

## FY99 Appropriations Bill

What follows is the text of the Ag Appropriations bill sent to the President October 6, 1998. Go to page 6 for Fusarium Head Blight.

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Committee Report - House Rpt. 105-588 - AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 1999

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Associated Bill --H.R.4101--*AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 1999*

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### AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

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1998 appropriation	\$744,382,000
1999 budget estimate	776,828,000
Provided in the bill	755,816,000
Comparison:	
1998 appropriation	+11,434,000
1999 budget estimate	-21,012,000
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The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) was established by the Secretary of Agriculture on November 2, 1953, under the authority of the Reorganization Act of 1949 (5 U.S.C. 133z-15), Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1953, and other authorities. Pursuant to the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6912), ARS includes functions previously performed by the Human Nutrition Information Service and the National Agricultural Library. ARS conducts basic and applied research in the fields of animal sciences, plant sciences, entomology, soil and water conservation, agricultural engineering, utilization and development, human nutrition and consumer use, marketing, development of integrated farming systems, and development of methods to eradicate narcotic-producing plants.

ARS also directs research beneficial to the United States which can be advantageously conducted in foreign countries through agreements with foreign research institutions and universities, using foreign currencies for such purposes. This program is carried out under the authority of sections 104(b) (1) and (3) of Public Law 480, and the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, as amended.

## COMMITTEE PROVISIONS

*Salaries and expenses.*--For salaries and expenses of the Agricultural Research Service, the Committee provides an appropriation of \$755,816,000, an increase of \$11,434,000 above the amount available for fiscal year 1998 and a decrease of \$21,012,000 below the budget request.

*Alternative fish feed, Aberdeen, ID-* Idaho is a national leader in the aquaculture industry producing more than 70 percent of the nation's commercially grown rainbow trout. The Committee provides an increase of \$250,000 to initiate an alternative grain-based fish feed project at the ARS facility in Aberdeen, ID. Idaho is in a unique position to coordinate needed research to develop solutions to challenges facing the aquaculture industry.

*Areawide pest management-* The Committee provides an increase of \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 1999 as requested in the budget for research to develop compounds to replace hazardous chemicals and to expand IPM and areawide pest management practices. New technologies are critical to assist the Department in implementing its target of instituting IPM practices on 75 percent of the nation's cropland and to meet requirements resulting from the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). No funds are appropriated in this bill to fund an Office of Pest Management as proposed in the fiscal year 1999 budget.

*Biotechnology Research and Development Corporation.*--The Committee expects the agency to continue its work on the Corporation's research at the same levels as fiscal year 1998, subject to administrative streamlining reductions concurred in by the Committee.

*Biological control of western weeds-* Over 30 million acres in western states are currently infested with noxious weeds which continue to spread at an alarming rate. Yellow Starthistle, Medusa Head and other weeds stifle the ability of millions of acres to produce crops, forage for livestock and wildlife, and habitat for wildlife. These weeds are also invading our most environmentally sensitive parks and natural resource acres in the west. The Committee provides an increase of \$300,000 to the Western Regional Research Center for biological control resources on noxious weeds.

*Citrus tresteza virus research-* The Committee recognizes the importance of Citrus Tresteza Virus (CTV) research. The fiscal year 1998 appropriations bill provided an increase of \$750,000 for cooperative CTV research. However, the Committee believes the most effective use of these funds is through the Special Research Grants account administered by CSREES. Funding in the amount of \$500,000 is transferred to that account in fiscal year 1999 for CTV research. The balance is to remain in support of the in-house Orlando-Ft. Pierce citrus research program.

*Closures of facilities-* The Committee has reviewed and again disagrees with the President's recommendation to close research laboratories at Prosser, WA; Mandan, ND; Orono, ME; and Brawley, CA. The Committee believes that these locations are essential components of the Department's agricultural research program.

*Continuing programs-* The Committee has reviewed the 92 projects recommended for elimination in FY 1999, some of which were retained by the Committee last year. The Committee recognizes the importance of these ongoing research projects in addressing increasing problems faced by the Nation's food and fiber producers. In this regard, the Committee directs the Agricultural Research Service to continue to fund the following areas of research in fiscal year 1999: organics management research; shallow groundwater management systems for arid irrigated areas; rice research; floriculture; genetic characterization of soybean germplasm; development of soybean germplasm and production systems for high yield and drought prone environments; germplasm evaluation and genetic improvement of oats and wild rice; improving sugarcane productivity by conventional and molecular approaches to genetic development; disease and insect control mechanisms for the enhancement of sugar germplasm resistance; development and use of molecular techniques in oat enhancement; soybean diseases; genetically enhanced wheat for quality, productivity, and resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses; control of foliar diseases and smuts of wheat; Northwest nursery crops research; biological control of yellow starthistle and other non-indigenous plant pests in the Western U.S.; honeybee research; in-vitro creation and commercialization of high solids tomatoes and high solids, low sugar potatoes; biology and control of virus diseases of sorghum; grain legume research; biochemical and molecular regulation of preharvest sprouting and grain dormancy in wheat; germplasm enhancement and cultivar development of blackberry, strawberry, blueberry, and raspberry; sensors and systems for site-specific crop management to improve environmental quality; small grains research; sugarcane biotechnology research; plant genetics equipment; developing integrated weed management systems for efficient and sustainable sugarcane production; evaluation of temperate legumes and warm-season grass mixtures in sustainable production systems; enhancement of strawberry, blueberry, and other small fruit crops through molecular approaches and breeding; reduced herbicide inputs for effective weed management systems to improve water quality; hops research; Formosan termite; management of termites as urban pests in the American Pacific; lyme disease (tick management project); reproductive efficiency of beef cattle; Poultry Enteritis Mortality Syndrome; ecologically-based technologies for controlling ixodes scapularis and reducing lyme disease; fish disease research; poisonous plant research; postharvest handling and mechanization to minimize damage to fruits; enhanced use of plant proteins: identifying, isolating, and relating structures to properties; improving quality of fresh and fresh-cut produce by preventing deterioration in cold storage; flavor optimization of major food crops through control of metabolic processes; exploratory thermal chemical conversions of starch to enhance derivatization; genetic engineering of anaerobic bacteria for improved rumen function; novel biopolymers based on agricultural sources; new bacterial polysaccharides for food and

industry; modification of vegetable oils as raw materials for industrial uses; comparative textural analysis of fresh and fresh-cut fruits and vegetables; factors responsible for control of the textural properties of processed sweet potato products; improved peanut quality and bioactive nutrient composition with genetic resources; food fermentation research; cotton ginning; and crop/animal systems to improve nutrient management and sustainability of dairy farms.

*Emerging infectious animal and plant diseases.*--The Committee is keenly aware of the potential threats posed to agriculture and animal and human health from emerging plant and animal diseases. The Committee provides an increase of \$1,500,000 to combat new and emerging noxious weeds, biological control of weedy plants that severely threaten biodiversity and ecosystem functions, and emerging plant diseases that include potato blight, sorghum ergot, etc. This research is directed to ARS research centers at: Beltsville, MD; Frederick, MD; College Station, TX; Weslaco, TX; Albany, CA; and Montpellier, FR.

In addition, the Committee provides an increase of \$250,000 for rangeland research at the ARS Reno, NV research station to emphasize the reestablishment of desirable native grass and forage species.

The Committee is particularly sensitive to the need to accelerate research to protect U.S. livestock and human health against emerging infectious and zoonotic diseases such as tuberculosis, brucellosis, toxoplasmosis, trichinosis, salmonella, etc. Additional funding in the amount of \$3,400,000 is provided to combat these diseases as well as develop critical diagnostic tests and basic information for Scrapie, BSE, Johne's disease, porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome, avian influenza, and various other disease agents of livestock. These funds are to expand the ongoing research carried out at existing ARS laboratories located at: Pullman, WA; Laramie, WY; Athens, GA; Beltsville, MD; and the National Animal Disease Center, Ames, IA.

*Endophyte research.*--There are over 35 million acres of endophyte infected tall fescue pastures in the U.S. responsible for annual losses to the beef cattle industry. The Committee provides an increase of \$200,000 for expanded cooperative research with the University of Arkansas, University of Missouri, and Oregon State University.

*Everglades preservation.*--The Committee recognizes the importance of the research being carried out to restore the South Florida ecosystem and provides an increase of \$750,000 as requested in the President's budget. These funds are to be implemented at the Canal Point, Miami and Ft. Lauderdale laboratories to accelerate efforts to resolve the ecological, hydrological, and agricultural constraints on sustainable production in South Florida.

*Fish diseases research.* The Committee provides an increase of \$350,000 in fiscal year 1999 for expanded agriculture research at the ARS Auburn, AL research laboratory focusing on

development of successful disease prevention methods and vaccines to thwart warm water fish diseases.

*Floriculture and nursery crop research.*--The Committee notes that floriculture and nursery crops represent more than 10 percent of the total U.S. farm crop cash receipts. The Committee provides an increase of \$1,000,000 to implement this research. Of the additional funding, \$200,000 is provided for research at Ohio State University to support the Ornamental Plant Germplasm Center and \$200,000 is directed to the floral and nursery plants research program at the U.S. National Arboretum. A portion of this funding should be allocated to university partners, including California University and Cornell University, through cooperative agreements.

*Food safety.* The Committee is currently providing significant funding in support of the department's food safety programs. In fiscal year 1998 the Congress appropriated a total of \$66,262,000 to USDA for the President's food safety initiative. ARS funding for food safety research is currently \$54,849,000, which is an increase of \$4,000,000 over the fiscal year 1997 level. The Committee understands the importance of this research and the need to assure the American people that they have a safe and healthy food supply. Within the limited budget allocations available for fiscal year 1999, the Committee provides an additional \$3,750,000 for pre- and post-harvest food safety research. The Committee directs the Agency to implement the additional pre-harvest resources to those areas emphasized in the budget at Clay Center, NE; Ames, IA; Athens, GA; Beltsville, MD; College Station, TX; and West Lafayette, IN totaling \$1,500,000. The Committee also includes \$1,000,000 for expanded research to maintain the safety and quality of fresh fruits and vegetables as requested in the President's budget. The Committee provides an additional \$1,250,000 for the most essential post-harvest food safety research as identified in the fiscal year 1999 request.

The fiscal year 1998 Appropriations Act provided \$420,000 for a food safety study to be conducted by the National Academy of Sciences. These funds are deleted in the fiscal year 1999 appropriations bill.

*Ft. Pierce, FL.*--The Committee recognizes the important research currently being conducted at the Orlando, FL citrus research laboratory and notes its consolidation in the new replacement laboratory at Ft. Pierce in fiscal year 1999. The new laboratory will carry out a more diverse horticultural sciences program. The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 to support additional research scientists under this expanded program.

*Formosan Termite Control.* The Committee has provided \$5,000,000, the same amount as in fiscal year 1998, for the ongoing formosan termite control and research program at the Southern Regional Research Center.

***Fusarium head blight.***--Generally known as `scab', **Fusarium Head Blight poses an extremely serious threat to all classes of wheat and barley in the U.S. The effects of scab are mostly manifested as reduced farm yield, lowered test weights, and reduced grain quality. The problem is amplified because scab infected grain is usually contaminated with vomitoxin, a toxic metabolite produced when the fungal pathogen invades the developing grain kernel. The Committee is providing an increase of \$3,000,000 to support the ongoing cooperative effort with the 12 land-grant universities to control this serious threat to the wheat and barley industries.**

*Genetic resources.*--The Committee concurs that there is need to invest in new biotechnological approaches of genomics which promise to unlock secrets controlling agriculturally important traits of plant and animal germplasm. The Committee provides an increase of \$2,100,000 over the fiscal year 1998 level to support funding of the department's Food Genome Initiative. The Committee is supportive of this initiative and directs the Department to provide status reports detailing program and funding efforts in this research.

*Grape rootstock.*--Grapes are now the highest value fruit crop in the nation and sixth largest crop overall. Most of the crop is processed to raisins, grape juice, and wine, thereby adding enormous value to the crop. The Committee provides an increase of \$300,000 for research at Geneva, NY for vitally needed research on rootstock development.

*Honey bee.*--Varroa mites and trachea mites are having devastating effects on wild honeybee populations. Without proper control of these pests U.S. agriculture will suffer dramatic losses to production. Accordingly, the Committee provides \$300,000 at the ARS lab in Baton Rouge, LA for the development of long term, genetics-based solutions.

*Human nutrition research.*--The Committee recognizes the ongoing efforts of the ARS Human Nutrition Centers and provides an additional \$2,500,000 for fiscal year 1999. These resources will further research investigations on dietary intake, and reduced risk of chronic diseases. The increase is directed to the Centers located at Beltsville, MD; Boston, MA; Houston, TX; San Francisco, CA; Little Rock, AR; and Grand Forks, ND.

*Lettuce geneticist/breeder, Salinas, CA.*--The Committee provides an increase of \$250,000 for a new geneticist plant breeder at the ARS research station at Salinas, CA. This increase will strengthen the current research effort on development of new lettuce varieties and improved product quality.

*Lyme disease.*--The Committee provides an increase of \$200,000 for continued support of the 5 year Northeast Area-Wide Tick Control Project to achieve a dramatic reduction of Lyme Ticks thereby reducing Lyme disease risks to humans.

*Meadowfoam research-* The Committee supports the important utilization research conducted at the Peoria, IL Center and the work it is doing on meadowfoam. An increase of

\$200,000 over the fiscal year 1998 level is provided to expand research on this important new crop at NCAUR.

*Methyl Bromide-* The Committee is aware of the important research carried out by ARS to develop alternatives to methyl bromide which is effectively utilized as a soil farming agent and pest control for stored commodities. The Committee provides \$14,571,000 for methyl bromide research, the same as the fiscal year 1998 funding level.

*National Agricultural Library-* The Committee provides an increase of \$300,000 for the purchase of periodicals, improved electronic retrieval capacity, enhanced preservation effort, and to expand agriculture network information centers.

*Peanut research-* The Committee notes that peanuts represent an essential agricultural industry to the rural Southeast. Peanuts are a major commodity in the U.S. and International markets. The peanut industry is concerned about the need for new and effective technologies to use in place of existing marketing methodologies for peanuts from the producer to the consumer. The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 in fiscal year 1999 to support this research program to be carried out at ARS research laboratories in Dawson, GA and Raleigh, NC.

*Pfiesteria research-* The Committee recognizes the need for additional research on the relationship between agricultural practices and Pfiesteria in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. While it has not been clearly established that agricultural nutrient sources are responsible for the recent outbreaks of Pfiesteria, there is a scientific consensus that agricultural-based nutrients can be a contributing factor. In this regard, the Committee provides \$1,500,000 over the fiscal year 1998 level to investigate this matter and to make periodic reports to the Committee on the research findings.

*Phytoestrogens research-* The Committee has provided \$450,000, the same amount as in fiscal year 1998, for the Southern Regional Research Center for a broad based research program to investigate the mechanisms of production and action of phytoestrogens.

*Range research-* The Committee is cognizant of the important work carried out at the ARS rangeland research station at Burns, OR. Additional staffing is required to meet research needs in support of action agencies, farmers and ranchers in the Great Basin rangeland area--primarily Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Nevada. The Committee provides an increase of \$250,000 for this research in fiscal year 1999.

*Rice research-* The Committee continues to emphasize the need for rice research and provides an increase of \$200,000 to enhance rice quality research at the ARS Rice Research Laboratory, Beaumont, TX and \$250,000 for rice germplasm and genetics research at the Davis, CA laboratory.

*Root diseases in wheat and barley.*--An increase of \$250,000 is provided to the ARS Root Disease and Biological Control Laboratory, Pullman, WA for investigation of root diseases. Major research breakthroughs are needed in root disease management to achieve high yields possible under conservation tillage systems.

*Small fruits research.*--The Committee provides an increase of \$250,000 to the Northwest Center for Small Fruits Research, Corvallis, OR. The Center conducts and coordinates research efforts unique to small fruit industries in the Pacific Northwest, including breeding, insect, disease management, product development, and market analyses.

*Soil tilth research.*--Additional research staffing to carry out effective soil and water investigations at the ARS National Soil Tilth Laboratory, Ames, IA is prudent. The Committee provides an addition of \$500,000 over the fiscal year 1998 level to support this research.

*Subtropical Animal Research Station.*--The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 above the fiscal year 1998 funding level for essential staffing of subtropical animal production and germplasm research at the STARS research station at Brooksville, FL.

*Subtropical Horticulture Research Station, Miami, FL.*--The Committee provides an increase of \$300,000 for additional staffing at the ARS Miami research station. Expansion of research efforts is needed to address emerging pest problems from the Caribbean basin areas; development of tropical tree fruit as a high value crop; and support the restoration of the Everglades ecosystem.

*Sugarbeet research.*--The Committee is aware of the need for additional funding to adequately support the ARS sugarbeet research program at Ft. Collins, CO. An increase of \$200,000 is provided to strengthen sugarbeet research at the ARS laboratory in fiscal year 1999.

*Survey of food intakes of infants and children.*--The Committee provided \$5,000,000 in fiscal year 1998 to respond to the requirements of the Food Quality and Protection Act. The survey will enable the Secretary to provide the Environmental Protection Agency with essential information on food consumption patterns of infants and children. This data will also be useful to other agencies that address similar or related issues. These funds will not be required in fiscal year 1999 and are deleted from the fiscal year 1999 bill.

*U.S. Plant Stress and Water Conservation Laboratory.*--The Committee provides an increase of \$500,000 in fiscal year 1999 for additional staffing to perform research on molecular biology to improve agronomic crop tolerance to water and other environmental stress factors in the High Plains region.



*Vegetable research.*--ARS carries out important research on cucumbers, carrots, onions, cabbage, garlic and other vegetables essential to the American diet. The Committee provides an increase of \$200,000 to strengthen this research at the Vegetable Harvesting Laboratory, East Lansing, MI; Vegetable Crops Research Laboratory, Madison, WI; U.S. Vegetable Laboratory, Charleston, SC; and the Food Fermentation Laboratory, Raleigh, NC.

*Wild rice research.*--The Committee provides an increase of \$100,000 in fiscal year 1999 to strengthen program support for wild rice research including germplasm preservation, seed storage, disease resistance, and plant productivity. This program is directed from the ARS St. Paul, MN research laboratory.