



American Society of Agronomy • Crop Science Society of America • Soil Science Society of America

5585 Guilford Road, Madison WI 53711-5801 • Tel. 608-273-8080 • Fax 608-273-2021
www.agronomy.org • www.crops.org • www.soils.org

March 2020

The Honorable José Serrano
Chair, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: FY2021 Appropriations—Support for the National Science Foundation

Dear Chairman Serrano and Ranking Member Aderholt:

The American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) represent more than 8,000 scientists and students, 13,500 Certified Crop Advisers (CCA), and over 700 Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS). We are the largest coalition of scientists and professionals dedicated to the agronomic, crop and soil science disciplines in the United States.

In the coming decades, our agricultural system must sustainably produce food and fuel for a rapidly growing global population. The Nation's economic prosperity and security depend on our dedication to developing innovative, science-based solutions to address the challenges facing our food system. We appreciate the appropriations that that National Science Foundation (NSF) received in fiscal year (FY) 2020. Yet, as our nation's farmers face increasing extreme weather and market uncertainty, NSF's programs become even more important providers of the science they need to stay in business. NSF's Big Ideas initiatives, its core programs that sustain research infrastructure, and its unparalleled support for STEM students and the future STEM workforce require increased investment.

We support **\$9 billion for the National Science Foundation** for the fiscal year 2021. This funding level will put the premier government-funding agency for scientific research on track to address farmers' challenges by increasing the broad knowledge base supported by a wide range of scientific disciplines, such as biology, plant science, chemistry and soil science.

Within NSF we are very supportive of **Signals in the Soil**. As Franklin D. Roosevelt stated in 1935, "A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself," and yet our soils are eroding at an alarming rate. This interdisciplinary program is a collaboration among four NSF Directorates, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and five international science organizations to encourage convergent research and high-impact projects that advance a more comprehensive understand of soil and the systems soils support.

We urge you to include report language highlighting the importance of this effort and the need to better understand the interconnectedness of agricultural challenges.

Science is essential. A strong commitment to federally funded scientific research will boost the Nation's capacity for innovation, agricultural productivity and economic prosperity.

Thank you for your consideration. For additional information or to learn more about the ASA, CSSA and SSSA, please contact Karl Anderson, Director of Government Relations, at kanderson@sciencesocieties.org or 202-408-5382.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'N' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Nicholas J. Goeser, CEO

Cc:

Members of the House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies