DATE

Mr. Kevin Morris

President, National Turfgrass Federation, Inc.

P. O. Box 106

Beltsville, MD 20704

RE: **Letter of Support**

SCMP Proposal: A National Turfgrass Industry Survey: Size, Impact and Potential for Economic Growth and Future Workforce Development

Dear Kevin,

[Short bio of yourself and your interest in the USDA, AMS, Specialty Crop Multi State Program, why this proposal is important]

Surveys of the turfgrass industry are essential to understand the size and impact of turfgrass in the U.S.: the number of jobs provided, geographical distribution of jobs and acres, costs of installation and maintenance, value of land planted to turfgrass, the number of home lawns, athletic fields, golf courses, parks, miles of maintained roadside turfgrass and more.   This information is critical to the allocation of federal and state research funding, marketing and promotion activity, in determining resource needs such as water and fertilizer, and other important functions of a healthy industry.

However, a comprehensive survey of U.S. turfgrass acreage and the industry’s economic impact has never been attempted.  This project will collect and disseminate national, regional and state information on the U.S. turfgrass industry. A three-phase approach will be utilized, combining Geographic Information System (GIS) and other online resources (Phase I) to estimate land areas, acreage and uses; land use-value assessments of turfgrass acreage in current vs. alternate or prior uses (Phase II); and a traditional survey of selected property owners, managers and others to estimate jobs, costs and other economic factors of the turfgrass industry (Phase III).

In addition, publicizing the inherent value of turfgrass is essential to the long-term sustainability of the industry. Collecting, summarizing and reporting job availability and career opportunities to outside groups such as science teachers will help in new recruitments. Documenting and comparing land use-values of turfgrass, along with maintenance costs and economic value to communities, to other uses is critical for land development and consideration of increasing turfgrass areas, and reduction of hardscapes and artificial turf.

For these reasons, I fully support this proposal…….

Sincerely,