

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 26, 2018

The Honorable John Hoeven
Chairman
Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 129
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 190
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Hoeven and Ranking Member Merkley:

As you develop the Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request an increase in funding for cranberry research administered by the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) within the Department of Agriculture (USDA). We appreciate that the Appropriations Committee has long recognized the importance of cranberry research and America's cranberry farmers. In line with the recent budget agreement, we are requesting \$4.989 million, an increase from \$2.989 million in FY18, in funding for cranberry research within the USDA budget for ARS and NIFA.

A robust cranberry research funding level would support the additional equipment and research faculty needed to address the challenges faced by our cranberry farmers, including disease control, growing productivity and nutrient management. The additional funding would support critical research on constantly evolving crop diseases like cranberry fungal fruit rot complex and the cranberry false-blossom phytoplasma, which have the potential to destroy crops and create hardships for our farmers. Other decades-long research programs focus on genetically breeding resistant cranberry plants that can naturally fight these diseases without the use of potentially harmful chemicals. Additional research programs focus on creating more efficient cranberry plants, which reduces the need for both water and fertilizer during the growing season. Further research focuses on cranberry water usage so that cranberry farmers can be better stewards of their land and only use the amount of water necessary for their crops.

Cranberries are a familiar holiday staple that many Americans have come to expect and enjoy through the hard work of American cranberry farmers. Their farms support and employ thousands of people and are part of a \$1 billion industry. A small increase in funding for cranberry research can have an outsized economic impact by helping these farmers fight diseases and grow more bountiful crops all while improving their environmental footprint.

With this in mind, we respectfully request your support in this funding request of \$4.989 million for cranberry research within the Agricultural Research Service and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture and are grateful for the Appropriations Committee's past support for this critical research.

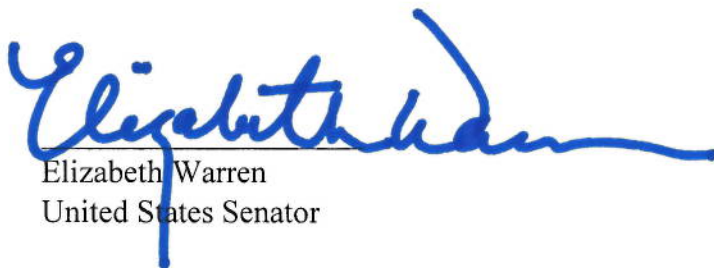
Sincerely,



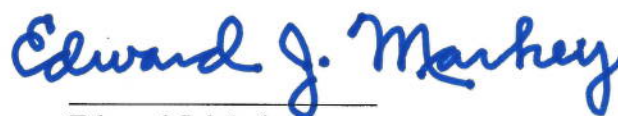
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



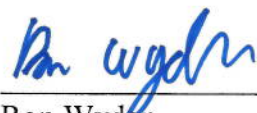
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



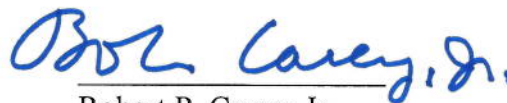
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator