

- **Budget Scenario 1: Maintain Previous Budget Request — \$125 million**) *This scenario would be recommended if there is no significant change in the political landscape or congressional turnover).*

A request of **\$125 million for the Evans-Allen Program** represents a prudent and necessary step toward maintaining the research capacity of the 1890 Land-grant Universities and strengthening the nation's agricultural innovation enterprise.

The Evans-Allen Program is the principal federal investment supporting agricultural research at the 1890 Land-grant Universities. These institutions play a vital role in advancing scientific discovery, developing the next generation of agricultural scientists and professionals, and delivering innovative solutions that address critical national priorities in food and agriculture, nutrition and health, natural resources, rural prosperity, and strengthening communities. Their research directly benefits farmers, ranchers, foresters, agribusinesses, and communities across the nation while expanding opportunities for historically underserved and limited-resource populations.

- A \$125 million appropriation would help preserve essential scientific expertise, modernize research infrastructure, strengthen workforce development, and enhance the research capacity needed to respond to emerging agricultural challenges. It would also reinforce the longstanding federal-state partnership that has made the U.S. Land-grant System the global model for agricultural research, education, and Extension.
- This level of appropriations does not reverse decades of underinvestment or restore the purchasing power lost to inflation. Continued erosion of Evans-Allen funding threatens the ability of the 1890 Land-grant Universities to maintain top-tier research programs, recruit and retain outstanding scientists, leverage competitive federal and private-sector investments, and contribute fully to the nation's agricultural research enterprise.
- Sustained growth in Evans-Allen appropriations is essential to ensuring that the 1890 Land-grant Universities remain strong partners in addressing America's most pressing challenges. Increased federal investment will accelerate innovation, strengthen U.S. food and agricultural competitiveness, enhance national security, improve public health and environmental stewardship, and generate measurable economic returns for producers, consumers, and communities throughout the country.

Budget Scenario 2: Request a Transformational Increase — \$129 Million *(This scenario would be recommended if significant political or budgetary opportunities emerge that support a larger federal investment.)*

A **\$129 million increase for the Evans-Allen Program** would represent a modest but meaningful investment in the research capacity of the 1890 Land-grant Universities. This funding would help these institutions strengthen scientific capacity, recruit and retain outstanding faculty, improve research infrastructure, expand workforce development, and enhance their ability to address emerging challenges in food and agriculture, nutrition and health, natural resources, and rural prosperity.

While this investment would not fully address decades of inflation and unmet needs, it would provide essential resources to strengthen the Evans-Allen Program as a strategic national asset. It would also enhance America's agricultural innovation system, improve U.S. global competitiveness, expand opportunities for the communities served by the 1890 universities, and support their continued role as vital partners in addressing the nation's most pressing agricultural and societal challenges.

Justification for Increased Evans-Allen Funding

The need for increased Evans-Allen funding has never been greater. Decades of inadequate funding and the continuing erosion of purchasing power have significantly constrained the research capacity of the 1890 Land-grant Universities. These universities have consistently demonstrated their ability to produce high-impact research while educating a talented agricultural workforce and serving rural and urban communities.

However, limited capacity funding restricts their ability to recruit and retain scientists, modernize laboratories, replace aging equipment, support graduate students, and respond rapidly to emerging national priorities.

At the same time, global competitors continue to make unprecedented investments in agricultural research and development. China has become the world's largest investor in agri-food research and development, while India, Brazil, Vietnam, and other nations continue to expand their research enterprises. Without sustained federal investment in research capacity at the 1890 Land-grant Universities, the United States risks weakening its agricultural innovation ecosystem, reducing scientific competitiveness, and limiting its ability to address future food, agricultural, and national security challenges.

Leveraging Additional Federal, State, and Private Investments

Evans-Allen funding serves as foundational research capacity funding that enables institutions to compete successfully for federal competitive grants and attract additional investments from state governments, industry, commodity organizations, philanthropic foundations, and other partners.

Every additional federal dollar invested through Evans-Allen strengthens the overall agricultural research enterprise by leveraging substantially greater investments from multiple sources and expanding the impact of research conducted at the 1890 Land-grant Universities.

Delivering Exceptional Return on Federal Investment

Public investment in agricultural research consistently generates among the highest returns of any federal investment, with numerous economic studies estimating returns ranging from **\$10 to \$20 for every federal dollar invested**. Increasing Evans-Allen funding would generate long-term returns by increasing agricultural productivity and profitability, accelerating innovation and technology adoption, strengthening food and nutrition security, supporting rural economic development, and strengthening national security.

Developing the Next Generation of Agricultural Scientists

The Evans-Allen Program is fundamental to developing the future agricultural workforce. Increased funding would expand opportunities for undergraduate research, graduate education, postdoctoral training, and early-career faculty development while increasing participation by students in the communities that the 1890 universities serve in the areas of science, technology, engineering, agriculture, and mathematics.

Strengthening this talent pipeline is essential to meeting future workforce needs in academia, industry, government, and the private sector.

Pardey, Philip G. and Vincent H. Smith. 2026. US Agri-Food Research and Development, Farm Revenues, and Retirement Wealth. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. [US-Agri-Food-Research-and-Development-Farm-Revenues-and-Retirement-Wealth.pdf](#)