FFAR's Public-Private Partnership Research Model Supports Solutions to the Economic Crisis Facing Farmers & Rural America

The Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research (FFAR) was created to amplify federal investment in food and agriculture research through public-private partnerships that bring private-sector funds to public research. FFAR's highly successful public-private partnership model secures $1.40 in non-federal funding for every tax dollar invested in research, allowing government investments to do more with less.

Farmers need research investments to develop solutions to ongoing and future challenges. FFAR prioritizes translational research to address urgent needs caused by global conflicts, such as high input costs, current and emerging biosecurity threats, changing supply chain demands and workforce shortages, as well as barriers limiting U.S. agricultural exports in global markets. FFAR's partnership with the private sector ensures that results can be quickly commercialized. To date, FFAR-funded research has resulted in dozens of commercial innovations that increase farmer profitability, reduce input needs and boost resiliency and productivity.

Increasing Farmer Profitability

FFAR invests in technologies that boost U.S. farm productivity and profitability and keep food prices affordable for American consumers. FFAR partnered with Clemson University and Carolina Seed Systems to develop sorghum-based feed that improves poultry health and reduces costs. Economic analysis confirms cost savings for farmers who adopt the new sorghum varieties, significant gains for poultry integrators and, at base adoption levels, a 10-year return on investment (ROI) of $95 to $138 for every $1 invested in this project. Project partners are working to scale the sorghum hybrid commercially.

Lowering Input Costs

FFAR invests in research to lower input costs by funding solutions that improve the management of antibiotics, pesticides and fertilizers. Through the USDA Global Fertilizer Challenge, FFAR launched the Efficient Fertilizer Consortium, a public-private partnership that advances fertilizer efficiency, improves soil health and reduces costs for farmers, in response to rising fertilizer prices. The Consortium developed the first widely agreed-upon Field Trial Guidelines for evaluating enhanced efficiency fertilizers. These guidelines establish clear, science-based standards and consistent methods to verify fertilizer performance.

Creating Additional Revenue Streams

FFAR-funded research generates additional revenue streams and supports new markets for farmers. Collaboration with industry helps protect U.S. competitiveness and advances profits by diversifying farmers' incomes. For example, FFAR and the United Soybean Board are investing in U.S. soy's competitiveness by improving soybean quality and protein content. Global soy customers are increasingly seeking high-protein soybeans, and the varieties developed in this research will help U.S. soybean farmers deliver on consumer demand.

Contact FFAR

Please contact us with any questions.

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Advancing Biosecurity Research

FFAR's biosecurity research portfolio aims to safeguard American agriculture from current and future threats. FFAR has invested in research to mitigate the threat from Fusarium wilt, a devastating fungal disease with historical potential as a bioweapon and that attacks several crops, including cotton, lettuce, corn and strawberries.

Supporting Farmers & Livestock Producers

The majority of FFAR's research supports solutions for farmers, ranchers and rural communities across the U.S. For example, researchers developed a portable biosensor that can detect certain cattle viruses in under an hour, giving farmers and veterinarians fast, on-site insights to manage herd health. In feedlot trials, the tool detected more viruses than lab tests, improving real-time decision-making. Combined with nationwide data on Bovine Respiratory Disease viruses, this innovation is moving toward commercialization and offers producers a practical way to reduce losses, improve animal health and protect their bottom line.

Responding to Pests & Pathogens

FFAR's Rapid Outcomes from Agricultural Research (ROAR) program funds research on response, prevention and mitigation of new pests and pathogens. ROAR's one- to two-year funding quickly fills urgent research gaps until traditional, longer-term funding can be secured. FFAR issued a call for proposals when the New World screwworm emerged and will award several grants in 2026 for research that complements USDA's current efforts.

Although demand from private players and end-users for FFAR to invest in new areas such as these is high, FFAR is unable to make new long-term funding commitments at current funding levels, leaving critical research needs unmet and forgoing private funding that could benefit the public good.

480+
grants awarded

$1:$1.40
of FFAR funding to matching

$852M
funding awarded

660+
funding partners