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Date: April 2, 2020

William Hoffman, PhD
Chief of Staff, National Institute of Food and Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture

Submitted via electronic mail: NIFAProjectCAFE@usda.gov

RE: NIFA Service Delivery Input

Dear Dr. Hoffman,

The Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) is pleased to provide comments on “NIFA Service Delivery Input.” IFT is a global organization of nearly 16,000 individual members from more than 100 countries. IFT brings together the brightest minds in food science, technology and related professions from academia, government, and industry to solve the world’s greatest food challenges. We believe that science is essential to ensuring a global food supply that is sustainable, safe, nutritious, and accessible to all.

IFT provides suggestions on how NIFA may capitalize on its previous success and continue to further the research and innovation in food and agricultural sciences by improving outreach and scientific communication, enabling interdisciplinary collaboration, including with other agencies, and training the next generation of food and agriculture scientists.

Outreach and Scientific Communication

NIFA staff and activities have great influence throughout the global food system, and their participation is critical towards collaborative, synergistic research. IFT believes NIFA staff should have the flexibility to travel and engage with external stakeholders, including continued communication and interaction with other government agencies on inter-agency research. With the relocation, this has become even more critical.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

IFT applauds NIFA on its efforts for funding interdisciplinary research to address the multidimensional food system challenges. However, we believe that comprehensive solutions are best achieved if investments in fundamental basic and foundational research are made across all segments of the entire food system, ***including research in food science and food processing***. Nutrition, food safety and quality, and food security and sustainability are influenced by all processes of the food value chain. Research along the entire food value chain is important to link the various domains from seed/farm to table/cell. IFT’s 2019-member survey identified research areas in food science and technology. Some of these research

areas are interdisciplinary in nature and can help address the mounting global challenges, including climate change, population growth, and limited natural resources, which threatens the food system. These challenges dramatically impact public health, food safety and quality, and food security and sustainability (Mohamedshah, Havlik, & Velissariou).

US Competitiveness in Food and Agriculture

IFT firmly believes that training the next generation of food and agriculture scientists is important to maintain our nation's global competitiveness. Adequate resources must be provided to motivate students to enroll in food and agriculture sciences and to build the next generation of food and agriculture scientists. NIFA should consider the realistic costs for a student with grants to ensure that talent is not lost to other, better-funded, research areas.

IFT appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on "NIFAs Service Delivery Input." Please contact Farida Mohamedshah, Director, Nutrition Science, Food Laws and Regulations (fmohamedshah@ift.org; 202-330-4986), if IFT may provide further assistance.

Sincerely,



Pam Coleman, MBA, CFS
IFT President, 2019-2020



Christie Tarantino-Dean, FASAE, CAE
IFT, Chief Executive Officer

Reference

Mohamedshah, F., Havlik, S., & Velissariou, M. (2020). Food research: Call to action on funding and priorities. Retrieved from: <https://www.ift.org/-/media/policy-advocacy/ift-whitepaper-012720final.pdf?la=en&hash=325D75E4611DD73335C9ED2DD3C8A7143D589F78>