

## **Senator Dick Durbin introduces bill to restore American leadership on agricultural R&D**

WASHINGTON—On September 10, 2019, Senator and Democratic Whip Dick Durbin introduced the *America Grows Act*, a bill to increase funding for agricultural R&D to ensure that the U.S. continues to be the preeminent leader in public agricultural science. The *America Grows Act* authorizes a five percent annual increase in appropriations for the next five years to four USDA research agencies, including the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Economic Research Service (ERS), National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). ARS and NIFA address major pest and disease issues that can have ramifications for the long-term productivity of American agriculture and are able to focus on basic research issues that affect the entire industry.

“Compared to funding growth for public health over the last twenty years, appropriations for agricultural research have been relatively flat. This bill injects newfound energy into America’s capabilities as a leading agriculture science powerhouse,” said Tricia Beal, CEO of Farm Journal Foundation. “For far too long, countries like Brazil and China have been clipping at our heels. Since 2013, China’s spending on public agricultural R&D has been nearly double that of the U.S. It’s time to retake our place as the number one investor in public agricultural research.”

David Hong, Director of Government Affairs for Farm Journal Foundation said, “We hope to see wide bipartisan and bicameral support for this bill – it’s a huge win for American farmers and ranchers and doubles down on our country’s unmatched capabilities in agricultural science and technology. Farm Journal Foundation is thrilled to see this legislation introduced and will work vigorously to help move it along.”

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Farm Journal Foundation’s mission is to sustain agriculture’s ability to meet the vital needs of a growing population through education and advocacy. We are an independent, non-partisan organization focused on supporting American leadership in agricultural productivity and technology – important issues for America’s farmers and our economy, and vital for global food security. We believe that every person in the United States and around the world should have access to affordable, wholesome food.

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