

HB1020

The Senate Appropriations Committee

3/2/2023

Sarah Hall Lovas, SBARE Chair

Chairman Bekkedahl and members of The Senate Appropriations Committee. My name is Sarah Hall Lovas and I am an agronomist from Hillsboro, ND. I currently serve as the Chair of State Board of Agricultural Research and Education (SBARE). Thank you for this opportunity to come before you today and share with you some information about the North Dakota Agricultural Research Station (NDAES), NDSU Extension (Extension), and SBARE. Thank you for your previous support for the NDAES and Extension.

The State Board of Agriculture Research (SBAR) was established by legislative decree in 1997. It was responsible for the budgeting and policy making associated with the supervision of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station. The law was amended in 1999 to include responsibility for the North Dakota State University Extension Service and the name was changed to the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education (SBARE).

SBARE within the policies of the State Board of Higher Education, is responsible for the budgeting and policy making associated with the NDAES and Extension. Our role applies equally to both. I won't go through all the duties of SBARE, but they can be found in North Dakota Century Code and are also outlined on page 1 in your budget book. As required by the ND Century Code, SBARE develops the biennial budget report by receiving grassroots

information from individual producers, commodity groups, organizations, extension leaders, researchers, and agribusinesses across the state.

This past biennium, SBARE started receiving stakeholder input on November 2, 2021, and stakeholder input was concluded on January 5th, 2022. Stakeholder input was received via two in-person, oral input sessions with locations in Dickinson and Fargo, by mail submission, and electronic submission. We received input from across North Dakota and many diverse groups were represented. We heard about many diverse needs for North Dakota's Agriculture and the people of North Dakota. After stakeholder input was received, we began the prioritization process to rank programmatic initiatives based on the input we received. The Extension and NDAES programmatic priority lists, and the NDAES Capital Improvement list are in your budget book. Dr. Greg Lardy will follow me and go over our priorities in more detail. However, I do want to make this committee aware of two significant conversations that SBARE had during our prioritization process: 1) The need for a Field Lab Facility (Waldron Hall Replacement); 2) The need to enhance North Dakota state employee compensation.

Chairman Bekkedahl and Committee Members, the agriculture industry has a significant contribution to North Dakota's economy. Dean Bangsund and Nancy Hodur recently completed research to determine the contribution of North Dakota's Agriculture industry to North Dakota's economy. On December 5th in Bismarck, Governor Burgum hosted a press conference about the results of this research. Many elected leaders and others were also in attendance. The research results are astounding! Agriculture has a \$30.8 billion dollar contribution to North Dakota's economy! Agriculture accounts for about 19% of all North Dakota's employment and 20% of all labor income. If you have a dollar in your pocket, twenty cents of that dollar would be attributed

to North Dakota's agriculture industry. At the same time, agriculture research has an ROI of 25%. This is a very good return on investment. Simply put, there is no better investment for a dollar than into agriculture research and this investment improves a major economic driver for North Dakota's economy.

Those are the impacts in dollars and cents. However, there is more to this story than just the dollars and cents. Extension and NDAES is present every day in North Dakota agriculture and the daily lives of North Dakotan's! The basis for my agronomic recommendations for North Dakota producers is derived from the NDAES and Extension. My experience as a youth in 4-H taught me the leadership skills I needed to participate in many boards, including SBARE. The NDAES and Extension touches North Dakota Lives in so many ways. Examples include specialty crop plant breeding programs; the Rural Leadership North Dakota, livestock information; drought management education for crop and livestock producers; soil health education programs. These are only a few examples I can name off the top of my head, but feel free to ask for more information regarding the impact of the NDAES and Extension on North Dakota.

Thank you for your time this afternoon. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about SBARE, our priorities, or my involvement in agriculture.

Request: Please support the SBARE Priority list. Please support the Field Lab Facility request. Please support enhancing state employee compensation packages.