



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

May 16, 2012

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

My congratulations to the United States Department of Agriculture on its 150th anniversary. The success of our nation is due, in part, to the work of USDA to ensure a safe, secure food and water supply for Americans and others around the globe, and the success of that food and water supply is owed greatly to the work of USDA in research, innovation and policy.

Pennsylvanians benefit greatly from USDA's inspection services, technical assistance and conservation programs. Our farmers, many of whom suffered from last year's periods of drought and extreme heat, capped off with major flooding in September, can recover thanks to the assistance of the Farm Service Agency and Risk Management Agency.

They also benefit from our partnership in ensuring animal, plant and human health for our commonwealth and beyond. Whether combatting invasive species, ensuring the health of animals for export, preserving farmland from development, providing food for Pennsylvanians in need or conserving our streams and waterways, USDA is there to help in every step.

As Pennsylvania and other states confront the challenges of conserving and protecting our natural resources while producing enough food to sustain a growing world, we look to USDA as a partner. Since 1862, USDA has successfully tackled the agricultural issues of the times.

As we look at the 2012 Farm Bill, we recognize the challenges faced in balancing fiscal responsibility against the pledge of assistance for our agriculture industry when producers need it most. Risk management, conservation, food assistance and farmland protection programs are vital to Pennsylvania agriculture. I know that USDA will work to help craft a bill that benefits producers here in Pennsylvania and across the country.

The USDA certainly fulfills President Abraham Lincoln's vision "to touch the lives of every American, every day." I look forward to continuing our long working relationship with USDA as it begins its next 150 years. Again, congratulations for your success, and my thanks for your help in keeping America growing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George D. Greig".

George D. Greig
Secretary