA organic label will be eroded.

Specifically, the Members of the National Organic Coalition urge the Committee to funding the National Organic Program at \$8 million for fiscal year 2010, as authorized by Section 10303 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, and to include language directing NOP to undertake the following critical activities, as established by the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) of 1990.

- Establish a Peer Review Panel, as called for in Section 2117 of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) of 1990, and Section 205.509 of USDA's own organic regulations; to provide oversight of USDA's accreditation process for organic certifying agents.
- Reinstate funding for independent, scientific reviews of substances proposed for use in organic agriculture, as required by OFPA. Historically, the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) has had the benefit of independent scientific reviews, called Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) reviews, of any substance proposed for use in organic agriculture, to make sure that its use is compatible with the purposes of OFPA. However, in recent years, USDA has denied funding for these independent TAP reviews, leaving the NOSB with little information on which to base these important decisions.
- Make the NOP budget fully transparent and accountable to the public, by publishing the details of the budget on the NOP website.
- Finalize the pending pasture rule for organic livestock, and initiate rulemaking to address the issue of the origin of livestock.

USDA

Organic Data Initiatives

Authorized by Section 7407 of the 2002 Farm Bill, the Organic Production and Marketing Data Initiative States that the "Secretary shall ensure that segregated data on the production and marketing of organic agricultural products is included

in the ongoing baseline of data collection regarding agricultural production and marketing.” Section 10302 of the Farm, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 amends the provision further to provide mandatory funding, and to provide further authorization for \$5 million annually in discretionary funds for this effort.

As the organic industry matures and grows at a rapid rate, the lack of national data for the production, pricing, and marketing of organic products has been an impediment to further development of the industry and to the effective functioning of many organic programs within USDA. The organic data collection and analysis effort at USDA has made significant strides in recent years, but remains in its infancy. Because of the multi-agency nature of data collection within USDA, organic data collection and analysis must also be undertaken by several different agencies within the Department: We are requesting the full \$5 million to be appropriated for this initiative, to be divided between the three main data collection sub-agencies as follows:

Economic Research Service (ERS).—Collection and Analysis of Organic Economic Data—Request: \$1.5 million

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).—Collection and Analysis of Organic Economic Data—Request: \$3 million

National Agricultural Statistic Service (NASS).—Organic Production Data—Request: \$500,000

USDA/CSREES

Organic Transitions Program—Request: \$5 million

The Organic Transition Program, authorized by Section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Education and Extension Reform Act (AREERA) for Integrated Research Programs, is a research grant program that helps farmers surmount some of the challenges of organic production and marketing. As the organic industry grows, the demand for research on topics related to organic agriculture is experiencing significant growth as well. The benefits of this research are far-reaching, with broad applications to all sectors of U.S. agriculture, even beyond the organic sector. Yet funding for organic research is minuscule in relation to the relative economic importance of organic agriculture and marketing in this nation. Starting in fiscal year 2009, the program has been administered in combination with the CSREES Water Quality integrated research program, to study the watershed impacts of organic systems.

The Organic Transition Program was funded at \$2.1 million in fiscal year 2003, \$1.9 million in fiscal year 2004, \$1.88 million for both fiscal year 2005 and 2006, \$1.855 million for fiscal year 2007 and 2008, and 1.842 million in fiscal year 2009. Given the rapid increase in demand for organic foods and other products, and the growing importance of organic agriculture, this important research program should be growing instead of contracting. Therefore, we are requesting that the program be funded at \$5 million in fiscal year 2010.

USDA/CSREES/Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)

Request: Report language on Conventional/Classical Plant and Animal Breeding

In recent decades, public resources for classical plant and animal breeding have dwindled, while resources have shifted toward genomics and biotechnology, with a focus on a limited set of major crops and breeds. This problem has been particularly acute for organic and sustainable farmers, who seek access to germplasm well suited to their unique cropping systems and their local environment.

Ever year since fiscal year 2005, the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee has included report language raising concerns about this problem, and urging CSREES to give greater consideration to research needs related to classical plant and animal breeding, when setting priorities within the National Research Initiative. Despite this report language, research proposals for classical plant and animal breeding that have sought NRI funding in the recent years have been consistently declined.

In Section 7406 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, the National Research Initiative was merged with the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems to become the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). Congress included language within the AFRI to make “conventional” plant and animal breeding a priority for AFRI research grants, consistent with the concerns expressed by Appropriations Committee in the three preceding appropriations cycles.

When CSREES released its AFRI Program Announcement in December of 2008, it invited research proposals on conventional/classical plant and animal breeding. However, when researchers submitted their initial letters of intent spelling out their research topics in the arena, they were nearly all rejected in the pre-proposal stage.

Therefore, we are requesting that report language be added to the CSREES/AFRI section of the report, stating the following:

“While the Committee is pleased that the new AFRI program language is now encouraging classical or conventional plant and animal breeding initiatives, we are concerned by the lack of progress in funding of actual projects in this research arena. The Committee urges USDA to make further progress by creating a clear, separate and on-going category of research funding for conventional/classical plant and animal breeding within AFRI, with adequate funding allocations to meet this critical and growing need.”

USDA/CSREES

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Request: \$25 Million (Research and Education Grants) and Education (SARE) and \$5 Million (Professional Development Grants)

The SARE program has been very successful in funding on-farm research on environmentally sound and profitable practices and systems, including organic production. The reliable information developed and distributed through SARE grants have been invaluable to organic farmers. For fiscal year 2010, we are requesting \$25 million for research and education grants and \$5 million for professional development grants.

USDA/Rural Business Cooperative Service

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)—Request: \$3 million

ATTRA, authorized by Section 6016 on the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, is a national sustainable agriculture information service, which provides practical information and technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, Extension agents, educators and others interested and active in sustainable agriculture. ATTRA interacts with the public, not only through its call-in service and website, but also provides numerous excellent publications written to help address some of the most frequently asked questions of farmers and educators. Much of the real-world information provided by ATTRA is extremely helpful to both the conventional and organic communities, and is available nowhere else. As a result, the growth in demand for ATTRA services has increased significantly, both through the website-based information services and through the growing requests for workshops. We are requesting \$3 million for ATTRA for fiscal year 2010.

USDA/ARS

Organic Agricultural Systems Research—Request: Devote “Fair Share” of ARS Research Dollars, Commensurate With Organic’s Retail Market Share (Approximately \$33 Million), to Direct Organic Research.

USDA research programs have not kept pace with the growth of organic agriculture in the marketplace. Although organic currently represents nearly 4 percent of total U.S. food retail market, the share of USDA research targeted to organic agriculture and marketing is significantly less. With regard to ARS specifically, efforts have been made to devote greater resources to organic research. The current total funding for direct organic projects within ARS is about \$14 million, about 1.5 percent of the ARS budget. Despite this progress, much more needs to be done in this area. We are requesting that a “fair share” of ARS expenditures (approximately \$33 million annually) be devoted to direct organic projects, using organic’s retail market share as a basis of comparison to the conventional sector. This should include the establishment of a clearinghouse for disseminating organic research information through the National Agricultural Library, Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (NAL-AFSIC).

USDA/NRCS

Conservation Stewardship Program—Request: No Funding Limitation

USDA/Rural Business Cooperative Service

Value-Added Producer Grants—Request: \$40 million

The Conservation Security Program (authorized by Section 2001 of the 2002 farm bill) and the Value-Added Producer Grant (authorized by Section 6401 of the 2002 farm bill) have great potential to benefit organic and conventional producers in their efforts to conserve natural resources and to explore new, value-added enterprises as part of their operations. Unfortunately, while these programs were authorized to operate with mandatory funding, their usefulness has been limited by funding restric-

tions imposed through the annual appropriations process. We are urging that the Conservation Security Program be permitted to operate with unrestricted mandatory funding, and that the Value-Added Producer Grant Program receive an appropriation of \$40 million for fiscal year 2009.

Food and Nutrition Service/WIC Program

Report Language: Removing Barriers of Access to Organic Foods for WIC recipients

Despite the scientifically documented nutritional and health benefits of organic food, particularly for pregnant mothers and small children, many States have greatly limited or prohibited access to organic foods as part of the WIC program. Some of the barriers are explicit, whereby WIC recipient are expressly prohibited in some States from using their WIC certificates or vouchers for organic versions of WIC foods. Others barriers are indirect, such as rules that make it difficult for retail stores that carry organic foods from participating in the program. Therefore, we are requesting that report language be included in the Food and Nutrition Service section of the fiscal year 2010 Appropriations report, such as:

“The Committee is concerned about the number of States the have set up barriers within the WIC program to hinder or prohibit WIC recipients from purchasing organic food. The Committee strongly urges FNS to actively encourage States to remove barriers to the purchase of organic foods as part of the basic food instrument, and to understand the nutritional and health benefits of organic foods for the vulnerable populations served by this program.”

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL POTATO COUNCIL

My name is Justin Dagen. I am a potato farmer from Karlstad, Minnesota and current Vice President, Legislative/Government Affairs for the National Potato Council (NPC). On behalf of the NPC, we thank you for your attention to the needs of our potato growers.

The NPC is the only trade association representing commercial growers in 50 States. Our growers produce both seed potatoes and potatoes for consumption in a variety of forms. Annual production is estimated at 437,888,000 cwt. with a farm value of \$3.2 billion. Total value is substantially increased through processing. The potato crop clearly has a positive impact on the U.S. economy.

The National Potato Council (NPC) urges the Congress to continue to fund programs critical to potato growers and to oppose any attempts to eliminate and/or curtail various critical research and other projects. For example, interruptions in CSREES funded projects will result in significant disruption or cancellation of valuable breeding research and the loss of varieties resulting from years of previous research. Much of this potato research is conducted jointly using potato industry and university funding. Similarly, ARS potato research is critical to the potato industry.

The NPC'S fiscal year 2010 Appropriations Priorities are as follows:

POTATO RESEARCH

Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES)

The NPC urges the Congress not to support any attempt to eliminate the CSREES Special Grant Program for potatoes. This program supports and fine-tunes important university research work that helps our growers remain competitive in today's domestic and world marketplace.

The NPC supports an appropriation of \$1,800,000 for the Special Potato Grant program for fiscal year 2010. The Congress appropriated \$1,482,000 in fiscal year 2006 and recommended the same amount in fiscal year 2007. However, the program only received \$1,112,000 in fiscal year 2008 which was further reduced by the across-the-board cut and \$1,037,000 in fiscal year 2009. This has been a highly successful program, and the number of funding requests from various potato-producing regions is increasing.

The NPC also urges that the Congress include Committee report language as follows:

“*Potato research.*—The Committee expects the Department to ensure that funds provided to CSREES for potato research are utilized for varietal development testing. Further, these funds are to be awarded after review by the Potato Industry Working Group.”

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE (ARS)

The NPC urges that the Congress to continue the Congressional increases for research projects.

The Congress provided funds for a number of important ARS projects and, due to previous direction by the Congress, the ARS continues to work with the NPC on how overall research funds can best be utilized for grower priorities.

The NPC urges that \$3 million per site be provided for the construction and/or the expansion of nematode research facilities at Cornell University in New York and in Idaho. The Potato Cyst Nematode Laboratory (PCNL) at Cornell University is structurally deficient and may lose its Federal license to operate as a quarantine facility. Its demise would put New York agriculture and the United States potato industries at risk. Equally important is the risk to the Western United States from the Idaho and Alberta outbreaks. A coordinated National Program is critical if export markets are to be maintained and this quarantined pest is to be contained. The Western facility could be constructed on University of Idaho land where an existing nematologist is present and a core ARS presence already exists. If PCN expands into other States, the entire U.S. potato industry will be affected, not only from direct damage by the pest (up to 80 percent yield loss), but more importantly, by embargoes disrupting interstate and international trade

FOREIGN MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Market Access Program (MAP)

The NPC also urges that the Congress maintain the spending level for the Market Access Program (MAP) at its authorized level of \$200 million annually.

Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

The NPC supports a minimum of \$279 million for salaries and expenses of the USDA Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS). This level is the minimum necessary for the Agency given the multitude of trade negotiations and discussions currently underway. The Agency has had to absorb pay cost increases, as well as higher operating costs for its overseas offices, such as increased payments to the Department of State for services provided at overseas posts. However, this minimal budget request does not allow for expanded enforcement activities to assure that various trade agreements are being properly implemented. The Congress should consider increasing the budget request to allow for more FAS trade enforcement activities.

FOOD AID PROGRAMS

McGovern-Dole

The NPC supports a level of at least \$108 million for the McGovern-Dole International Food Aid Program. The Program has included potato products.

PEST AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)

Given the transfer of Agriculture Quarantine Inspection (AQI) personnel at U.S. ports to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), it is important that certain USDA-APHIS programs be adequately funded to ensure progress on export petitions and protection of the U.S. potato growers from invasive, harmful pests and diseases. Even though DHS staffing has increased, agriculture priorities have not yet been adequately addressed.

Golden Nematode Quarantine.—The NPC supports an appropriation of \$1,266,000 for this quarantine which is what is believed to be necessary for USDA and the State of New York to assure official control of this pest. Failure to do so could adversely impact potato exports.

Emerging Plant Pests.—The NPC supports at least \$145 million with \$9.5 million going to the potato cyst nematode regulatory, control and survey activity. The recent discovery of Golden Nematode in seed fields in Alberta, and possibly linked to production fields in the United States, has increased the scope and cost of the national survey being conducted by USDA. In addition, the costs of the eradication program have increased due to rising input costs and some expansion of target acres.

Pest Detection.—The NPC supports \$45 million. This is essential for the Plant Protection and Quarantine Service's (PPQ) efforts against potato pests and diseases, such as *Ralstonia* and the potato cyst nematode, and funds many cooperative pest and disease programs.

Trade Issues Resolution Management.—The NPC supports \$19 million but ONLY if any increase is specifically for plant protection and quarantine activities. These activities are of increased importance as new trade agreements are negotiated, the

Agency must have the necessary staff and technology to work on plant related import/export issues and to resolve phytosanitary trade issues in a timely manner.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

The NPC supports an addition of \$8.4 million and report language to assure that the potato objective yield and grade and size surveys and vegetable pesticide use surveys are continued. These surveys provide valuable data to the growers and the EPA for use in registration and reregistration decisions for key chemical tools. NASS has discontinued these chemical use surveys for fruits and vegetables.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding fiscal year 2010 funding for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Foundation). We appreciate the Subcommittee's past support and respectfully request your approval of \$5 million through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Conservation Operations appropriation in fiscal year 2010. This funding request is authorized and would allow the Foundation to expand our historical partnership with NRCS.

In 2009, the Foundation is celebrating its 25th Anniversary and a remarkable history of bringing private partners together to leverage Federal funds to conserve fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats.

The Foundation is required by law to match each federally-appropriated dollar with a minimum of one non-Federal dollar. We consistently exceed this requirement by leveraging Federal funds at a 3:1 ratio while providing thought leadership and emphasizing accountability, measurable results, and sustainable conservation outcomes. Funds appropriated by this subcommittee are fully dedicated to project grants and do not cover any overhead expenses of the Foundation.

As of fiscal year 2008, the Foundation has awarded over 10,000 grants to more than 3,500 national and community-based organizations through successful partnerships with NRCS and other Federal agencies, including the USDA Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other Department of Interior agencies, Environmental Protection Agency, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This effective model brings together multiple Federal agencies with State and local government and private organizations to implement conservation strategies on private lands that directly benefit diverse habitats and a wide range of fish and wildlife species.

During fiscal year 2000–2006, the Foundation received an average appropriation of \$3 million annually to further the mission of NRCS through a matching grant program focused on private lands conservation. Together, NRCS and the Foundation have supported nearly 500 grants to conservation districts, universities, Resource Conservation and Development Councils, and non-profit organizations who partner with farmers, ranchers, and foresters to support conservation efforts on private land. Through these efforts, the Foundation leveraged \$21 million in NRCS funds into more than \$85 million to conserve fish and wildlife habitat, reduce agricultural runoff, and remove invasive species in 50 States, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Islands. We ask that the subcommittee restore the NRCS appropriation for the Foundation in fiscal year 2010.

This subcommittee's support is critical to our success in attracting additional funding for agricultural conservation through corporate and foundation contributions, legal settlements, and direct gifts. As a neutral convener, the Foundation is in a unique position to work with the Federal agencies, State and local government, corporations, foundations, conservation organizations and others to build strategic partnerships to address the most significant threats to fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. Currently, the Foundation has active partnerships with more than 30 corporations and foundations and 17 Federal agencies. The Foundation is successfully building bridges between the government and private sector to benefit NRCS's mission. Examples of those benefiting agricultural conservation include:

- ArcelorMittal, the world's largest steel company, established a \$2.5 million partnership with the Foundation in 2008 to restore wildlife habitat in the Great Lakes.
- The Kellogg Foundation contributed \$750,000 of NRCS-matching funds through to support innovative and sustainable conservation activities on agricultural lands.
- Strong partnerships with Anheuser-Busch, Southern Company, and the McKnight Foundation, all of whom have a special interest in conserving habitat

on private agricultural lands. New opportunities in 2009 for agriculture-focused partnerships include Syngenta and Perdue.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

It is widely known that climate change will endanger some wildlife populations and ecosystems more than others. In fiscal year 2008, the Foundation initiated grant-making through new keystone initiatives, which focus on select species of birds, fish and sensitive habitats. With support from the subcommittee in fiscal year 2010, we will accelerate implementation of these strategic initiatives, many of which seek to address the affects of climate change through wildlife and natural resource adaptation. To ensure success in these investments, we are incorporating monitoring and evaluation into the entire lifecycle of our strategic initiatives in order to measure progress, promote adaptive management, demonstrate results, and continuously learn from our grant-making. With our partners, the Foundation has identified several species and ecosystems in need of immediate conservation action, a few of which are described below.

Southeastern Grasslands.—Loss of native grasslands in the Southeast has dramatically reduced populations of grassland birds, such as the Northern Bobwhite and Loggerhead Shrike. Despite intensive efforts to improve habitat for these species, efforts have been disjointed and ineffective at recovering species. The Foundation will work with NRCS, other Federal agencies, and corporate partners to facilitate ongoing and new efforts toward effective and results-oriented grassland bird conservation. Fiscal year 2010 funding would support grassland restoration and management on private agricultural lands in the Southeast and, in turn, positively benefit wildlife conservation and associated recreation, erosion control and water quality.

Northeastern Early Successional Forests.—The state fish and wildlife agencies in the Northeast have identified habitats that depend on disturbance as a top priority for their investments. Fiscal year 2010 funds will strengthen the Foundation's partnership with NRCS to work with the States, farmers, family foresters and other landowners to create incentives to manage working lands that can support healthy wetland and forest wildlife. This includes controlling invasive species, using grazing as a win-win management tool, and other proactive efforts to keep declining species off the endangered species list.

The Green River Basin of Wyoming.—Sublette County and other areas in the southwest corner of the State—are a major area for U.S. natural gas production and provide some of the highest quality sagebrush, riparian habitats and forest for wildlife in the west. The area also supports one of the strongest sage grouse populations, as well as mule deer, pronghorn and elk populations. Energy development impacts on wildlife movement and habitat are being addressed by energy companies, BLM and other government agencies. Our goal is to work with public and private partners to accelerate these efforts through several key strategies which include modifying fences and other barriers that obstruct wildlife movement, reducing road mortality along important migratory pathways, and protecting key parcels of private ranchland from development and subdivision with conservation easements.

Sierra Nevada Alpine Wetlands.—We recognize that climate change will greatly exacerbate two existing water supply problems which impact wildlife and the public—too little water and the seasonality of freshwater supplies. The Foundation is working proactively with Federal, State and local partners to expand voluntary water transaction programs for private landowners and launching new initiatives to increase natural water storage. These efforts will benefit a diversity of wildlife species while improving water flows year-round for human use. For example, Sierra Nevada alpine wetlands, or “wet meadows”, are hotspots within the Sierra Nevada ecosystem for wildlife diversity. Federal agencies manage about 40 percent of the area of these mountain ranges, but wet meadow habitat along valley bottoms is primarily private land. The Foundation will invest in partnerships that provide incentives to private landowners to conserve springs and wet meadows and provide artificial water sources to protect stream habitats.

Klamath Basin.—The Foundation will be focusing on spring systems in the Klamath either by acquisition, easement, or voluntarily modifying agricultural practices as it is the soundest strategy for recovery of both endangered Suckers and Coho salmon. This strategy will provide these species and other fishes the ability to withstand climate change (resilience) much longer into this century. Similarly, an investment strategy of protecting and restoring spring systems in the Shenandoah River Basin will allow for the return of Eastern Brook Trout and 18–24 additional native species. In the Upper Colorado River Basin, locating areas at the warmwater-coldwater interface which contain Colorado Cutthroat trout and native suckers and

chubs is providing the framework to sustain these fishes into the next century, on both public and private lands.

Restored funding through NRCS in fiscal year 2010 will also support the Foundation's ongoing conservation grant programs including the Great Lakes Watershed Restoration Fund, Long Island Sound Futures Fund, and Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund. These grant programs, which effectively leverage funds from multiple Federal agencies and corporate partners, continued positive results in 2009 with priority project requests far exceeding available funds.

EFFICIENCY, PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

As you know, the Foundation has taken important strides to strengthen our performance measures and accountability. For example, the Foundation is working with scientists and other experts to develop species-specific metrics for each of our keystone initiatives that we will use to measure our progress in achieving our conservation outcomes. Our grant review and contracting processes have been improved to ensure we maximize efficiency while maintaining strict financial and evaluation-based requirements. We have enhanced our website with interactive tools such as webinars and a grants library to enhance the transparency of our grant-making, and instituted a new paperless application and grant administration system. In 2009, we will continue our efforts improve communication between and among our stakeholders and streamlining of our grant-making process.

The Foundation's grant-making involves a thorough internal and external review process. Peer reviews involve Federal and State agencies, affected industry, non-profit organizations, and academics. Grants are also reviewed by the Foundation's issue experts, as well as evaluation staff, before being recommended to the Board of Directors for approval. In addition, according to our Congressional Charter, the Foundation provides a 30-day notification to the Members of Congress for the congressional district and state in which a grant will be funded, prior to making a funding decision.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, we greatly appreciate your continued support and hope the subcommittee will approve funding for the Foundation in fiscal year 2010.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NEW MEXICO INTERSTATE STREAM COMMISSION

Summary

This statement is submitted in support of appropriations for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program. Prior to the enactment of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act (FSRIA) in 2002, the salinity control program had not been funded at the level necessary to control salinity with respect to water quality standards since the enactment of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act (FAIRA) of 1996. Inadequate funding of the salinity control program also negatively impacts the quality of water delivered to Mexico pursuant to Minute 242 of the International Boundary and Water Commission. Adequate funding for EQIP, from which the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funds the salinity program, is needed to implement salinity control measures. I request that the Subcommittee designate 2.5 percent, but no less than \$20 million, of the EQIP appropriation for the Colorado River Basin salinity control program. I request that adequate funds be appropriated for technical assistance and education activities directed to salinity control program participants.

Statement

The seven Colorado River Basin States, in response to the salinity issues addressed by Clean Water Act of 1972, formed the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum). Comprised of gubernatorial appointees from the seven Basin States, the Forum was created to provide for interstate cooperation in response to the Clean Water Act, and to provide the States with information to comply with Sections 303(a) and (b) of the act. The Forum has become the primary means for the seven Basin States to coordinate with Federal agencies and Congress to support the implementation of the Salinity control program.

Congress authorized the Colorado River Basin salinity control program in the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974. Congress amended the act in 1984 to give new responsibilities to the USDA. While retaining the Department of the Interior as the lead coordinator for the salinity control program, the amended act recognized the importance of the USDA operating under its authorities to meet the objectives of the salinity control program. Many of the most cost-effective projects undertaken by the salinity control program to date have occurred since implementa-

tion of the USDA's authorization for the program. Now, Congress is considering enactment of a new Farm Bill to further define how the Colorado River Basin States can cost-share in a newly designated salinity control program known as the "Basin States Program."

Bureau of Reclamation studies show that quantified damages from the Colorado River to United States water users are about \$350,000,000 per year. Unquantified damages are significantly greater. Damages are estimated at \$75,000,000 per year for every additional increase of 30 milligrams per liter in salinity of the Colorado River. It is essential to the cost-effectiveness of the salinity control program that USDA salinity control projects be funded for timely implementation to protect the quality of Colorado River Basin water delivered to the Lower Basin States and Mexico.

Congress concluded, with the enactment FAIRA in 1996, that the salinity control program could be most effectively implemented as a component of EQIP. However, until 2004, the salinity control program since the enactment of FAIRA was not funded at an adequate level to protect the Basin State-adopted and Environmental Protection Agency approved water quality standards for salinity in the Colorado River. Appropriations for EQIP prior to 2004 were insufficient to adequately control salinity impacts from water delivered to the downstream States, and hampered the required quality of water delivered to Mexico pursuant to Minute No. 242 of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico.

EQIP subsumed the salinity control program without giving adequate recognition to the responsibilities of the USDA to implement salinity control measures per Section 202(c) of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act. The EQIP evaluation and project ranking criteria target small watershed improvements which do not recognize that water users hundreds of miles downstream are significant beneficiaries of the salinity control program. Proposals for EQIP funding are ranked in the States of Utah, Wyoming and Colorado under the direction of the respective State Conservationists without consideration of those downstream, particularly out-of-state, benefits.

Following recommendations of the Basin States to address the funding problem, the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) designated the Colorado River Basin an "area of special interest" including earmarked funds for the salinity control program. The NRCS concluded that the salinity control program is different from the small watershed approach of EQIP. The watershed for the salinity control program stretches almost 1200 miles from the headwaters of the river through the salt-laden soils of the Upper Basin to the river's termination at the Gulf of California in Mexico. NRCS is to be commended for its efforts to comply with the USDA's responsibilities under the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act, as amended. Irrigated agriculture in the Upper Basin realizes significant local benefits of improved irrigation practices, and agricultural producers have succeeded in submitting cost-effective proposals to NRCS.

Years of inadequate Federal funding for EQIP since the 1996 enactment of FAIRA and prior to 2004 resulted in the Forum finding that the salinity control program needs acceleration to maintain the water quality criteria of the Colorado River Water Quality Standards for Salinity. Since the enactment of FSRIA in 2002, an opportunity to adequately fund the salinity control program now exists. The requested funding of 2.5 percent, but no less than \$20 million, of the EQIP funding will continue to be needed each year for at least the next few fiscal years.

State and local cost-sharing is triggered by and indexed to the Federal appropriation. Federal funding for the NRCS salinity control program of about \$18 million for fiscal year 2009 has generated about \$13.8 million in cost-sharing from the Colorado River Basin States and agricultural producers, or more than a 75 percent match of the Federal funds appropriated for the fiscal year.

