

April 30, 2025

The Honorable John Hoeven
Chair, Subcommittee on Agriculture
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Agriculture
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Andy Harris
Chair, Subcommittee on Agriculture
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Agriculture
House Committee on Appropriations

Chairman Hoeven, Chairman Harris, Ranking Member Shaheen, and Ranking Member Bishop:

We write to express our unified support for federal investment in aflatoxin and vomitoxin mitigation research. We appreciate the funds appropriated for aflatoxin research in FY23 and FY24 and ask the committees to increase the funding level for aflatoxin research to \$2.5 million in FY26, as well as award a total of \$2.5 million toward vomitoxin research through USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS).

Aflatoxins and vomitoxins are two of the most prevalent mycotoxins that affect corn production. Mycotoxins are deadly toxins produced by molds that can grow in a variety of crops and cost U.S. agriculture approximately \$1 billion each year.¹ **Due to the corn industry's tremendous role in the U.S. economy, protecting American corn from mycotoxins should be a paramount concern.**

Recognizing the significant threat of aflatoxin, corn growers in Southern states banded together to form the National Corn Growers Association's (NCGA) Aflatoxin Mitigation Center of Excellence (AMCOE), and since 2012, corn growers have invested more than \$5 million in private funds to research through AMCOE. The investment of these private funds, in addition to the \$1.5 million collected from federal appropriation thus far, has resulted in a strong network of university cooperators that have consolidated, extended, and unified research efforts for aflatoxin mitigation.

Building on AMCOE's success, NCGA, its state partners, and industry stakeholders are joining efforts to add vomitoxin research to the AMCOE model to expand its reach and maximize the center's impact. As NCGA and corn grower leaders enhance the center to

¹ Mycotoxin Prevention and Applied Microbiology Research. USDA-ARS, March 1, 2024.
<https://www.ars.usda.gov/midwest-area/peoria-il/national-center-for-agricultural-utilization-research/mycotoxin-prevention-and-applied-microbiology-research/docs/what-are-mycotoxins/>.

expand its impact on aflatoxin and vomitoxin research, federal appropriations would greatly complement this ever-growing, extremely critical work and research.

We respectfully seek your support for these requests in the FY26 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. This research is well-aligned with ARS’s mission to deliver “scientific solutions to national and global agricultural challenges,” and **directly advances the success of American farmers and their businesses.** For instance, AMCOE has invested in research that has made strides in areas such as novel breeding and biocontrol, gene silencing, biological control, identification of gene-based markers, and boosting resistance through metabolites, to name a few. This AMCOE-supported research aids farmers in quick mitigation, reducing the likelihood of a failed crop and protecting profitability.

We are proud of the outcomes this public-private partnership has produced and are confident that this model will lead to meaningful mycotoxin mitigation and detection techniques for farmers. If our organizations can assist or provide any additional information on these requests, please don’t hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

National Corn Growers Association
Texas Corn Producers Association
Georgia Corn Growers Association
Ohio Corn and Wheat Association
Indiana Corn Growers Association
Michigan Corn Growers Association
American Seed Trade Association
Jeff Heikes, P.E., POET Research
Pet Food Institute
Beck's Hybrids
North American Millers' Association
Growth Energy
Texas A&M AgriLife Research
Ohio Sheep Improvement Association
Ohio Pork Council
Ohio AgriBusiness Association
Ohio Dairy Producers Association
Ohio Ethanol Producers Association
Ohio Cattlemen's Association
Ohio Farm Bureau