



## Nebraska Grain Sorghum Board

301 Centennial Mall South • P.O. Box 94982 • Lincoln, NE 68509-4982 • Phone: 402/471-4276 • Fax: 402/471-3040 • [www.sorghum.state.ne.us](http://www.sorghum.state.ne.us)

December 14, 2009

The Honorable E. Benjamin Nelson  
United States Senate  
720 Senate Hart Building  
2<sup>nd</sup> & C Streets, NE  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

On behalf of Nebraska's sorghum producers, we are writing to thank you for your outstanding and diligent work in support of agriculture and, more specifically, you're your support and leadership in obtaining the planning and initial construction funds needed for the UNL/ARS Research facility at Lincoln, Nebraska to be located at UNL's new Nebraska Innovation Campus. We recognize and applaud your efforts in securing more than \$6 Million toward this project. What is needed now is congressional commitment for the remainder of the construction funds.

Grain sorghum is an important dryland crop in Nebraska and the Great Plains and is grown in rotation with other crops such as corn, soybeans and wheat. Sorghum's drought-resistant and water-sipping characteristics position it as a crop with an important role to play in establishing a sustainable and profitable bio-fuels industry. As an advanced biofuels crop, sorghum is being recognized for the role it can play in solving our nation's energy puzzle.

Very important sorghum research is currently being conducted by ARS-Lincoln and UNL scientists, but so much more is needed – especially in improving yields and bringing more technology to sorghum. Research is needed to develop better herbicides for sorghum and to improve disease and insect-resistance. Increased emphasis is also needed to evaluate the potential for both sweet sorghum and grain sorghum for biofuel production, including cellulosic ethanol.

Our nation is faced with the tremendous challenge of reducing our reliance on foreign oil while, at the same time, preserving and conserving our precious natural resources. The team of ARS researchers, working together with IANR scientists, provides mutual benefits that position them as national leaders in the area of bioenergy research. Having the facilities and increased funding to support state of the art research will enable Nebraska to remain competitive in this rapidly emerging area.

Thank you for the important work you do on behalf of Nebraska agriculture and agricultural research.

Sincerely,

NEBRASKA GRAIN SORGHUM BOARD  
John Dvoracek, Chairman