

June 13, 2012

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

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition  
and Forestry  
U.S. Senate  
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  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Mushroom Institute  
American Sheep Industry Association  
American Soybean Association  
National Cattlemen's Beef Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Farmers Union  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Pork Producers Council

National Potato Council  
National Watermelon Association  
North American Blueberry Council  
Peanut Growers Cooperative Marketing  
Association  
Produce Marketing Association  
State Agriculture and Rural Leaders  
Association  
United Egg Producers  
United Egg Association  
United Fresh Produce Association

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