USDA salinity control projects have proven to be a most cost-effective component of the salinity control program. USDA has indicated that a more adequately funded EQIP program would result in more funds being allocated to the salinity program. The Basin States have cost-sharing dollars available to participate in on-farm salinity control efforts. The agricultural producers in the Upper Basin are willing to cost-share their portion and are awaiting funding for their applications to be considered.

The Basin States expend 40 percent of the State funds allocated for the program for essential NRCS technical assistance and education activities. Previously, the Federal part of the salinity control program funded through EQIP failed to adequately fund NRCS for these activities, which has been shown to be a severe impediment to accomplishing successful implementation of the salinity control program. Recent acknowledgement by the administration that technical assistance and education activities must be better funded has encouraged the Basin States and local producers that cost-share with the EQIP funding for implementation of the es-

sential salinity control work. I request that adequate funds be appropriated to NRCS technical assistance and education activities directed to the salinity control program participants (producers).

I urge the Congress to appropriate at least \$1 billion in fiscal year 2010 for EQIP. Also, I request that Congress designate 2.5 percent, but no less than \$20 million, of the EQIP appropriation for the Colorado River Basin salinity control program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION

The Organic Farming Research Foundation's funding requests for the fiscal year 2010 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill are to protect mandatory funding and to allocate \$54.7 million in discretionary funds, divided among agencies and programs in the following manner:

- USDA—Cooperative State Research, Extension, and Education Service
 - Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative
 - Fiscal year 2009 actual: \$18 million
 - USDA fiscal year 2010 request: protect mandatory funding
 - OFRF fiscal year 2010 request: protect mandatory funding plus \$5 million discretionary
 - “Organic Transitions” Integrated Research
 - Fiscal year 2009 actual: \$1.8 million
 - USDA fiscal year 2010 request: \$1.8 million
 - OFRF fiscal year 2010 request: \$5 million
- USDA—Agricultural Research Service
 - Direct Organic Projects
 - Fiscal year 2009 actual: \$16.9 million
 - USDA fiscal year 2010: N/A
 - OFRF fiscal year 2010 request: \$33 million
 - Includes “Organic Research Clearinghouse,” National Agricultural Library: \$250,000
- USDA—Agricultural Marketing Service/Economic Research Service/National Agricultural Statistics Service
 - Organic Production and Market Data Initiatives
 - Fiscal year 2009 actual: \$500,000 appropriated and \$5 million one-time mandatory from 2008 Farm Bill
 - USDA fiscal year 2010 request: \$0
 - OFRF fiscal year 2010 request: \$5 million
- USDA—Agricultural Marketing Service
 - National Organic Program
 - Fiscal year 2009 actual: \$3.8 million
 - USDA fiscal year 2010 request: \$6.7 million
 - OFRF fiscal year 2010 request: \$6.7 million

Details and further information on these programs is provided below.

The Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) appreciates the opportunity to present our funding requests for the fiscal year 2010 Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. OFRF is a grower-directed, non-profit foundation working to foster the improvement and widespread adoption of organic farming systems. Organic agriculture plays an important and growing role in U.S. agriculture. Relatively modest investments in organic research and education can significantly increase the economic benefits and environmental services provided by organic farming systems and the organic products sector. As a result, we urge the Subcommittee to provide additional resources for organic agriculture in fiscal year 2010.

The Organic Farming Research Foundation appropriations requests for fiscal year 2010 reflect a coordinated set of activities that will strategically build upon the growth of organic agriculture and leverage the sector's role in addressing the Nation's economic, climate, and energy challenges. Organic agriculture continues to be a growing sector in U.S. agriculture, despite the economic recession. The organic products sector provides jobs on- and off-farm, provides increased marketing opportunities for farmers and processors, and meets widespread consumer demand for more food grown in an environmentally-sound manner. Emerging research is showing that organic agricultural systems provide a comprehensive strategy for mitigating the effects of climate change and facilitating the adaptation to climate change. Organic agriculture also reduces the use of non-renewable sources of energy such as fossil fuels. The multiple benefits of organic production systems make organic agriculture an effective vehicle for achieving national economic and environ-

mental goals. This growth has been facilitated by the Subcommittee and was supported by the 2008 Farm Bill.

OFRF's recommendations emphasize research, data collection, and information dissemination. In our view, these are the most limiting factors for the growth and improvement of organic agriculture. Within the USDA—REE Mission Area, the support of the Subcommittee and the Department has been usefully tracked by the “fair-share” comparison.¹ Currently, organic product sales are approaching 4 percent of the domestic retail market, yet USDA—REE expenditures directed explicitly to research and information programs for organic agriculture have only just reached 2 percent of the REE Mission Area funding.² This discrepancy is detrimental to an industry that relies intensively on management and information for its success. By providing modest increases as outlined below, the Subcommittee can help meet the “fair-share” benchmark for organic research and promote the multiple public benefits that organic farming can provide.

USDA—COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION SERVICE

*Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI)*³

OFRF Fiscal Year 2010 Request: \$25 million (protect mandatory funding plus \$5 million discretionary)

OREI is USDA's premier competitive research and education grant program specifically dedicated to the investigation of organic agriculture. Due to its success with very modest funding, the program received an increase in mandatory funding in the 2008 Farm Bill. Despite this increase, the program remains heavily oversubscribed. For the fiscal year 2009 allocation of \$18 million, the program received applications totaling over \$98 million. Increasing organic research capacities within the land grant university system and elsewhere are reflected in this trend.

The 2008 Farm Bill allocates mandatory funding of \$20 million to OREI for fiscal year 2010. The legislation also recognizes the need for further increases to reach the full potential of this program and authorizes discretionary funding of up to \$25 million annually. In addition to protecting the full mandatory allocation, OFRF recommends appropriating \$5 million of the discretionary authority in fiscal year 2010. This modest additional increase would continue making progress towards the fair-share benchmark of USDA research and education for organic agriculture and respond to the strong demand and increased capacity for the program's outcomes.

*“Organic Transitions” Integrated Research (ORG)*⁴

OFRF Fiscal Year 2010 Request: \$5 million

ORG is the older and smaller of two USDA competitive grant programs dedicated to organic research and education. From 2003 to 2008, it was administered together with OREI. Starting in fiscal year 2009, USDA—CSREES is instead combining the program with the 406 Integrated Water Quality research program. The newly combined program will fund multi-year projects that examine the effects of organic production systems on water quality. This approach provides a “specialized” complement to the general purposes of OREI, and OFRF supports this move by the agency. At current funding levels,⁵ this program can only fund a small number of serious investigations. Our request of \$5 million for fiscal year 2010 seeks to enable a higher level of program performance and help reach the overall organic fair-share benchmark.

¹The fair-share benchmark compares the U.S. retail market share of organic products to the percentage of USDA—REE spending on activities explicitly directed towards organic farming and food.

²OFRF estimates total fiscal year 2009 organic REE spending at \$48 million, out of approximately \$2.4 billion for the REE Mission Area. This includes: OREI (\$18 million), ORG (\$1.8 million), ARS direct-organic (\$16.9 million), ODI (\$5 million), other CSREES grants (\$6 million).

³The Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) is authorized by Section 1672B of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925b) as amended by Section 7206 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

⁴“Organic Transitions” Integrated Research (ORG) is authorized by Section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C. 7626).

⁵\$1.8 million for fiscal year 2009.

USDA—AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

Direct Organic Projects

OFRF Fiscal Year 2010 Request: \$33 million (“fair share” for ARS organic research)

USDA—Agricultural Research Service has an organic research portfolio and a strategic plan for further organic research activities. The current funding for direct organic projects is \$16.9 million, about 1.5 percent of the total ARS budget.⁶ We are urging growth of the agency’s direct organic activity to reach an ARS fair-share objective of \$33 million. The increase should be pointed towards full implementation of the ARS Organic Research Action Plan.⁷

We ask that \$250,000 be directed at funding the National Agricultural Library’s Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (NAL–AFSIC). As organic results proliferate, dissemination of information becomes a critical limiting factor for the overall goals of widespread adoption. The NAL–AFSIC program is well positioned to lead the dissemination function within USDA. OFRF estimates that maintenance and outreach for a national “clearinghouse” for organic agriculture, “enthusiastically” supported by USDA’s National Research Advisory Board,⁸ will require an ongoing annual budget allocation of \$250,000.

USDA—AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE/ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE/NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Organic Production and Market Data Initiatives (ODI)⁹

OFRF Fiscal Year 2010 Request: \$5 million (\$3 million for AMS, \$1.5 million for ERS, and \$0.5 million for NASS)

Data on prices, yields, and markets are vital to farmers for production planning, market development, risk management, and obtaining financial credit. The organic sector is still without vital comprehensive data on par with what USDA provides for conventional agriculture, putting organic farmers at a significant disadvantage. The absence of marketing and production data specific to organic agriculture inhibits organic producers and handlers, and limits the effectiveness of policies enacted to facilitate the public benefits of organic agriculture.

The Subcommittee has supported the initial 2002 authorization with \$500,000 from 2004 through 2009. These appropriations enabled a minimal baseline effort for general measurements of the organic sector. The 2008 Farm Bill provided \$5 million in mandatory funds to jumpstart the combined data collection initiatives at AMS, ERS, and NASS. Those funds have already been spent on a variety of efforts at each of the agencies,¹¹ including the development of a first-ever survey of organic agriculture by NASS to be released in early May 2009.

Activities of AMS, ERS, and NASS require continued full support to build upon the previous investments. AMS has planned further enhancement of organic reporting and the development of additional organic market information tools. NASS is releasing its first-ever organic agriculture production survey in May, and will need funds to continue its data collection efforts. ERS will use additional targeted funds to continue expanding the agency’s overall program of research and analysis of organic agriculture, and will work jointly with NASS to analyze the data from the organic production survey.

The 2008 Farm Bill provided additional authority up to \$5 million annually for ODI. We are asking the Subcommittee to exercise its full authority and allocate \$5 million for fiscal year 2010 to organic data collection, distributed among the three

⁶Communications from ARS national program staff, April 29, 2009. A larger total is reported to Congress, combining “direct organic” projects with “indirect organic” projects, as determined by ARS staff.

⁷Organic Research Action Plan: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/Program/216/OrganicResearchActPlan.pdf>.

⁸“Report and Recommendations from a Focus Session on Organic Agriculture Conducted at the Advisory Board Meeting held in Washington, D.C. on October 29–31, 2007.” Page 4. National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board. Transmitted to the Secretary of Agriculture and the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, and Agriculture, March 5, 2008.

⁹The Organic Market and Production Data Initiatives is authorized by Section 7407 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 as amended by Section 10302 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

¹¹For an update on the use of the funds, see “U.S. Department of Agriculture Report to Congress: Status of Organic Production and Market Data Activities As Required by the 2008 Farm Bill.” December 2008.

agencies leading this initiative. We anticipate that the President's budget will recommend a similar allocation and agency distribution.

USDA—Agricultural Marketing Service

National Organic Program (NOP)

OFRF Fiscal Year 2010 Request: \$6.7 million

NOP (including the National Organic Standards Board, organic standards setting, certifier accreditation and enforcement) received an increased authorization for appropriations in the 2008 Farm Bill. \$8 million is the authorization level for fiscal year 2010. NOP has a large and growing number of important backlogged tasks. We support the President's fiscal year 2010 request for \$6.7 million.

The Organic Farming Research Foundation thanks the Subcommittee for the opportunity to submit our requests. We ask the Subcommittee to provide funds to close the gap in research and education funding for organic agriculture, for the continued improvement and expansion of organic farming systems.

Disclosure.—Organic Farming Research Foundation was a subcontractor for a grant awarded by the USDA—CSREES Integrated Organic Program. Grant# 2207-01384. "Midwest Organic Research Symposium."

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH

On the behalf of the Society for Women's Health Research and the Women's Health Research Coalition, we are pleased to submit testimony in support of increased funding for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and more specifically for the Office of Women's Health (OWH), a critical focal point on women's health within the Agency.

The Society for Women's Health Research is the Nation's only non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the health of all women through advocacy, research, and education. Founded in 1990, the Society brought to national attention the need for the appropriate inclusion of women in major medical research studies and the need for more information about conditions affecting women exclusively, disproportionately, or differently than men. The Society advocates increased funding for research on women's health; encourages the study of sex differences that may affect the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease; promotes the inclusion of women in medical research studies; and informs women, providers, policy makers and media about contemporary women's health issues.

In 1999, the Women's Health Research Coalition was established by the Society to give a voice to scientists and researchers from across the country that are concerned and committed to improving women's health research. The Coalition now has more than 650 members, including leaders within the scientific community and medical researchers from many of the country's leading universities and medical centers, as well as leading voluntary health associations, and pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.

The Society and the Coalition are committed to advancing the health status of women through the discovery of new and useful scientific knowledge. We strongly believe that appropriate funding of the FDA by Congress is critical for the Agency to function and to assure the American public of the safety of its food and drugs. However, as has been well documented, currently the FDA is endeavoring to catch up after years of flat funding to meet the needs of scientific growth, innovation and development, and adequate food and drug protection. Further, FDA is struggling to catch up to present-day needs in the area of information technology (IT).

Last year the FDA was awarded a \$325 million increase to assist in revamping the Agency, as well as a one time investment of \$150 million in supplemental funding. This influx of funds was meant to address years of chronic under-funding; however, the Agency needs a continuous stream of funding to address the myriad of infrastructure, resources and IT issues resulting from the budget shortages it has faced in the past decade.

The Society urges Congress to provide the FDA with an increase of \$386 million, bringing the FDA's fiscal year 2010 budget to \$2.425 billion. This funding increase will allow the FDA to continue rebuilding its infrastructure and addressing the shortage of resources as well as install IT systems that match the needs of the industries it is regulating and expectations of the American public.

Another important investment that must be taken into account at the FDA is the Office of Women's Health (OWH). OWH's women's health programs, often conducted with the Agency centers, are vital to maintaining focus on women's health within the FDA. They are critical to improved care and increased awareness of disease-spe-

cific impacts to women. For example, OWH ensures that sex and gender differences in the efficacy of drugs (such as metabolism rates), devices (sizes and functionality) and diagnostics are taken into consideration in reviews. To address OWH's growing list of priorities, the Society recommends that Congress support a \$7 million budget for OWH for fiscal year 2010 within the budget for the FDA. In addition, we further recommend that the current budget levels not only increase in the future, but should never be less than the \$6 million that the office currently receives.

FDA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

The FDA is tasked with guarding the safety, efficacy, and security of human drugs, biological products, and medical devices. However, as was stated by the Science Board Report, requested by former Commissioner von Eschenbach, FDA's IT systems were inefficient and incapable of handling the current demands placed on the Agency, thus preventing the FDA from fulfilling its mission. Equipment is outdated, often unsupported by maintenance, and regularly breaks down. FDA's IT system, a system which needs to function 24/7, simply cannot keep up with current scientific data and market trends. This will only continue to worsen as servers' age beyond usefulness, and serviceability and email networks fail multiple times per day.

Additionally, the new Obama Administration is seeking to pass an overhaul of the Nation's healthcare system. This reform is likely to include further advances to electronic health records and other IT innovations which will place an even greater burden on the FDA, among other agencies, to function within those advanced IT systems and networks.

The antiquated nature of the IT systems also makes the agency unable to conduct safety analyses for product marketing applications, track the natural history and disease models for rare disorders, and access huge amounts of clinical data. The creation of a central database must happen to provide for a system query to a centralized repository for all relevant facts about a certain product including where, when and how the product was made. Such a uniform centralized database will be relevant for all information stored across agencies, so as to maximize functionality not only of FDA's data but of expected research and analysis needed by the American public.

Currently, the FDA receives large volumes of information in applications from drug manufacturers for review and evaluation. FDA reviewers must manually comb through the submitted drug trial reports and digital data in as many as twelve formats to evaluate a new drug's safety and effectiveness. Frequently reviewers must handpick data manually from stacks of paper reports and craft their own data comparisons. This process is time consuming, makes the review process less efficient, and is error-prone and delays access to important information. Scientific and medical advances are occurring rapidly and the public needs and deserves access to the most recent and accurate information regarding their health. It is time Congress recognize that the Agency must utilize up-to-date information technology and that it sorely needs the resources to maintain them.

The Society believes that the Agency and/or the FDA's Office of Women's Health should be able to track women or men and other subpopulations in all clinical trials before them and they are currently not able to do so. The FDA should be able to know how many women are in studies (both by recruitment and retention rates). This should be an immediate goal of any new IT system upgrade at the Agency in conjunction with the adoption of uniform data standards from which to pull the data and as part of the shift to an automated, electronic filing system.

Estimations have shown that it would take \$200 million (\$40 million/year) over the course of 5 years to begin the process of improving the IT system. Congress must address past shortfalls to FDA and provide it a \$386 million increase to begin IT transformation and many other improvements.

OFFICE OF WOMEN'S HEALTH

OWH at the FDA, established in 1994, plays a critical role in women's health, both within and outside the Agency, supporting sex- and gender-based research, areas in which the Society has long been a proponent. OWH provides scientific and policy expertise on sex and gender sensitive regulatory and oversight issues; endeavors to correct sex and gender disparities in the areas for which the FDA is responsible—drugs, devices, and biologics; and monitors women's health priorities, providing both leadership and an integrated approach across the FDA. Despite inadequate funding, OWH provides all women with invaluable tools for their health.

Each year OWH, with little difficulty, exhausts its tiny budget. OWH's pamphlets are the most requested of any documents at the government printing facility in New

Mexico. Last year more than 5.6 million pamphlets are distributed to women across the Nation including target populations such as Hispanic communities, seniors and low-income citizens. Further, the Office attends over 125 meetings per year to exhibit, to present scientific posters and oral presentations, and to chair sessions. Despite its \$1 million increase the office received last year, additional funding is needed so OWH may continue its present work on current projects, but expand and develop future projects.

It is absolutely critical for Congress to take action now to help preserve the vital functions of OWH and to ensure that its small budget is dedicated to the resource needs of the office and to the projects and programs and research it funds.

