

## 2007 Farm Bill Research Title

### Making Investments in Agricultural Research

*The farm bill presents the best opportunity to improve current programs and establish new ones to reinvigorate our nation's agricultural research system.*

Despite the importance of agricultural research, funding for it has remained essentially flat in inflation-adjusted dollars over the past twenty years. Agricultural research, extension, and education carries out a vital mission, yet fails to attract the funding associated with such high priority items.

#### **Enhances agricultural research, extension and education**

- Restructures the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), the grant-administering agency at USDA. CSREES will become the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), with increased visibility for competitive programs and the infrastructure, or "capacity", programs (i.e. the formula funds that go to the land-grant system to support research, extension, and education)
- Establishes a direct line between the Director of NIFA – who will be appointed by the President – and the Secretary of Agriculture, but will be coordinated by the Undersecretary for Research, Education, and Economics
- Increases competitive grant opportunities for agricultural research
- Increases the visibility of the research, extension and education components administered by USDA through state colleges and the land-grant university system
- Formalizes coordination between USDA's in-house research agency, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and the newly-created NIFA to enable more efficient use of resources
- Increases access to formula funds by minority-serving agricultural colleges and universities

#### **Provides funding for priorities**

- Provides \$80 million for research on specialty crops, including mechanization, plant breeding, genetics, genomics, invasive species, and food safety
- Provides \$80 million for organic agriculture research and extension, to enhance the ability of organic producers and processors to grow and market organic food, feed and fiber

*The farm bill authorizes agricultural research, extension and education programs that are the foundation for the success of the U.S. agricultural sector and farming and rural communities, and for the nutritional well-being of all consumers of U.S. food products.*

- This research title will be the first step in building a robust research, extension and education system that is responsive to stakeholders, ensures that funding goes to areas of greatest need, and emphasizes the best science to keep our producers competitive, our rural communities productive, and our consumers healthy.
- Our nation's investments in agricultural research, extension, and education have not kept up with the challenges we face in agriculture, and during this farm bill year, various proposals to breathe new life into the research system at USDA have been considered and incorporated into the research title.