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Testimony of Northern Canola Growers Association

March 1, 2023

RE: Support for HB 1020

Senate Appropriations Committee

The Northern Canola Growers Association, which represents over 3,000 canola growers in North Dakota that produce nearly 82 percent of canola grown in the U.S., would like to extend its support for the SBARE initiatives, particularly the equipment storage sheds, and technician support for the plant pathology program at the Langdon Research Center (LREC). We also understand the bids for a greenhouse at the LREC from last session came in over the authorized amount and would support efforts to fully fund a greenhouse.

Canola has enjoyed tremendous success since the crop started to take off in the late 90's and acres have tripled since then. With the increase in acres, we had to focus on challenges with obtaining crop protection products for use on canola in the early years, to focusing on monitoring pests and diseases of canola even more intently in the last 15 years.

We rely heavily on the NDSU experts to aid the industry in addressing these challenges. We have a long-standing relationship with the Langdon Research Extension Center because it is in the heart of canola acreage in the state. Dr. Chapara has spent many hours trying to understand the implications and management of clubroot in canola. His research has involved identifying areas of the disease within the county, expanding to a state-wide survey, and researching products to control this disease in canola. Now his workload is increasing due to the increased prevalence of a newly discovered disease in canola, verticillium stripe, which was discovered by Canadian researchers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and is now being detected in northern North Dakota.

As many of you have probably heard, in November, a canola oil pathway was approved by the EPA for production of renewable diesel and other products as a result of the canola industry's petition submitted to the EPA over two years ago. Market analysts estimate we will need double the amount of canola we currently produce just to meet the needs of this new market for canola. This does not consider the huge potential sustainable aviation fuel will bring to the market. To ensure NDSU can facilitate this needed growth in the acreage of canola, the initiatives mentioned above will be vital and will be a smart investment in agriculture in the state.

We urge your support for enhancements at the Langdon Research Extension Center. Thank you very much for your consideration.