





United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

DEC 13 2012

Research,  
Education, and  
Economics

National Institute  
of Food and  
Agriculture

1400 Independence  
Avenue SW  
Washington, DC  
20250

Dr. David L. Meeker  
President  
United States Animal Health Association  
4221 Mitchell Ave.  
Saint Joseph, Missouri 64507

Dear Dr. Meeker:

Thank you for your letter of November 19, 2012, and the continued support of the United States Animal Health Association for agricultural research and extension. We at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) share your concern about the potentially devastating effects of mycobacterial diseases on U.S. livestock production. While the NIFA Animal Health portfolio has many competing priorities for animal and zoonotic diseases, we recognize that support for mycobacterial diseases must remain as a component of our competitive and non-competitive funding programs.

NIFA has a substantial history of support for research on Johne's and the tuberculosis complex of diseases. As you know, in fiscal year (FY) 2004, NIFA awarded \$4.4 million over three years in support of the Johne's Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP). Sixteen research institutions participated, and numerous outcomes and impacts have been documented in relation to this CAP. As a consequence of the success of the Johne's CAP, the award was competitively renewed in FY 2008 for an additional \$4.8 million over four years.

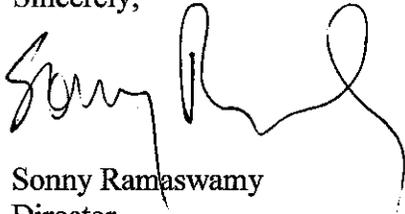
In addition, we have collaborated with the National Institutes of Health on a funding opportunity entitled "Dual Purpose with Dual Benefit: Research in Biomedicine and Agriculture Using Agriculturally Important Domestic Species," and provided NIFA funding in support of this program. This partnership is now in its third year and continues to welcome zoonotic diseases, including mycobacterial pathogens. In FY 2011, an award that studies mycobacterial diseases was made to the University of Massachusetts (with a subcontract to the USDA-Agricultural Research Service) for \$1.6 million over 5 years.

The Hatch-supported multistate research committee NE-1201, "Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals" was recently approved, and held its first meeting in Chicago this month. Additionally, the Animal Health and Disease component of the FY 2013 Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Foundational Request For Application (RFA) welcomes all relevant animal diseases, including mycobacterial pathogens.

Dr. David L. Meeker  
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Thank you again for contacting me. I assure you that as priorities for future NIFA competitive solicitations are developed that involve animal health, mycobacterial diseases will be given strong consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sonny Ramaswamy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Sonny Ramaswamy  
Director