June 13, 2012

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairwoman  Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition  Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition
and Forestry  and Forestry
U.S. Senate  U.S. Senate
Washington, DC  20510  Washington, DC  20510

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Roberts:

The undersigned organizations reiterate our strong support for the various federally authorized research and promotion programs, commonly known as checkoffs, in which our members participate. During consideration of the farm bill, we urge you to oppose amendments that will negatively impact these programs which are established and approved in referenda by producers who fund the programs with their own money.

With oversight provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), producers have taken it upon themselves to fund over $905 million of research, promotion and consumer education programs annually through checkoff activities at no cost to the federal government. In these austere budgetary times, our producers should be commended and certainly deserve the support of Congress.

Our members see the checkoff programs as an investment in their families’ future which they and their fellow producers have voluntarily adopted. We support these programs and look forward to working with you to ensure their continued success.

Sincerely,

American Beekeeping Federation  National Potato Council
American Farm Bureau Federation  National Watermelon Association
American Mushroom Institute  North American Blueberry Council
American Sheep Industry Association  Peanut Growers Cooperative Marketing Association
American Soybean Association  Produce Marketing Association
National Cattlemen’s Beef Association  State Agriculture and Rural Leaders Association
National Cotton Council  United Egg Producers
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  United Egg Association
National Farmers Union  United Fresh Produce Association
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Pork Producers Council  

Page 1 of 3
Council of State Governments-Eastern Regional Conference
North Carolina Peanut Growers Association
Northeast States Association for Agricultural Stewardship
United Dairymen of Arizona
Virginia Peanut Growers Association
Association of Virginia Potato and Vegetable Growers
Southern Rolling Plains Cotton Growers Association
Southern Cotton Growers
Agricultural Council of Arkansas
Kansas Cotton Association
Maine Potato Board
Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation
American Ag Movement of Tennessee
Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.
Oklahoma Cotton Council
Iowa Soybean Association
Kansas Soybean Association
Kentucky Soybean Association
Missouri Soybean Association
Mid-Atlantic Soybean Association
Nebraska Soybean Association
New York Corn & Soybean Growers Association
North Carolina Soybean Producers Association
Ohio Soybean Association
South Carolina Corn & Soybean Association
Wisconsin Soybean Association
Illinois Lamb and Wool Producers
Illinois Soybean Association
Michigan Soybean Association
North Dakota Soybean Growers Association
California Wool Growers Association
Colorado Potato Administrative Committee
Oregon Sheep Growers Association
Georgia Sheep and Wool Growers Association
Missouri Sheep Producers
Massachusetts Federation of Sheep Associations
Arkansas Soybean Association
Alabama Soybean Association
Minnesota Soybean Association
Mississippi Soybean Association
Tennessee Soybean Association
Minnesota Area II Potato Research and Promotion Council
Potato Growers of Michigan
Kansas Sorghum Producers
Texas Sorghum Producers
Colorado Wool Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association
Idaho Wool Growers Association
North Carolina Potato Association
Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association
Western Growers
Washington State Potato Commission
Idaho Growers Shippers Association
Idaho Potato Commission
Wisconsin Produce and Vegetable Growers Association
Northern Plains Potato Growers Association