

November 14, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
Senate Agriculture Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
Senate Agriculture Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow,

On behalf of our millions of members across the country, the undersigned organizations strongly urge you to oppose the nomination of Scott Hutchins as chief scientist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Hutchins spent over 30 years of his career working at Dow AgroSciences with a focus on pesticides.ⁱ His strong ties to corporate agribusiness and pesticide companies present serious conflicts of interest that will undoubtedly affect his ability to serve as chief scientist for the USDA. Hutchins would also be the third member of Dow AgroSciences' pesticide and seed division to hold a high-level position in the Trump administration's USDA.ⁱⁱ

We are deeply concerned that the Senate is confirming nominees to regulate the products and conduct of their former employers. If Hutchins is confirmed to this post, it would be to the detriment of independent farmers, workers and consumers, and our environment.

If confirmed, Hutchins would be setting the agenda for the agency's \$2.9 billion research budget to advance scientific knowledge related to agriculture through research, extension and education.ⁱⁱⁱ He would provide leadership and oversight for the Agricultural Research Service, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, National Agricultural Library and National Agricultural Statistics Service. These programs cover a variety of important agricultural issues including nutrition, food safety, crop production and protection, natural resources, sustainable agricultural systems and the economic viability of U.S. farms.

Over the past twenty years, Dow Chemical has spent a minimum of \$2.44 million and up to \$14.43 million per year lobbying the federal government.^{iv} Some of the company's top priorities include working to secure approval to introduce new pesticides into the market, working to secure approval to merge with DuPont, preventing regulation of its pesticides, preventing labeling of genetically modified foods and reforming the Endangered Species Act to end EPA's review of whether pesticides it manufactures may impact threatened or endangered species.^v The company urged the Trump administration to set aside research demonstrating harm to three organophosphate pesticides it manufactures that pose threats to endangered species.^{vi}

The Trump administration has demonstrated it has an unhealthy relationship with Dow Chemical at the expense of the health and safety of the American public and our environment. In 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, based on the weight of the scientific evidence, was set to

ban the pesticide chlorpyrifos, which Dow manufactures.^{vii} However, the Trump administration reversed the proposed ban after Dow delivered \$1 million to Donald Trump's inaugural committee.^{viii}

Scott Hutchins has a history of defending the toxic pesticide chlorpyrifos. In 2001, Hutchins expressed disappointment that Dow needed to limit uses of the pesticide, complaining that the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) put Dow's organophosphates under scrutiny.^{ix}

Hutchins encourages growers to use pesticides, even when less toxic alternatives are available. In a 2006 presentation, Hutchins claimed, "Integrative Pest Management does/should NOT advocate avoidance of technology."^x While many practitioners of Integrative Pest Management view the practice as a way to significantly reduce synthetic pesticide use and utilize them as a "last resort," Hutchins has co-opted the term to encourage pesticide application. Should Scott Hutchins gain control of USDA's research programs, he could use the agency's infrastructure and grant making to advance his harmful vision of chemical intensive agriculture under the guise of ecologically sustainable practices.

We need someone at the helm of USDA's science and research programs who understands the importance of growing stronger local agricultural economies and supports independent family farmers and ranchers who are working hard to meet U.S. consumers' demand for healthier, cleaner food (including organic agriculture) grown without the use of synthetic hormones, routine antibiotics, GMOs or toxic pesticides. We also need a leader who will invest public research dollars in ways that help farmers develop strategies and practices that address challenges including climate change, herbicide drift, and pesticide and GMO contamination. Given Scott Hutchins's conflicts of interests, it is clear he is not fit to serve as chief scientist for USDA.

We call on the Senate to oppose Hutchins' nomination as Undersecretary for Research, Education and Economics for USDA to protect farmers, the American public and our environment.

Sincerely,

ActionAid USA
Agricultural Justice Project
Agricultural Missions, Inc.
Alaska Wilderness League
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas
All-Creatures.org
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Grassfed Association
American Indian Mothers Inc.
Animal Welfare Institute
Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc.

Appetite For Change, Inc.
Aurora Foundation
Berks Gas Truth
Beyond Pesticides
Biodynamic Association
Black Mesa Water Coalition
Black Warrior Riverkeeper
Bold Visions Conservation
Boulder Innovative Technologies, Inc.
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
Brooklyn Bridge CSA
California Institute for Rural Studies
Californians for Pesticide Reform
Cascades Raptor Center
CATA - El Comite de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agricolas
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice
Center for Environmental Health
Center for Food Safety
Central Jersey Coalition Against Endless War
Central Maryland Beekeepers Association
Champlain Valley Apiaries
Child Labor Coalition
Clean Water Action
Climate Justice Alliance
Coast Range Association
Comeback Farm
Coming Clean
Community Alliance for Global Justice
Community Farm Alliance
Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA), Inc.
Conservation Congress
Corporations v Democracy Issue Committee of WILPF US - Women's International League for Peace &
Freedom - US Section
Crawford Stewardship Project
Cuatro Puertas
DC Environmental Network
Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and Families
Des Moines County Farmer and Neighbors for Optimal Health
Dogwood Alliance
Earth's Echo Farm, LLC
Earthjustice
Eco-Justice Collaborative
Eco-Justice Ministries
Ecology Center

Eden's Garden CSA Farm
El Comite de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agricolas
Elder-Activists
Endangered Habitats League
Endangered Species Coalition
Environmental Protection Information Center
Environmental Working Group
Experimental Farm Network
Fair Farms
Family Farm Defenders
Farm & Ranch Freedom Alliance
Farm Aid
Farm Worker Ministry Northwest
Farmworker Association of Florida
Farmworker Justice
Farmworker Self-Help
Food & Water Watch
Food Chain Workers Alliance
Food Democracy Now!
Food Policy Action
FOODwatch
Friends of Bumping Lake
Friends of the Earth
Friends of the WI Wolf
Gap Mountain Goats
Gene Ethics
Genesis Farm
Georgia ForestWatch
Global Justice Ecology Project
GMO Free Florida
GMO Free USA
Government Accountability Project
Grand Canyon Trust
Grassroots Environmental Education
Grassroots Global Justice
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Green America
Green Goose Farm
Green Plate Catering
Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice
Greenhorns Now
GreenLatinos
Greenpeace
GROW North Texas
Haiku Aina Permaculture Initiative
Hawai`i Alliance for Progressive Action

Hawk Dance Farm
HEAL Food Alliance
Health Care Without Harm
Healthy Building Network
Hispanic Federation
Howling For Wolves
Humming for Bees
Idaho Organization of Resource Councils
IEat Green, LLC
Illinois Right to Know GMO
Illinois Stewardship Alliance
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Institute for Responsible Technology
Interfaith Power & Light
Interfaith Worker Justice
International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal - North America (ICJB-NA)
Iowa Alliance for Responsible Agriculture
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
Iowa County Farmers and Neighbors
Jayhawk Audubon Society
Jefferson County Farmers & Neighbors, Inc.
Judith Schwartz, Author
Klamath Forest Alliance
Land Stewardship Project
Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy, Teachers College Columbia University
Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois
Learning Disabilities Association of Maine
Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota
Learning Disabilities Association of New Jersey
Learning Disabilities Association of South Carolina
Learning Disabilities Association of Utah
Linn County Farmers and Neighbors
Local Futures
Mangrove Action Project
Maryland Conservation Council
Maryland Ornithological Society
Maryland Pesticide Education Network
Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative
Midwest Pesticide Action Center
Migrant Justice / Justicia Migrante
Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Missouri Farmers Union
MOM's Organic Market
Moms Across America
Moosewood Restaurant, Shareholder (for ID purposes only)
National Consumers League

National Council for Occupational Safety and Health
National Employment Law Project
National Family Farm Coalition
National Farm Worker Ministry
National Farmers Organization
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association
Natural Grocers
No Spray Zone
Noah's Notes
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut (NOFA-CT)
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Massachusetts Chapter (NOFA-MA)
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY)
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)
Northeast Organic Farming Association-Interstate Council
Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides
NY4WHALES
Occidental Arts and Ecology Center
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association
Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project
Operation Spring Plant, Inc.
Oregon Rural Action
Organic Consumers Association
Organic Farmers Association
Organic Seed Alliance
Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association
Organic Vision LLC
PCC Community Markets
People and Pollinators Action Network
Pesticide Action Network
Pesticide Free Zone
Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste
Planting Justice
Planting Seeds of Hope
Pollinate Minnesota
Pollinator Friendly Alliance
Pollinator Stewardship Council, Inc.
Protect All Children's Environment
Public Citizen
QLatinx
Rachel Carson Council
Raptors Are The Solution
Real Food Challenge
Real Food Challenge at the University of Utah

Rights & Democracy Vermont
Riverside-Salem UCC/DC
Rodenticide Free Project
Roots of Change
RootsAction.org
Rural Coalition
Safe Grow Montgomery
Santa Cruz Permaculture
Save Animals Facing Extinction
Save Our Sky Blue Waters
SAVE THE FROGS!
Seed the Commons
Sequoia Forest Keeper
Sierra Club
Slow Food USA
Socially Responsible Agricultural Project
South Australia Genetic Food Information Network
Southeastern Grasslands Initiative
Sustainable Food Center
Sustainable Living Systems
Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
The Aurora Foundation
The Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance
The Borneo Project
The Cornucopia Institute
The Humane League
The Lands Council
The Organic & Non-GMO Report
Three Sisters Farm & Ranch Co-op
Toxic Free NC
Toxics Action Center
Turning Green
Turtle Island Restoration Network
UMOS
Vermont Conservation Voters
Vermont Natural Resources Council
Virginia Association for Biological Farm
WE ACT for Environmental Justice
Western Colorado Alliance
Western Organization of Resource Councils
WhyHunger
WildEarth Guardians
Wildlands Network
Women's Voices for the Earth
Women's International League for Peace & Freedom, U.S. Section & Earth Democracy
Campaign

Worker Justice Center of NY
Worksafe, Inc
West Virginia Food & Farm Coalition
Young Progressives Demanding Action - Hawaii
100Grannies for a Livable Future

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- ^{iv} The Center for Responsive Politics. (2018). DowDupont. *OpenSecrets.org*. Retrieved from <https://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/clientsum.php?id=D000069022&year=2017>
- ^v The Center for Responsive Politics. (2018). DowDuPont: Issues. *OpenSecrets.org*. Retrieved from https://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/clientissues_spec.php?id=D000069022&year=2017&spec=AGR
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- ^x Hutchins, S. and Boucher, R. Formulation and Delivery of Actives: Technology Promises Delivered and Renewed [Powerpoint Slides]. Retrieved from <https://ipmsymposium.org/2006/sessions/26-5.pdf>