

December 15, 2017

Sonny Ramaswamy, PhD.

Director

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

305-A Whitten Building

1400 Independence Ave., S.W.

Washington DC, 20250

Dear Director Ramaswamy,

We the undersigned consumer, public health, environment, and agriculture groups would like to thank you for the support for NIFA-funded research on antibiotic resistance during your tenure, and to ask for your assurance that future funding, including extramural grant funding, will be commensurate with the crisis in antibiotic resistance.

Antibiotic resistance continues to be a serious public health threat that requires a multi-sectoral response using a One Health approach that acknowledges the links between human, animal, and environmental health. Last year, the U.S. committed to support research on antimicrobial resistance including in the agricultural sector when it joined every other United Nations member in September in adopting a [political declaration of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on antimicrobial resistance](#). We are greatly concerned about proposed cuts to NIFA's extramural funding for antibiotic resistance research in FY2018. Our fear is that research funding specifically targeted to antibiotic resistance will simply disappear as the agency shifts resources in Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) from Challenge Grants to a Grand Challenge approach under the new Sustainable Agricultural Systems Program.

The threat to human health from resistant infections is obvious, and urgent. All sectors where antibiotics are used need to act to combat this threat. Now is certainly not the time to be reducing research funding on antibiotic resistance.

We ask that NIFA continue to support research into antibiotic resistance at least at the current levels and specifically include antibiotic resistance among the areas to be funded as part of the AFRI requests for applications for FY2018. We would also like to learn about other potential funding by NIFA on the topic of antibiotic resistance.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you at your convenience. Please respond to this letter by email to Steven Roach, [sroach@foodanimalconcerns.org](mailto:sroach@foodanimalconcerns.org).

Sincerely,

Food Animal Concerns Trust

The Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention

Antibiotic Resistance Action Center, the George Washington University

Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future

Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists (SIDP)  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Consumers Union  
Consumer Federation of America  
Infectious Disease Society of America  
National Center for Health Research  
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology