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Dr. Scott,

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) acknowledges the outstanding effort provided by Virginia Tech and its partners in planning and administering OneOp and the Military Family Readiness Academy. We look forward to the Academy's focus on food security for military families in June 2023 and beyond.

As you know, food security is a priority for the administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and NIFA. The Department and NIFA work every day to ensure a safe, nutritious, and secure food supply while also developing, delivering, and disseminating evidence-based nutrition education and promotion to prevent chronic diseases, improve health, and prioritize nutrition security.

NIFA partners with the Land-grant University System, Cooperative Extension, and many others to use an integrated approach in prioritizing nutrition security and ensuring sustainable agricultural systems through research, education, and Extension. NIFA invests more than \$129 million in research, education, Extension, and innovation to advance USDA's goal to tackle food and nutrition insecurity. Our interagency partnership with the Department of Defense affords the foundational support for OneOp and other military youth and family programming.

We appreciate that the OneOp team is emphasizing food and nutrition security for military families. In defending the freedom and security of our country, these families deserve to also be on the frontline of receiving the evidence-based education that can promote self-sufficiency, nutritional health, and well-being. Because these parents, caregivers and youths are our neighbors, whether living on a military base or in the house or apartment next door, extra effort should be given to ensure their access to the translational knowledge that these educational offerings provide. We recognize that the core team and others affiliated with OneOp are uniquely trained and positioned to help military families, including Veterans, achieve their personal and collective missions. Such efforts, in turn, help USDA and NIFA advance our own.

As OneOp prioritizes food security programs in 2023, we look forward to amplifying your efforts and learning about new strategies and impacts. The longstanding partnership between USDA and the Department of Defense has been instrumental in bringing the expertise of the Land-grant and Cooperative Extension System to bear on these important issues and is a proven contributor to the security of our homeland. We look forward to the outcomes of this latest chapter.

Respectfully,



R. Brent Elrod  
Science Programs Analysis Officer  
USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture