

July 7, 2021

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Via e-mail: [agsec@usda.gov](mailto:agsec@usda.gov)

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I am writing on behalf of Family Agriculture Resource Management Services (F.A.R.M.S.), a national nonprofit dedicated to reversing small farmland loss to ensure generational wealth and reducing hunger in rural low-income communities.

Every year, 30,000 acres of Black landownership is lost, primarily because of nonpayment of property tax, eminent domain, unprofitable business models, discrimination, generational outmigration, and lack of estate planning. Compounding farmers' financial burden are federally mandated assessment fees that totaled over \$885 million in 2016 alone and that are paid by agricultural producers, handlers, processors, importers, and others to the agricultural checkoff programs overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service.

We have learned from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) that many of these agricultural checkoff programs use a portion of these fees to fund animal experiments that are cruel, unscientific, and not required by law. We were shocked to learn that in experiments funded by these checkoffs and published between 2015 and 2019, more than 2,600 animals were doused, poisoned, force-fed, starved, irradiated, bled, suffocated, beheaded, and dissected.

Many farmers in today's economy are struggling. They don't need barbaric tests on animals to sell their agricultural commodities. Rather, they need economic relief from inflated assessment fees that are wasted on worthless experiments on animals.

We are firmly against taxing farmers to fund needless and senseless animal tests. **We are joining PETA in respectfully urging you to prohibit the agricultural checkoff programs from using assessment fees to fund animal experiments.** You can contact me via PETA's Dr. Frances Cheng at [FrancesC@peta.org](mailto:FrancesC@peta.org). Please respond by August 4, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jillian Hishaw, Esq. LL.M. (Agricultural Law)  
F.A.R.M.S. Founding Director  
572 John Ross Pkwy., #107  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

July 7, 2021

Bart Minor  
President and CEO  
Mushroom Council

Via e-mail: [Bart@mushroomcouncil.org](mailto:Bart@mushroomcouncil.org); [info@mushroomcouncil.com](mailto:info@mushroomcouncil.com);  
[sonya@firstgenfarms.com](mailto:sonya@firstgenfarms.com)

Dear Mr. Minor:

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I am writing on behalf of Family Agriculture Resource Management Services (F.A.R.M.S.), a national nonprofit dedicated to reversing small farmland loss to ensure generational wealth and reducing hunger in rural low-income communities.

Every year, 30,000 acres of Black landownership is lost, primarily because of nonpayment of property tax, eminent domain, unprofitable business models, discrimination, generational out-migration, and lack of estate planning. Compounding farmers' financial burden are federally mandated assessment fees that totaled over \$885 million in 2016 alone and that are paid by agricultural producers, handlers, processors, importers, and others to the agricultural checkoff programs overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service.

We have learned from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) that many of these agricultural checkoff programs use a portion of these fees to fund animal experiments that are cruel, unscientific, and not required by law. We were shocked to learn that in experiments funded by these checkoffs and published between 2015 and 2019, more than 2,600 animals were doused, poisoned, force-fed, starved, irradiated, bled, suffocated, beheaded, and dissected.

Many farmers in today's economy are struggling. They don't need barbaric tests on animals to sell their agricultural commodities. Rather, they need economic relief from inflated assessment fees that are wasted on worthless experiments on animals.

We are firmly against taxing farmers to fund needless and senseless animal tests. **We are joining PETA in respectfully urging you to prohibit the Mushroom Council from using assessment fees to fund animal experiments.** You can contact me via PETA's Dr. Frances Cheng at [FrancesC@peta.org](mailto:FrancesC@peta.org). Please respond by August 4, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jillian Hishaw, Esq. LL.M. (Agricultural Law)  
F.A.R.M.S. Founding Director  
572 John Ross Pkwy., #107  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

July 7, 2021

Manuel Michel  
Executive Director  
National Mango Board

Via e-mail: [mmichel@mango.org](mailto:mmichel@mango.org); [info@mango.org](mailto:info@mango.org); [Clark@amazonprod.com](mailto:Clark@amazonprod.com)

Dear Mr. Michel:

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I am writing on behalf of Family Agriculture Resource Management Services (F.A.R.M.S.), a national nonprofit dedicated to reversing small farmland loss to ensure generational wealth and reducing hunger in rural low-income communities.

Every year, 30,000 acres of Black landownership is lost, primarily because of nonpayment of property tax, eminent domain, unprofitable business models, discrimination, generational out-migration, and lack of estate planning. Compounding farmers' financial burden are federally mandated assessment fees that totaled over \$885 million in 2016 alone and that are paid by agricultural producers, handlers, processors, importers, and others to the agricultural checkoff programs overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service.

We have learned from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) that many of these agricultural checkoff programs use a portion of these fees to fund animal experiments that are cruel, unscientific, and not required by law. We were shocked to learn that in experiments funded by these checkoffs and published between 2015 and 2019, more than 2,600 animals were doused, poisoned, force-fed, starved, irradiated, bled, suffocated, beheaded, and dissected.

Many farmers in today's economy are struggling. They don't need barbaric tests on animals to sell their agricultural commodities. Rather, they need economic relief from inflated assessment fees that are wasted on worthless experiments on animals.

We are firmly against taxing farmers to fund needless and senseless animal tests. **We are joining PETA in respectfully urging you to prohibit the National Mango Board from using assessment fees to fund animal experiments.** You can contact me via PETA's Dr. Frances Cheng at [FrancesC@peta.org](mailto:FrancesC@peta.org). Please respond by August 4, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jillian Hishaw, Esq. LL.M. (Agricultural Law)  
F.A.R.M.S. Founding Director  
572 John Ross Pkwy., #107  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

July 7, 2021

Mark Arney  
Executive Director/CEO  
National Watermelon Promotion Board

Via e-mail: [MArney@watermelon.org](mailto:MArney@watermelon.org); [info@watermelon.org](mailto:info@watermelon.org); [jordan@legerandson.com](mailto:jordan@legerandson.com)

Dear Mr. Arney:

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I am writing on behalf of Family Agriculture Resource Management Services (F.A.R.M.S.), a national nonprofit dedicated to reversing small farmland loss to ensure generational wealth and reducing hunger in rural low-income communities.

Every year, 30,000 acres of Black landownership is lost, primarily because of nonpayment of property tax, eminent domain, unprofitable business models, discrimination, generational out-migration, and lack of estate planning. Compounding farmers' financial burden are federally mandated assessment fees that totaled over \$885 million in 2016 alone and that are paid by agricultural producers, handlers, processors, importers, and others to the agricultural checkoff programs overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service.

We have learned from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) that many of these agricultural checkoff programs use a portion of these fees to fund animal experiments that are cruel, unscientific, and not required by law. We were shocked to learn that in experiments funded by these checkoffs and published between 2015 and 2019, more than 2,600 animals were doused, poisoned, force-fed, starved, irradiated, bled, suffocated, beheaded, and dissected.

Many farmers in today's economy are struggling. They don't need barbaric tests on animals to sell their agricultural commodities. Rather, they need economic relief from inflated assessment fees that are wasted on worthless experiments on animals.

We are firmly against taxing farmers to fund needless and senseless animal tests. **We are joining PETA in respectfully urging you to prohibit the National Watermelon Promotion Board from using assessment fees to fund animal experiments.** You can contact me via PETA's Dr. Frances Cheng at [FrancesC@peta.org](mailto:FrancesC@peta.org). Please respond by August 4, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jillian Hishaw, Esq. LL.M. (Agricultural Law)  
F.A.R.M.S. Founding Director  
572 John Ross Pkwy., #107  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

July 7, 2021

Polly Ruhland  
CEO  
United Soybean Board

Via e-mail: [PRuhland@unitedsoybean.org](mailto:PRuhland@unitedsoybean.org); [info@unitedsoybean.org](mailto:info@unitedsoybean.org);  
[dfarney@unitedsoybean.org](mailto:dfarney@unitedsoybean.org)

Dear Ms. Ruhland:

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I am writing on behalf of Family Agriculture Resource Management Services (F.A.R.M.S.), a national nonprofit dedicated to reversing small farmland loss to ensure generational wealth and reducing hunger in rural low-income communities.

