



AMERICAN SPICE TRADE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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November 3, 2011

The Honorable Jack Kingston, Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Farr, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member Farr:

As you work to finalize the FY 2012 Agriculture Appropriations budget, The American Spice Trade Association respectfully urges the House to accept the Senate's higher number for FY 12 funding for the United States Food & Drug Administration (FDA). Under the Senate's proposal, FDA funding would be increased by about \$50 million above its FY 11 level of \$2.447 billion, and about \$335 million above the House proposed levels for FY 2012.

American Spice Trade Association

The American Spice Trade Association (ASTA) was established in 1907 to provide representation for the American spice trade. Its members include companies involved in all aspects of the spice trade: importing, growing, processing, and marketing at the wholesale and retail levels. On behalf of its members, ASTA works with federal and state regulators and legislators and assists its members in addressing a variety of technical issues to help members provide an adequate supply of safe and wholesome spices for their industrial, food service and consumer customers.

FDA Role to Protect the Food Supply

The FDA oversees products that account for 25% of consumer spending. It plays the critical role in ensuring that our nation's food supply is safe. Any cutback will immediately affect the manpower needed for FDA to do its job that is a core function of government. There is no backstop, no other agency, which performs FDA's critical public health functions. Consumers, patients and industry share this vision of an agency that carries out essential services that can only be provided if FDA funding is sustained and increased. An already overworked FDA is being called upon to address important new mandates, including the implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act. Significant additional demands placed on the agency and the exponential growth of the global marketplace has resulted in significant resource constraints for FDA. ASTA relies on product that is grown outside of the United

States and is supportive of FDA's responsibility to insure the safety of food and food ingredients that are brought in for U.S. consumers.

ASTA respectfully requests that the House recede to the Senate's proposal for FY 2012 FDA funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Deem', with a horizontal line above it.

Cheryl Deem
Executive Director

cc: The Honorable Herb Kohl, Chairman
Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Roy Blunt, Ranking Member
Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations