

Contact: Lawrence Green  
301-634-7335  
[lgreen@faseb.org](mailto:lgreen@faseb.org)

## **FASEB PRESIDENT, DR. MARK LIVELY, COMMENTS ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD RESEARCH INITIATIVE FY 2011 RESEARCH PRIORITIES**

*Bethesda, MD* – Mark Lively, Ph.D., President of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), testified yesterday at a public meeting for the Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The meeting was held to obtain public perspectives on research priorities for the Fiscal Year 2011 Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) competitive grants program. “FASEB supports AFRI’s mission to fund research, education, and extension grants that address key problems of National, regional, and multi-state importance in sustaining all components of agriculture,” Lively stated. “The establishment of AFRI presents an unparalleled opportunity for revitalization and improvement of our agricultural research system,” he added.

Lively spoke to NIFA officials about the potential dangers of prioritizing narrowly targeted outcome-based research that may exclude other vital areas of agricultural research. Recognizing the constraints on the AFRI budget, Lively stressed the need for AFRI to maintain a strong and balanced portfolio with an emphasis on foundational research that fosters continuous generation of new knowledge, leading to a rapid progress in meeting national needs. Lively testified, “Basic agricultural research provides the key discoveries necessary to develop the scientific and technological advances that will benefit our nation’s farms and citizens’ daily lives.”

Lively also emphasized that investigator-initiated research should remain the foundation of the nation’s agricultural research enterprise. “We believe that a significant portion of asset allocation should be directed toward long-term, individual investigator-initiated grants of sufficient duration in support of innovation in agricultural research,” he advised.

FASEB supports a [FY 2011 appropriation](#) of \$500 million for AFRI. Dr. Lively’s statement on research priorities may be found [here](#).

*FASEB is composed of 23 societies with more than 100,000 members, making it the largest coalition of biomedical research associations in the United States. FASEB enhances the ability of scientists and engineers to improve—through their research—the health, well-being, and productivity of all people. Our mission is to advance health and welfare by promoting progress and education in biological and biomedical sciences through service to our member societies and collaborative advocacy.*