

November 20, 2008

The Honorable Edward Schafer
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Jamie L. Whitten Building, Rm. 200-A
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Schafer:

During Fiscal Year 2008, the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics (NAREEE) Advisory Board Specialty Crops Committee conducted a listening session and gathered data to make recommendations pertinent to the research, education, and economic needs of the specialty crop industry.

Enclosed for your consideration is copy of the Specialty Crop Committee's final report. The Board believes that the suggestions offered will help to improve the Department's activities associated with the Specialty Crop Research Initiative Program.

As always, I remain available to discuss our findings with you at any time.

Sincerely,



Martin A. Massengale
Chair

Enclosures

cc: Deputy Secretary Conner
Under Secretary for REE Buchanan
U.S. House and Senate Agriculture and Appropriations committees/subcommittees