As a land-grant university, UW–Madison provides essential research, education, and public outreach that sustains U.S. food, fiber, and renewable fuel production. Financial support for this enterprise comes from both public and private sources. The most significant funding source is the federal-state partnership managed by the National Institutes of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)’s extramural science agency. UW–Madison also receives substantial support from the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), USDA’s flagship competitive grant program. At UW–Madison, the awards we receive from the USDA support research, education, and extension activities, including agriculture, farm efficiency and profitability, and renewable energy.

$33.9 million
USDA federal research awards at UW–Madison in 2021–22
17th in nation for research expenditures financed by USDA

EXAMPLES OF USDA RESEARCH AT UW–MADISON

Battling a Beetle
*College of Agricultural and Life Sciences*

The Colorado potato beetle has evolved resistance to more than 50 different kinds of insecticides, making the insect a “super pest” that wreaks havoc on potato crops around the world. New research from UW–Madison finds that the beetle achieved this feat largely by turning to a deep pool of diversity within its genome, allowing different populations across the U.S. to quickly evolve resistance to nearly anything humans have thrown at it. This new understanding of the pest’s genomic resources is a step toward management systems that will keep it in check. More online.

Fighting Cranberry Rot
*College of Agricultural and Life Sciences*

The U.S. leads the world in production of cranberries; unfortunately, 75 percent of growers surveyed reported that cranberry fruit rot (CFR) has significantly reduced marketable yields in the last five years, and for many, the losses were annual. The current solutions for CFR focus on preventing infections during the bloom period but are not as effective when heat stress and increased precipitation cause fruit rot during berry development. To address the challenge, UW–Madison researchers are taking a multidisciplinary approach to understand and manage CFR. More online.

WHY UNIVERSITY RESEARCH MATTERS

By supporting the USDA, you support the discovery of interdisciplinary solutions needed to address today’s complex agricultural, food, and fuel challenges.