Every year, 30,000 acres of Black landownership is lost, primarily because of nonpayment of property tax, eminent domain, unprofitable business models, discrimination, generational out-migration, and lack of estate planning. Compounding farmers' financial burden are federally mandated assessment fees that totaled over \$885 million in 2016 alone and that are paid by agricultural producers, handlers, processors, importers, and others to the agricultural checkoff programs overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service.

We have learned from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) that many of these agricultural checkoff programs use a portion of these fees to fund animal experiments that are cruel, unscientific, and not required by law. We were shocked to learn that in experiments funded by these checkoffs and published between 2015 and 2019, more than 2,600 animals were doused, poisoned, force-fed, starved, irradiated, bled, suffocated, beheaded, and dissected.

Many farmers in today's economy are struggling. They don't need barbaric tests on animals to sell their agricultural commodities. Rather, they need economic relief from inflated assessment fees that are wasted on worthless experiments on animals.

We are firmly against taxing farmers to fund needless and senseless animal tests. **We are joining PETA in respectfully urging you to prohibit the United Soybean Board from using assessment fees to fund animal experiments.** You can contact me via PETA's Dr. Frances Cheng at [FrancesC@peta.org](mailto:FrancesC@peta.org). Please respond by August 4, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jillian Hishaw, Esq. LL.M. (Agricultural Law)  
F.A.R.M.S. Founding Director  
572 John Ross Pkwy., #107  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

July 7, 2021

Tim Lust  
CEO  
United Sorghum Checkoff Program

Via e-mail: [Tim@sorghumgrowers.com](mailto:Tim@sorghumgrowers.com); [info@sorghumcheckoff.com](mailto:info@sorghumcheckoff.com);  
[martinagconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:martinagconsulting@gmail.com)

Dear Mr. Lust:

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I am writing on behalf of Family Agriculture Resource Management Services (F.A.R.M.S.), a national nonprofit dedicated to reversing small farmland loss to ensure generational wealth and reducing hunger in rural low-income communities.

Every year, 30,000 acres of Black landownership is lost, primarily because of nonpayment of property tax, eminent domain, unprofitable business models, discrimination, generational out-migration, and lack of estate planning. Compounding farmers' financial burden are federally mandated assessment fees that totaled over \$885 million in 2016 alone and that are paid by agricultural producers, handlers, processors, importers, and others to the agricultural checkoff programs overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service.

We have learned from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) that many of these agricultural checkoff programs use a portion of these fees to fund animal experiments that are cruel, unscientific, and not required by law. We were shocked to learn that in experiments funded by these checkoffs and published between 2015 and 2019, more than 2,600 animals were doused, poisoned, force-fed, starved, irradiated, bled, suffocated, beheaded, and dissected.

Many farmers in today's economy are struggling. They don't need barbaric tests on animals to sell their agricultural commodities. Rather, they need economic relief from inflated assessment fees that are wasted on worthless experiments on animals.

