

Should US spend more on agricultural R&D to make food cheaper, more sustainable?

[Editor's note: Margaret Zeigler is executive director of the [Global Harvest Initiative](#), a private-sector voice for productivity growth throughout the agricultural value chain.]

Maintaining high productivity growth requires robust investment in agricultural R&D from both the public and private sectors.

Every public dollar invested in agricultural research in the U.S. [provides](#) at least \$10 and up to \$20 in economic benefits to society, a powerful return on investment that provides strong bang for the public agricultural research buck.

Yet U.S. public agriculture R&D investment has been flat since the 1980s and has declined 6 percent since 2000.

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Solutions lie in ensuring that funding for a wide range of U.S. agriculture research programs remains robust, as well as in improving the structure and collaboration of agriculture research.

[For example] the National Program for Genetic Improvement of Feed Efficiency in Beef Cattle, which aims to reduce the amount of feed required to produce beef, ... helps reduce environmental impact and costs for ranchers.

Gradually increasing [these] investments ... over the next several years could unleash a powerful research pipeline to ensure the U.S. remains competitive with other nations, such as China, that have already boosted their research investments.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Want more affordable and sustainable food? Invest in R&D.](#)

For more background on the Genetic Literacy Project, read [GLP on Wikipedia](#)