

The Honorable GT Thompson
Chair, House Committee on Agriculture
United States House of Representatives
400 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Scott
Ranking Member, House Committee on
Agriculture
United States House of Representatives
468 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate
731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

November 22, 2024

Dear Chair Thompson, Ranking Member Scott, Chair Stabenow, and Ranking Member Boozman:

As you strive toward our shared goal of completing a new farm bill this year, the undersigned organizations and stakeholders write to urge you to include funding for the orphan programs in any new farm bill, or should it become necessary, a farm bill extension. These critical programs support numerous stakeholders across the U.S. agricultural community and they require stable and predictable funding to continue their vital work.

As you know, orphan programs often address niche or emerging areas within agriculture which may not receive the same level of attention or resources as other larger programs. The outcomes of these varied programs are many: improving farm system efficiency, enhancing rangeland management and conservation, increasing farmers' and ranchers' resilience to extreme weather, addressing emerging diseases and invasive species, supporting young farmers and those transitioning to new crops or systems, de-risking investments in innovation, promoting biofuels production, and growing market access. These vital programs operate in all fifty states and a failure to fund them in a farm bill or farm bill extension in 2024 negatively impacts countless farmers, ranchers, and food system stakeholders.

Without guaranteed funding, the progress made in these areas is expected to stall, potentially setting back years of advancement in agricultural research, rural support, and conservation efforts. As American agriculture continues to face complex challenges, including supply chain disruptions, increasingly volatile weather conditions, new pest and disease pressures, labor shortages, and food security threats, it is imperative that these programs are not left behind as farm bill negotiations continue.

The organizations listed below appreciate the progress made on the farm bill thus far and remain committed to the primary goal of passing a farm bill this year. However, if it becomes clear that another farm bill extension is needed, we urge you to continue the precedent set by the 2023 farm bill extension and again provide funding for the orphan programs in any farm bill extension under consideration. Ensuring continuity for the orphan programs will provide much-needed certainty to

the growers, researchers, and communities that depend on them and will help maintain the momentum necessary to tackle the pressing issues facing our agricultural sector today.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued support of our nation's agricultural community.

Sincerely,

agInnovation North Central

American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges

American Bird Conservancy

American Conservation Coalition Action

American Dairy Science Association

American Institute of Biological Sciences

American Phytopathological Society

American Society of Agronomy

American Society of Plant Biologists

Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy

Bipartisan Policy Center Action

California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF)

California Citrus Mutual

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association

CEA Alliance

Center for Food Safety

Ceres

Clean Fuels Alliance America

Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST)

Crop Science Society of America

Ecosystem Services Market Consortium

EILEEN FISHER, Inc.

Environmental Defense Fund

Farm Journal Foundation

Florida Citrus Mutual

Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture

National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research

National Grange

National Organic Coalition, Inc.

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

National Wheat Improvement Committee

North American Millers' Association

Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association

Oregon State University

Oregon Tilth

Organic Farming Research Foundation

Organic Seed Alliance

Pollinator Partnership

Society for Range Management

Soil Science Society of America

Spark Climate Solutions

Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) Foundation

Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council

Texas Citrus Mutual

The American Sustainable Business Network

The Breakthrough Institute

The Climate Reality Project

The Good Food Institute

Union of Concerned Scientists

US Dairy Forage Research Center Stakeholder Committee

Virginia Association for Biological Farming

Washington State University