We are firmly against taxing farmers to fund needless and senseless animal tests. **We are joining PETA in respectfully urging you to prohibit the United Sorghum Checkoff Program from using assessment fees to fund animal experiments.** You can contact me via PETA's Dr. Frances Cheng at [FrancesC@peta.org](mailto:FrancesC@peta.org). Please respond by August 4, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jillian Hishaw, Esq. LL.M. (Agricultural Law)  
F.A.R.M.S. Founding Director  
572 John Ross Pkwy., #107  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

July 7, 2021

Kasey Cronquist  
President  
U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council

Via e-mail: [kcronquist@blueberry.org](mailto:kcronquist@blueberry.org); [info@blueberry.org](mailto:info@blueberry.org); [blueberryhill@intrstar.net](mailto:blueberryhill@intrstar.net)

Dear Mr. Cronquist:

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I am writing on behalf of Family Agriculture Resource Management Services (F.A.R.M.S.), a national nonprofit dedicated to reversing small farmland loss to ensure generational wealth and reducing hunger in rural low-income communities.

Every year, 30,000 acres of Black landownership is lost, primarily because of nonpayment of property tax, eminent domain, unprofitable business models, discrimination, generational out-migration, and lack of estate planning. Compounding farmers' financial burden are federally mandated assessment fees that totaled over \$885 million in 2016 alone and that are paid by agricultural producers, handlers, processors, importers, and others to the agricultural checkoff programs overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service.

We have learned from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) that many of these agricultural checkoff programs use a portion of these fees to fund animal experiments that are cruel, unscientific, and not required by law. We were shocked to learn that in experiments funded by these checkoffs and published between 2015 and 2019, more than 2,600 animals were doused, poisoned, force-fed, starved, irradiated, bled, suffocated, beheaded, and dissected.

Many farmers in today's economy are struggling. They don't need barbaric tests on animals to sell their agricultural commodities. Rather, they need economic relief from inflated assessment fees that are wasted on worthless experiments on animals.

We are firmly against taxing farmers to fund needless and senseless animal tests. **We are joining PETA in respectfully urging you to prohibit the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council from using assessment fees to fund animal experiments.** You can contact me via PETA's Dr. Frances Cheng at [FrancesC@peta.org](mailto:FrancesC@peta.org). Please respond by August 4, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jillian Hishaw, Esq. LL.M. (Agricultural Law)  
F.A.R.M.S. Founding Director  
572 John Ross Pkwy., #107  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

July 7, 2021

Henry Bierlink  
Executive Director  
Washington Red Raspberry Commission

Via e-mail: [henry@red-raspberry.org](mailto:henry@red-raspberry.org); [info@red-raspberry.org](mailto:info@red-raspberry.org)

Dear Mr. Bierlink:

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I am writing on behalf of Family Agriculture Resource Management Services (F.A.R.M.S.), a national nonprofit dedicated to reversing small farmland loss to ensure generational wealth and reducing hunger in rural low-income communities.

Every year, 30,000 acres of Black landownership is lost, primarily because of nonpayment of property tax, eminent domain, unprofitable business models, discrimination, generational out-migration, and lack of estate planning. Compounding farmers' financial burden are federally mandated assessment fees that totaled over \$885 million in 2016 alone and that are paid by agricultural producers, handlers, processors, importers, and others to the agricultural checkoff programs overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service.

We have learned from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) that many of these agricultural checkoff programs use a portion of these fees to fund animal experiments that are cruel, unscientific, and not required by law. We were shocked to learn that in experiments funded by these checkoffs and published between 2015 and 2019, more than 2,600 animals were doused, poisoned, force-fed, starved, irradiated, bled, suffocated, beheaded, and dissected.

Many farmers in today's economy are struggling. They don't need barbaric tests on animals to sell their agricultural commodities. Rather, they need economic relief from inflated assessment fees that are wasted on worthless experiments on animals.

We are firmly against taxing farmers to fund needless and senseless animal tests. **We are joining PETA in respectfully urging you to prohibit the Washington Red Raspberry Commission from using assessment fees to fund animal experiments.** You can contact me via PETA's Dr. Frances Cheng at [FrancesC@peta.org](mailto:FrancesC@peta.org). Please respond by August 4, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jillian Hishaw, Esq. LL.M. (Agricultural Law)  
F.A.R.M.S. Founding Director  
572 John Ross Pkwy., #107  
Rock Hill, SC 29730