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NATIONAL ONION
ASSOCIATION

Since 1913

218 Oak Ave., Eaton, CO 80615 | (970) 353-5895 | onions-usa.org

Jan. 31, 2021

Greg Yielding
Executive Vice President and Chief Executive
National Onion Association
218 Oak Ave.
Eaton, CO 80615

Dear Center for Produce Safety Proposal Review Committee:

We are pleased to be included in and support a CPS onion grant proposal aimed at “*Determining the Microbial Risk Profiles of Onion Production Practices in CA and CO: a Quantitative Approach to Defining Food Safety Risks and Controls within Onion Practices.*” This project is a partnership between California State University, Fresno; Colorado State University; Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Assn; the National Onion Assn; and commercial onion growers in California and Colorado.

As outlined by PI Dr. Eduardo Gutierrez-Rodriguez and coPIs Ms. Cristy Dice, Dr. Susan Pheasant, Dr. Jessica Prenni, Ms. Martha Sullins, Dr. Mark Uchanski, and Mr. Seth Urbanowitz, the proposed work leads to 1) development of a quantitative risk profile for each step of commonly employed onion production practices including topping, curing, harvesting, sorting, packing and storage and 2) dissemination of baseline information to enable updating of commodity specific guidelines for dry bulb onions.

Founded in 1913, the National Onion Association (NOA) is the official organization representing growers, shippers, brokers, and commercial representatives of the U.S. onion industry. The NOA is comprised of over 500 members from the United States and abroad. We are extremely pleased to be a part of this subsequent multi-state, collaborative, science-based effort to determine microbial risk profiles in dry bulb onions. Through this collaborative, multi-state effort we expect to better prepare our onion industry members to address/avoid situations that most likely resulted in the recent red onion human pathogen outbreak.

The NOA has already been and commits to continue being actively involved in this research project development and implementation including but not limited to the following:

- Serve on the collaborative academic applied research and industry advisory team
- Participate in biannual meetings with the research team
- Communicate project updates to our members via electronic means and face-to-face venues
- Facilitate dissemination of findings and identification of next steps upon project conclusion
- Provide 3-8 totes (48x44x29) for use by the growers providing commercial onions to the research
- Provide burlap sacks, mesh bags, and onion boxes (n=100 each for Colorado and for California) for use in research aspects related to handling, packing, and storage of fresh onions

We strongly encourage funding of this project. Please do not hesitate to contact either of us if we may be of further assistance as you evaluate this proposal of key importance to the dry bulb onion industry.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Yielding".

Greg Yielding
Executive Vice President