APLU is part of the broad business, university and science community concerned about cuts and stagnating federal funding in science and research at a time when other nations are increasing their research investments. We believe the FY15 Ag Appropriations bill must work to close this innovation deficit with reasonable increases in key accounts, as described below. These investments will develop the ideas, the people, and the innovations that power our economy, create jobs, improve health and strengthen our national security, ensuring that the U.S. maintains its role as global leader. Additionally, the growth supported by this innovation will help the nation address its fiscal challenges.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (NIFA)

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD RESEARCH INITIATIVE (AFRI)
APLU FY2015 Request: $360 million
(FY2015 PBR = $325M; FY2014 = $316.4M; FY2013 = $277M)

APLU supports a request of $360 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, USDA’s flagship competitive grants program.

- AFRI funds competitive grants supporting research, education and extension activities to address key issues of national, regional, and multi-state importance in sustaining all components of agriculture, including farm efficiency and profitability, ranching, renewable energy, forestry, aquaculture, human nutrition, food safety and biotechnology. AFRI benefits the nation in numerous ways, providing:
  - America’s farmers and foresters with genomic data and biotechnology tools to expand food and fiber production, processing, and international trade.
  - Healthcare professionals with insight into the links between diet and health.
  - Extension specialists and their clients expanded knowledge about water quality to help protect the environment and safeguard our food systems.
  - University educators with the funding to train new generations of food, agriculture, and natural resource scientists.

CAPACITY FUNDS:
FORMULA & BLOCK GRANT FUNDING PROGRAMS OF NIFA

APLU also urges strong support for several NIFA funding lines that underwrite the basic research and extension capacity at America’s land-grant universities and related institutions. Most of these programs have state-matching requirements and are essential to sustain the national food, agriculture, and natural resources research and extension capabilities that benefit both rural and urban areas.

- Hatch Act ($244 million) for agriculture experiment stations
- Evans-Allen ($52 million) for agricultural research
- McIntire-Stennis ($34 million) for cooperative forestry research
- Smith-Lever Funds 3(b) and 3(c) ($300 million) for cooperative extension
- Extension Services at 1890 Institutions ($44 million)
- 1994 Institutions Extension and 1994 Institutions Research ($6.2 million)

Additional APLU FY205 Agriculture Appropriations bill priorities and detailed justifications, as determined by the Association’s Commission on Food, Environment and Renewable Resources Board on Agriculture Assembly, are available at: http://www.land-grant.org/.