

## FLORICULTURE and NURSERY RESEARCH INITIATIVE

### **SAF's "Ask":**

***SAF asks Representatives and Senators to increase funding for the Floriculture and Nursery Research Initiative in their requests to the Appropriations Committees to maintain the initiative.***

SAF and AmericanHort continue our partnership to support the Floriculture and Nursery Research Initiative (FNRI) through USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS). FNRI is vital to our efforts to respond to pest and disease problems, tackle the challenges of climate change, enhance the efficiency of production practices, develop and promote sustainable growing practices and broaden the message of the positive environmental and social impact of our crops.

FNRI is a program designed to obtain and guide federal research funding targeted to the needs of the floriculture and nursery industry. FNRI was conceived in the mid 1980s, and it took more than 10 years of education and lobbying before funding was first appropriated by Congress.

FNRI has successfully generated research dollars because of the dynamic partnership between the floral and nursery industry, the academic community and the federal government. That partnership has been cited by the USDA as a unique and important model to follow for other industries interested in creating a similar program.

Available funds are divided equally between universities and ARS facilities and are split roughly in half between floriculture and nursery projects. However, funding has been flat since FY2018 and increased salaries and laboratory expenses have eroded the program's ability to tackle the challenges of the day.

Advances in breeding techniques and other technologies will allow floriculture to be part of the climate solution. More research will help enable producers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through production practice efficiencies and develop crops that require fewer inputs. But FNRI must be properly funded to execute on these initiatives.

SAF is asking for a \$1 million increase for FNRI for FY 2022.