



American Society for Nutrition
Excellence in Nutrition Research and Practice
www.nutrition.org

Contact: Mary Lee Watts, MPH, RD
(301) 634-7112
mwatts@nutrition.org

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR NUTRITION PRAISES NUTRITION MONITORING PROVISIONS IN THE FARM BILL; URGES MORE FUNDING FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION RESEARCH

May 15, 2008—Following Congressional passage of the Farm Bill, the American Society for Nutrition (ASN) praised conferees for producing a bill that takes important steps forward with respect to nutrition programs and the structure of food and nutrition research at the USDA. ASN is pleased that the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 reauthorizes national nutrition monitoring activities for the first time in over 15 years, establishes a National Institute for Food and Agriculture to support competitive research at USDA, and provides a much-needed financial boost to food assistance programs that reach those in greatest need.

“Nutrition monitoring is a unique and vitally important surveillance function that tracks dietary intake and evaluates the health and nutritional status of the U.S. population. The data collected critically inform nutrition policy and all nutrition programs, including those supported by the Farm Bill,” said ASN President Joanne Lupton, PhD. Lupton said the inclusion of this language in the Farm Bill reaffirms the nation’s commitment to continuing this important program.

Despite promising structural changes included in the bill aimed at bolstering competitive research at USDA while maintaining essential capacity and infrastructure programs, ASN remains deeply concerned about the lack of federal funding for food, nutrition and agriculture research. The cost of preventable dietary and physical activity-related diseases to the economy exceeds \$117 billion annually and is predicted to rise to \$1.7 trillion over the next decade. Nevertheless, funding for food and nutrition research at USDA has not increased in real dollars in over 25 years.

“The time has come to commit resources to ensure food, agricultural and nutrition research keeps pace in the 21st century, and to assure the U.S. remains competitive in a global economy,” said Lupton. “We look forward to working with members of Congress to ensure that research programs authorized under the Farm Bill are funded at a level required to address current public health needs,” said Lupton.

*The American Society for Nutrition is the preeminent professional organization for nutrition research scientists and clinicians around the world. ASN is dedicated to bringing together the top nutrition researchers, medical practitioners, policy makers and industry leaders to advance our knowledge and application of nutrition. Founded in 1928, ASN publishes *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition (AJCN)* and *The Journal of Nutrition (JN)*. Visit ASN online at www.nutrition.org.*

###