Since its beginning, OWH has funded high quality scientific research to serve as the foundation for Agency activities that improve women's health. To date, OWH has funded over 100 research projects with approximately \$19.9 million intramural grants, supporting projects within the FDA that address knowledge gaps or set new directions for sex and gender research. Extramural contracts leverage a wealth of expertise and other resources outside the FDA to provide insight on regulatory questions pertinent to women's health. All contracts and grants are awarded through a competitive process. A large number of these studies are published and appear in peer reviewed journals.

As part of its educational outreach efforts to consumers, OWH works closely with women's advocacy and health professional organizations to provide clarity on the results of the Women's Health Initiative. Due to OWH efforts, an informational fact sheet about menopause and hormones and a purse-sized questionnaire to review with the doctor were distributed to national and local print, radio, and Internet advertisements. OWH's website, to date, has received over 3 million hits to download campaign materials.

Further, OWH's website serves as a vital tool for consumers and is constantly updated to include new and important health information. The website provides free, downloadable fact sheets on over 40 different illnesses, diseases, and health related issues. Recently OWH has completed medication charts on seven chronic diseases, which are unique within the Agency. These charts list all the medications that are prescribed and available for each disease. This information is ideal for women to use in talking to their doctors, pharmacists or nurses about their treatment options.

OWH continues to improve the health of women through new research initiatives. Most recently, they have collaborated with Pharmacy Choice, Inc. to create a web portal solely dedicated to FDA consumer health education materials, providing access to fact sheets and medication guides.

OWH and Sex Differences Research

Scientists have long known of the anatomical differences between men and women, but only within the past decade have they begun to uncover significant biological and physiological differences. Sex differences have been found everywhere from the composition of bone matter and the experience of pain, to the metabolism of certain drugs and the rate of neurotransmitter synthesis in the brain. Sex-based biology, the study of biological and physiological differences between men and women, has revolutionized the way that the scientific community views the sexes, with even more information is forthcoming as a result of the sequencing of the X chromosome. The evidence is overwhelming, and as researchers continue to find more and complex biological differences, they gain a greater understanding of the biological and physiological composition of both sexes.

Much of what is known about sex differences is the result of observational studies, or is descriptive evidence from studies that were not designed to obtain a careful comparison between females and males. The Society has long recognized that the inclusion of women in study populations by itself was insufficient to address the inequities in our knowledge of human biology and medicine, and that only by the careful study of sex differences at all levels, from genes to behavior, would science achieve the goal of optimal health care for both men and women. Many sex differences are already present at birth, whereas others develop later in life. These differences play an important role in disease susceptibility, prevalence, time of onset and severity and are evident in cancer, obesity, heart disease, immune dysfunction, mental health disorders, and other illnesses. Physiological and hormonal fluctuations may also play a role in the rate of drug metabolism and effectiveness of response in females and males. This research is supported and encouraged by the Office of Women's Health within the Agency. OWH directly works with the various centers to advance the science in this area, collaborating on programs, projects, and research.

Building upon sex differences research, the Society encourages the establishment of drug-labeling requirements that ensure labels include language about differences

experienced by women and men. Furthermore, we advocate for research on the comparative effectiveness of drugs with specific emphasis on data analysis by sex. When available, this information should be on labels.

Our country's drug development process has succeeded in delivering new and better medications to ensure the health of both women and men. However, the requirement that the data acquired during research of a new drug's safety and effectiveness be analyzed as a function of sex or that information about the ways drugs may differ in various populations (e.g., women requiring a lower dosage because of different rates of absorption or chemical breakdown) be included in prescription drug labels and other patient educational and instructional materials is generally not enforced.

The Society believes the opportunity to present this information to consumers is now. Sex differences data discovered from clinical trials can be directly related to the medical community and to consumers through drug labeling and packaging inserts and other forms of alerts. As part of advancing the need to analyze and report sex differences, the Society encourages the FDA to continue adequately addressing the need for accurate drug labeling in order to identify important sex and gender differences, as well as to ensure that appropriate data analysis of post-market surveillance reporting for these differences is placed in the hands of physicians and ultimately the patient.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we thank you and this Committee for its strong record of support for the FDA and women's health and your commitment to OWH. We recommend that you increase the overall fiscal year 2010 budget for the FDA by \$386 million, so that it may dramatically improve upon current operations while also rebuilding its IT infrastructure. Secondly, we urge you to allocate \$7 million for the Office of Women's Health for fiscal year 2010, and to ensure that future budget appropriations for the OWH are never below current funding levels. We look forward to continuing to work with you to build a stronger and healthier future for all Americans.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

As the largest animal protection organization in the country, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to your subcommittee on fiscal year 2010 items of great importance to The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and its 11 million supporters nationwide. In this testimony, we request the following amounts for the following USDA accounts:

- FSIS/Humane Methods of Slaughter Act Enforcement—funding and language to improve enforcement (defer to subcommittee expertise for specific funding level)
- FSIS/Horse Slaughter—language mirroring fiscal year 2009 omnibus provision
- APHIS/Horse Protection Act Enforcement—at least \$1 million
- APHIS/Animal Welfare Act Enforcement—\$22,275,270
- APHIS/Investigative and Enforcement Services—\$14,036,350
- OIG/including Animal Fighting Enforcement—\$87,910,150
- CSREES/Veterinary Student Loan Forgiveness—\$5,000,000
- APHIS/Emergency Management Systems/Disaster Planning for Animals—\$1,001,000
- NAL/Animal Welfare Information Center—\$1,978,400

ENFORCEMENT OF ANIMAL WELFARE LAWS

We thank you for your outstanding support during recent years for improved enforcement by USDA of key animal welfare laws and we urge you to sustain this effort in fiscal year 2010. Your leadership is making a great difference in helping to protect the welfare of millions of animals across the country. As you know, better enforcement will also benefit people by helping to prevent: (1) food safety risks to consumers from sick animals who can transmit illness, and injuries to slaughterhouse workers from suffering animals; (2) orchestrated dogfights and cockfights that often involve illegal gambling, drug trafficking, and human violence, and can contribute to the spread of costly illnesses such as bird flu; (3) the sale of unhealthy pets by commercial breeders, commonly referred to as "puppy mills"; (4) laboratory conditions that may impair the scientific integrity of animal-based research; (5) risks of disease transmission from, and dangerous encounters with, wild animals in or during public exhibition; and (6) injuries and deaths of pets on commercial airline flights due to mishandling and exposure to adverse environmental conditions. In order to continue the important work made possible by the Committee's prior support, we request the following for fiscal year 2010:

FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE/HUMANE METHODS OF SLAUGHTER ACT
ENFORCEMENT

We Request Funding and Language to Ensure Strengthened HMSA Enforcement.—We greatly appreciated the Committee’s inclusion of language calling on USDA to immediately close the downed cattle loophole, language that was indeed effective, as President Obama announced USDA’s new no-downed cattle rule just three days after he signed the omnibus into law. We also greatly appreciated the Committee’s inclusion of a \$2 million increase in fiscal year 2009 to begin to address severe shortfalls in the agency’s oversight of humane handling rules for animals at slaughter facilities, oversight that is important not only for animal welfare but also for food safety. This problem came sharply into focus last year when egregious abuse of cattle was revealed from a 6-week hidden camera investigation of a plant—which happened to be the #2 beef supplier to the National School Lunch Program and had been honored by USDA as “Supplier of the Year” for the 2004–2005 academic year—leading to the nation’s largest meat recall in history. In that case, the blatant and recurrent violations of food safety and humane rules were not reported by 5 USDA inspection personnel at the plant. Subsequent undercover investigations showed the mistreatment was not an isolated case, and a USDA Inspector General’s audit identified several serious, continuing weaknesses in the inspection regime. We request funding and language to ensure that inspectors are continually observing live animals as they arrive and are offloaded and handled in pens, chutes, and stunning areas, and that USDA officials are taking strong action to avert violations of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act and the ban on slaughter of cattle too sick or injured to stand and walk. We urge the Committee to make this a high priority in order to better protect consumers and animals.

Specifically, we recommend a combination of measures to ensure meaningful compliance. More inspectors observing live animals are needed, and all inspectors should be trained and directed to monitor the treatment of live animals to ensure that they are handled humanely. Inspectors must understand that their oversight responsibilities begin at the moment animals arrive at slaughter premises, including when the animals are on trucks at slaughter facilities. An inspector should meet each truck when it arrives on the premises and should order the immediate humane euthanasia and condemnation of any cattle who are non-ambulatory. Egregious conduct such as forcefully striking an animal with an object, dragging an animal, ramming or otherwise attempting to move an animal with heavy machinery, or using electric shock, water pressure, or other extreme methods should be explicitly prohibited and those policies established in a formal rule to take effect immediately. Inspections should be unannounced and not on a predictable schedule. Oversight could be enhanced with video surveillance, accessible for viewing by independent third parties, but this should complement, not be a substitute for, improved inspections. Inspectors must be encouraged to report violations, rather than being discouraged from and even reprimanded for doing so by their superiors. Egregious humane handling violations must be noted through Noncompliance Reports and not just through Memoranda of Interview, so that documentation of these serious violations will be accessible through the PBIS system to other inspectors, USDA’s Office of Food Safety, Congress, and the public. Penalties should be more meaningful, particularly for repeat or egregious violations of humane handling standards. It would be helpful to rotate inspectors to ensure that they do not become too close with plant personnel, and undercover investigations by USDA personnel, under the OIG or otherwise, would bolster deterrence.

HORSE SLAUGHTER

We Request Inclusion of Language Barring USDA From the Expenditure of Funds for Horse Slaughter Inspection.—Such language has been included in past years and has been vital to prevent renewed horse slaughter activity in this country.

APHIS/HORSE PROTECTION ACT ENFORCEMENT

We Request at Least \$1 Million for Strengthened Enforcement of the Horse Protection Act.—Congress enacted the Horse Protection Act (HPA) in 1970 to end the cruelty and abuse of “soring”—a practice in which unscrupulous trainers use a variety of methods to inflict pain on sensitive areas of Tennessee Walking Horses’ feet and legs in an effort to exaggerate their high-stepping gait and gain an unfair competitive advantage at industry horse shows. For example, caustic chemicals—such as mustard oil, diesel fuel, kerosene, and industrial cleaners—are painted on the lower front legs of a horse. Then, the horse’s legs are wrapped in plastic wrap and tight bandages to “cook” the chemicals deep into the horse’s flesh. Sored horses are often

left standing in their stalls for days with their legs coated and wrapped. This makes the horse's legs extremely painful and sensitive, and can result in permanent damage or even death in some cases. It is not uncommon to see sores horses lying down in their stalls, moaning in pain. When ridden, the horse is fitted with chains that slide up and down the horse's sore legs, forcing him to produce an exaggerated, high-stepping gait in the show ring. In addition, other chemicals such as salicylic acid are used to slough off the scarred tissue and granulomas in an attempt to disguise the sores areas, a practice that is equally painful and cruel to these horses. When shown, some Tennessee Walking horses are fitted with heavy stacked shoes. Another particularly egregious form of soring—known as pressure shoeing—involves cutting a horse's hoof almost to the quick, paring it down to the sensitive live tissue and causing an extreme amount of pain every time the horse bears weight on the hoof. To further increase the pain in the horse's feet, foreign objects such as metal screws or acrylic are often inserted between the stacks and the horse's hoof.

Though soring has been illegal for almost 40 years, this cruel practice continues unabated by the well-intentioned but seriously understaffed APHIS inspection program. The most effective way to meet the goal of the Horse Protection Act is to have Animal Care inspectors present at the shows. Exhibitors who sore their horses go to great lengths to avoid detection, including fleeing a show when USDA inspectors arrive. Unfortunately, given an enforcement budget that has remained static at around \$500,000 since 1976, Animal Care is able to attend only about 6 percent of the more than 500 Tennessee Walking Horse shows held annually. Funding of at least \$1 million in fiscal year 2010 will begin to address the need for additional inspectors, training, security (to address threats of violence against inspectors), and advanced detection equipment (thermography and gas chromatography/mass spectrometry machines) to give agency officials the tools they need to meaningfully enforce this law as Congress intended.

APHIS/ANIMAL WELFARE ACT ENFORCEMENT

We Request \$22,275,270 (Near Level Funding) for AWA Enforcement Under the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).—We commend the Committee for responding in recent years to the urgent need for increased funding for the Animal Care division to improve its inspections of almost 16,000 sites, including commercial breeding facilities, laboratories, zoos, circuses, and airlines, to ensure compliance with AWA standards. As part of the 2008 Farm Bill, Congress established a new responsibility for this division—to enforce a ban on imports from foreign puppy mills where puppies are mass produced under inhumane conditions and then forced to endure harsh long-distance transport, so that many arrive ill or dead or die soon after being sold to an American family. Animal Care currently has 111 inspectors (with 5 vacancies in the process of being filled), compared to 64 inspectors at the end of the 1990s. An appropriation at the requested level would maintain fiscal year 2009 funding with a modest increase to cover pay costs and additional responsibilities associated with the new import ban and the increasing number of licensed/registered facilities.

APHIS/INVESTIGATIVE AND ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

We Request \$14,036,350 (Near Level Funding) for APHIS Investigative and Enforcement Services (IES).—We appreciate the Committee's consistent support for this division, which handles many important responsibilities, including the investigation of alleged violations of Federal animal welfare laws and the initiation of appropriate enforcement actions. The volume of animal welfare cases is rising significantly as new facilities become licensed and registered. An appropriation at the requested level would maintain fiscal year 2009 funding with a modest increase to cover pay costs.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL/ANIMAL FIGHTING ENFORCEMENT

We Request \$87,910,150 (Near Level Funding) for the Office of Inspector General (OIG) to Maintain Staff, Improve Effectiveness, and Allow Investigations in Various Areas, Including Enforcement of Animal Fighting Laws.—We appreciate the Committee's inclusion of funding and language in recent years for USDA's OIG to focus on animal fighting cases. Congress first prohibited most interstate and foreign commerce of animals for fighting in 1976, tightened loopholes in the law in 2002, established felony penalties in 2007, and further strengthened the law as part of the 2008 Farm Bill, in the wake of the high-profile Michael Vick dogfighting case. We are pleased that USDA is taking seriously its responsibility to enforce this law, working with State and local agencies to complement their efforts and address these barbaric practices, in which animals are drugged to heighten their aggression and forced to

keep fighting even after they've suffered grievous injuries. Dogs bred and trained to fight endanger public safety, and some dogfighters steal pets to use as bait for training their dogs. Cockfighting was linked to an outbreak of Exotic Newcastle Disease in 2002–2003 that cost taxpayers more than \$200 million to contain. It's also been linked to the death of a number of people in Asia reportedly exposed through cockfighting activity to bird flu. Given the potential for further costly disease transmission, as well as the animal cruelty involved, we believe it is a sound investment for the Federal government to increase its efforts to combat illegal animal fighting activity. We also support the OIG's auditing and investigative work to improve compliance with the humane slaughter law and downed animal rules and the Horse Protection Act.

COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE/VETERINARY
STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS

We Request \$5,000,000 to Continue the Implementation of the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (Public Law 108–161), Specifically Authorized in 2003.—This program received \$2,950,000 in fiscal year 2009, and was projected to need \$5,000,000 in its third year under the CBO score accompanying authorization. We appreciate that Congress is working to address the critical shortage of veterinarians practicing in rural and inner-city areas, as well as in government positions at FSIS and APHIS. A 2009 Government Accountability Office report enumerating the challenges facing veterinary medicine identified that an inadequate number of veterinarians to meet national needs is among the foremost challenges. A 2006 study demonstrated the acute and worsening shortage of veterinarians working in rural farm animal practice, while domestic pets in both rural and urban areas are often left without necessary medical care. Having adequate veterinary care is a core animal welfare concern. To ensure adequate oversight of humane handling and food safety rules, FSIS must be able to fill vacancies in inspector positions. Veterinarians also support our nation's defense against bioterrorism (the Centers for Disease Control estimate that 75 percent of potential bioterrorism agents are zoonotic—transmitted from animals to humans). They are also on the front lines addressing public health problems such as those associated with pet overpopulation, parasites, rabies, chronic wasting disease, and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (“mad cow” disease). Veterinary school graduates face a crushing debt burden of \$120,000 on average, with an average starting salary of \$61,000. For those who choose employment in underserved rural or inner-city areas or public health practice, the National Veterinary Medical Service Act authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to forgive student debt. It also authorizes financial assistance for those who provide services during Federal emergency situations such as disease outbreaks.

APHIS/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS /DISASTER PLANNING FOR ANIMALS

We Request \$1,001,000 (Level Funding) for Animal Care Under APHIS' Emergency Management Systems Line Item.—Hurricanes Katrina and Rita demonstrated that many people refuse to evacuate if they are forced to leave their pets behind. The Animal Care division has been asked to develop infrastructure to help prepare for and respond to animal issues in a disaster and incorporate lessons learned from previous disasters. These funds will be used for staff time and resources to support State and local governments' and humane organizations' efforts to plan for protection of people with animals. The additional resources will enable the agency to participate, in partnership with FEMA, in the National Response Plan without jeopardizing other Animal Care programs.

ANIMAL WELFARE INFORMATION CENTER

We Request \$1,978,400 for AWIC.—These funds will enable AWIC to improve its services as a clearinghouse, training center, and educational resource to help institutions using animals in research, testing and teaching comply with the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act, including consideration of alternatives to minimize or eliminate the use of animals in specific research protocols.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to share our views and priorities for the Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies Appropriation Act of fiscal year 2010. We are grateful for the Committee's past support, and hope you will be able to accommodate these modest requests to address some very pressing problems affecting millions of animals in the United States. Thank you for your consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WHITEWAVE FOODS

My name is Kelly Shea, and I thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of WhiteWave Foods regarding the growth of the organic industry and our support for the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Organic Program. Specifically, we support providing the Program with \$8 million as authorized by Congress.

Headquartered in Broomfield, Colorado, WhiteWave Foods, a growing subsidiary of Dean Foods, is the home of several pioneer organic brands, including Horizon Organic, The Organic Cow, and Silk Soymilk. As the organic industry evolves, we continue to lead with insight, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to organic principles. With this in mind, we are strongly supportive of efforts to ensure the continued growth of the organic sector by providing additional funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program.

The National Organic Program (NOP) is rapidly outgrowing its present resource capacity. With retail sales at \$24 billion and continuing to grow, certified operations in excess of 26,000, and 98 accredited certifying agents operating globally, the current NOP budget continually struggles to keep up with growing demands.

Consumer confidence is the key to growth in the organic market. Ensuring continued consumer confidence requires consistent and adequate enforcement of the organic rule to ensure the integrity of the USDA organic seal. Therefore, adequate funding is required to enable the NOP to hire additional staff and continue to do a credible job of re-accreditation and investigating non-compliances. Additional resources are needed for both addressing gaps in the regulations and increasing compliance and enforcement activity. The long run objective is to maintain the integrity of the USDA organic seal for consumers who are willing to purchase organic products, produced according to a set of sustainable practices voluntarily subscribed to by producers and processors, based on legislation and regulations they initiated nearly two decades ago.

The baseline for the NOP for the 2009 fiscal year is approximately \$3 million. However, a portion of the budget is, and has been, a "pass-through" for funding of the Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP). FSMIP provides matching funds to State Departments of Agriculture and other appropriate State agencies to assist in exploring new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products, and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the U.S. marketing system.

To facilitate the continued expansion of the organic industry, we support fully funding the operations of the NOP at the \$8 million level authorized by Congress.¹ We are strongly supportive of an increase in funding that could be allocated towards strengthening the accreditation process (training, education, audit, review, and compliance) for domestic and foreign certifying agents who are certifying to the NOP; international standards recognition and conformity assessment; standards development (new standards needed and continuing to improve existing standards as the industry develops); and enforcement through audits, investigative compliance and review (the NOP receives over 100 complaints per year).

We appreciate your consideration of our requests; we believe that this increased funding will be critical to the continued growth of the organic sector. We thank you for the opportunity to testify today and look forward to working with you in the future.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

The Wildlife Society appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning the fiscal year 2010 budgets for the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Services (CSREES), and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The Wildlife Society represents over 8,000 professional wildlife biologists and managers dedicated to sound wildlife stewardship through science and education. The Wildlife Society is committed to strengthening all Federal programs that benefit wildlife and their habitats on agricultural and other private land.

ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

Wildlife Services (WS), a unit of APHIS, is responsible for controlling wildlife damage to agriculture, aquaculture, forest, range, and other natural resources, wildlife-borne diseases, and wildlife at airports. Its activities are based on the principles of wildlife management and integrated damage management, and are carried out

¹The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Section 10303: National Organic Program).

cooperatively with state fish and wildlife agencies. The President's budget would allocate \$345 million to this program. The Wildlife Society recommends that Congress increase funding for this important program in fiscal year 2010, to at least the fiscal year 2009 level of \$351 million.

COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE

The Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) provides an expanded, comprehensive extension program for forest and rangeland renewable resources. The RREA funds, which are apportioned to State Extension Services, effectively leverage cooperative partnerships at an average of four to one, with a focus on private landowners. The need for RREA educational programs is greater than ever today because of continuing fragmentation of ownership, urbanization, the diversity of landowners needing assistance, and increasing societal concerns about land use and the impact on natural resources including soil, water, air, wildlife and other environmental factors. The Wildlife Society recommends that the Renewable Resources Extension Act be funded at \$30 million, as authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill.

The McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Program is essential to the future of resource management on non-industrial private forestlands, as forest products are produced while conserving natural resources, including fish and wildlife. As demand for forest products grow, privately held forests will increasingly be needed to supplement supplies, but trees suitable for harvest take decades to produce. In the absence of long-term and on-going research, such as provided through McIntire-Stennis, the nation could be unable to meet future forest-product needs. We appreciate the over \$27 million in funding allocated in the fiscal year 2009 omnibus and recommended in the fiscal year 2010 proposal, and encourage a further increase in fiscal year 2010.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

The Farm Bill conservation programs are more important than ever given huge backlogs of qualified applicants for these programs, increased pressure on farmland from the biofuels boom, sprawling development, and the ongoing declines in wildlife habitat and water quality. We are very concerned by the proposed decreases in the Farm Bill conservation programs in fiscal year 2010. The Wildlife Society recommends that the Farm Bill conservation programs be funded at the levels mandated in the 2008 Farm Bill. In particular, we encourage full funding of the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program at \$85 million. In addition, we note that 4 million acres of Conservation Reserve Program contracts are expiring. CRP should be funded at a level that allows for full enrollment of authorized CRP acres.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

The Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program was authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill, to encourage farmers and ranchers to allow public access on their lands. We support funding at \$16.67 million per year for the period 2010–2012, as recommended by the President.

Thank you for considering the views of wildlife professionals. We look forward to working with you and your staff to ensure adequate funding for wildlife conservation.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

On behalf of the undersigned animal welfare and horse industry organizations, with combined supporters exceeding 12 million, we submit the following testimony seeking an increase in funding for the USDA/APHIS Horse Protection Program to at least \$1 million for fiscal year 2010. This funding is urgently needed to begin to fulfill the intent of the Horse Protection Act—to eliminate the cruel practice of soring—by allowing the USDA to strengthen its enforcement capabilities for this law.

In 1970, Congress passed the Horse Protection Act to end soring, the intentional infliction of pain to the hooves and legs of a horse to produce an exaggerated gait, practiced primarily in the Tennessee Walking Horse show industry. The Act authorizes the USDA to inspect Tennessee Walking Horses and Racking Horses—in transport to and at shows, exhibits, auctions and sales—for signs of soring, and to pursue penalties against violators. Unfortunately, since its inception, enforcement of the act has been plagued by underfunding. As a result, the USDA has never been able to adequately enforce the act, allowing this extreme and deliberate cruelty to persist on a widespread basis.

The most effective way to eliminate soring and meet the goals of the Horse Protection Act is to have USDA officials present at more shows. Current funding levels allow USDA officials to attend only about 6 percent of more than 500 Tennessee Walking Horse shows held annually. As a result, the agency opted to institute an industry-run system of certified Horse Industry Organizations (HIO) inspection programs, which are charged with inspecting horses for signs of soring at the majority of shows. These groups license examiners known as Designated Qualified Persons (DQPs) to conduct inspections. To perform this function, they often hire industry insiders who have an obvious stake in preserving the status quo.

Statistics clearly show that when USDA inspectors are in attendance to oversee shows, the numbers of noted violations are many times higher than at shows where industry inspectors alone are conducting the inspections. And when USDA inspectors do arrive at shows, many exhibitors load up and leave to avoid being caught with sored horses. Agency officials have stated that inspectors are wary of going outside of their designated inspection area to examine horses on trailers as they leave the show grounds or in the barn areas, for fear of harassment and physical violence from exhibitors. Recently, armed security has been utilized to allow such inspections, at additional expense to this program. The fact that exhibitors feel they can intimidate government officials without penalty is a testament to the inherent shortcomings of the current system. By all measures, the overall DQP program has been a failure—the only remedy is to abolish it or greatly reduce dependence on this conflicted industry-run program of self-regulation and give USDA the resources it needs to adequately enforce the act.

Lack of a consistent presence by USDA officials at Tennessee Walking Horse shows, sales, exhibits and auctions has fostered a cavalier attitude among industry insiders, who have not stopped their abuse, but have only become more clandestine in their soring methods. The continued use of soring to gain an advantage in the show ring has tainted the Tennessee Walking Horse industry as a whole, and creates an unfair advantage for those who are willing to break the law in pursuit of victory.

Besides the indefensible suffering of the animals themselves, the continued acceptance of sored horses in the show ring prevents those with sound horses from competing fairly for prizes, breeding fees and other financial incentives, while those horse owners whose horses are sored may unwittingly suffer property damage and be duped into believing that their now abused, damaged horses are naturally superior.

Currently, the means of inspection involves a physical palpation by the inspector. New technologies, such as thermography and “sniffer” devices (gas chromatography/mass spectrometry machines), have been developed, which can help inspectors identify soring more effectively and objectively. However, USDA has been unable to purchase and put enough of this equipment in use in the field, allowing for industry insiders to continually evade detection. With increased funding, the USDA could purchase this equipment and train more inspectors to use it properly, greatly increasing its ability to enforce the Horse Protection Act (HPA).

The egregious cruelty of soring is not only a concern for animal protection and horse industry organizations, but also for veterinarians. Last year, the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) issued a white paper condemning soring, calling it “one of the most significant welfare issues faced by the equine industry.” It called for the abolition of the DQP Program, saying “the acknowledged conflicts of interest which involve many of them cannot be reasonably resolved, and these individuals should be excluded from the regulatory process.” The AAEP further stated, “The failure of the HPA to eliminate the practice of soring can be traced to the woefully inadequate annual budget of \$500,000 allocated to the USDA to enforce these rules and regulations.”

It is unacceptable that nearly 40 years after passage of the Horse Protection Act, the USDA still lacks the resources needed to end this extreme form of abuse. It is time for Congress to give our public servants charged with enforcing this Act the support and resources they want and need to fulfill their duty to protect these horses as effectively and safely as possible.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our views about this serious problem, and thank you for your consideration of our request.