



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 30 2018

Dear Research and Promotion Board Nominating Organizations:

The mission of Research and Promotion (R&P) programs is to expand, maintain and develop markets for individual commodities in the United States and abroad. This mission is an important contributor to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) overall vision related to "providing economic opportunity through innovation and helping rural America thrive and promote agriculture production that better nourishes Americans while helping to feed others throughout the world." Through the guidance of the R&P board members, appointed by Secretary Perdue, these programs execute a variety of activities benefitting agriculture. Consequently, the input and decision making provided by the board members is the foundation for success of these R&P programs.

The success of R&P boards depends on the broad support and engagement from individual producers. Recently, some of the nomination packages submitted to the Secretary contained only one nominee for a vacant board position. Having a strong pool of nominees helps reinforce producers' support for these programs and underscores the value R&P boards provide for certain commodities.

To ensure the best and most diverse representation possible on each board, please conduct extensive outreach for qualified candidates and provide at least two nominees for each vacant position within the nomination timeframe provided by USDA. If two nominees are not submitted, there may be a delay forwarding the nominees to the Secretary until two names are received. If it is not possible to submit at least two nominees, we ask that you to please provide supporting documentation explaining outreach efforts and why two nominees are not available.

If you have any questions, please contact your R&P Marketing Specialist.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Ibach", written over a faint blue circular stamp.

Greg Ibach  
Under Secretary  
Marketing and Regulatory Programs