



# American Society of Plant Biologists

*Cultivating a better future through plant biology research.*

July 14, 2015

Sally J. Rockey, Ph.D.  
Deputy Director for Extramural Research  
National Institutes of Health

Dear Dr. Rockey:

I write on behalf of the more than 4,000 members of the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB) to congratulate you on your selection as the first Executive Director of the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR).

ASPB is a professional scientific society that is devoted to the advancement of plant science. With members throughout the United States and more than 50 other nations, ASPB publishes two of the world's top plant science research journals: *The Plant Cell* and *Plant Physiology*. ASPB is also an active member of the agricultural research advocacy community, which successfully lobbied Congress for the inclusion of the FFAR authorization and funding in the 2014 Farm Bill.

ASPB is extremely excited about the creation of FFAR and the enormous potential that it represents to invigorate the nation's food and agricultural research enterprise. As ASPB and other organizations continue to urge congressional support for increased investments in this area, FFAR represents a critical step forward in that effort. Therefore, ASPB is deeply committed to supporting the foundation's successful implementation and operation.

ASPB has been involved in a strategic visioning process involving a coalition of representatives from across the plant science community that resulted in the publication of [\*Unleashing a Decade of Innovation in Plant Science: A Vision for 2015-2025\*](#). The *Decadal Vision*, as we have come to refer to this document, identifies and highlights the critical importance of plant biology in meeting urgent societal challenges with regard to food, energy, and the environment – key areas in which increased investments would be particularly valuable and impactful. Five interwoven components are recommended in this regard:

1. increase the ability to predict plant traits from plant genomes in diverse environments;
2. assemble plant traits to solve problems;
3. discover and utilize plant-derived chemicals;
4. enhance the ability to find answers in big data sets; and
5. create a training environment for plant science doctoral students to add horizontal skills that prepare them for a wide variety of careers.

The plant science community is eager and excited to work with you in advancing agricultural science to address national and global challenges. Please do not hesitate to contact us or to use ASPB as a resource in whatever ways may help you achieve our shared goals for FFAR.

For more information about ASPB, please visit <http://www.aspb.org/> or contact ASPB's director of legislative and public affairs Dr. Tyrone Spady at [tspady@aspb.org](mailto:tspady@aspb.org).

Congratulations once again!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Julian I. Schroeder". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Julian I. Schroeder, Ph.D.  
President, ASPB