

Statement from Dr. Catherine Woteki, USDA Chief Scientist,
on the National Academy of Sciences Report
“Critical Role of Animal Science Research in Food Security and Sustainability”

Jan. 7, 2015— Global demand for food from animal products such as meat, dairy and fish is expected to nearly double by 2050 as the world’s population continues to grow. The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report released today addresses environmental challenges (including global climate change and limited natural resources) and the growing threat of animal diseases that could hinder efforts to meet the demand for animal agricultural products. The report also identifies factors—the need for trained workers, product safety and quality, effective communication, and dissemination of new information and technologies—that could affect the United States’ ability to meet these demands.

“This National Academy of Science report highlights the importance and need to increase animal science research and our investment in meeting future animal protein needs, both domestically and globally, through sustainable agriculture,” says Catherine Woteki, U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Chief Scientist and Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics. “It also emphasizes the need to revitalize our research infrastructure.”

“The findings support and lend urgency to USDA’s investments in research through the Agricultural Research Service, USDA’s chief intramural scientific research agency, and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, which advances agricultural research, education and extension to solve societal challenges.”

“The NAS report recommends expanding private sector partnerships in animal science and notes significant accomplishments from USDA’s past investments in animal production research,” Woteki says. “In addition, the report emphasizes improving research through funding that encourages integration, rather than individual components, of the entire food chain.”

The study was supported by a grant from USDA, the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, the National Pork Board, Tyson Foods, Inc., and the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association.

###

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).