



American Society for Nutrition  
*Excellence in Nutrition Research and Practice*  
[www.nutrition.org](http://www.nutrition.org)

Contact: Suzanne Price  
(301) 634-7235  
[sprice@nutrition.org](mailto:sprice@nutrition.org)

### **ASN PRAISES FUNDING BOOST FOR USDA COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM, URGES SUPPORT FOR THE PROGRAM IN CONFERENCE**

**August 5, 2009**—Today the American Society for Nutrition praised the Senate for passage of the Agriculture appropriations bill, which included a nearly 50 percent increase for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), the USDA’s competitive grants program. “We are thrilled that the Senate has surpassed both the President and the House in support of this important research program at USDA,” said James O. Hill, PhD, ASN President. “This program funds cutting-edge basic and translational nutrition research and has been flat-funded for too long. This move by the Senate is a significant step forward.”

President Obama proposed \$201 million for the program and earlier this summer, the House passed an agriculture spending bill that provided \$210 million for AFRI. ASN urges those conferencing the Senate bill with that which was passed by the House to adopt the Senate’s target of \$296 million. ASN and other scientific societies have advocated for \$300 million for AFRI, with a goal of reaching \$550 million by 2015. The program was authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill to be funded at \$700 million, a level ASN would like to see the program reach sooner than later.

“AFRI takes nutrition research and innovation beyond the development phase, into implementation and through contemporary education and extension programs,” said Hill. For example, AFRI-funded projects have led to a better understanding of the behavioral and environmental factors that influence obesity, and to the development and evaluation of effective interventions. Grants also have funded nutrition education interventions focusing on the reduction of childhood obesity in low-income families.

*The American Society for Nutrition (ASN) 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](http://www.nutrition.org).*

###