

SB 2357
2/19/25

AGRICULTURE DIVERSIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

GRANT REPORT 2023-2024



Agriculture Commissioner
Doug Goehring

BND 
Bank of North Dakota

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ABOUT ADD

The Agriculture Diversification and Development Fund (ADD) was established through HB No. 1475 during the 67th Legislative Assembly to support new or expanding value-added-agriculture businesses that demonstrate financial feasibility, enhance profitability for farmers and ranchers, create jobs and grow North Dakota's economy. The funding opportunities include grants, interest rate buydowns and loans.

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) houses the ADD grant committee. The committee is tasked with the review and recommendation of the grant funding portion of the ADD program.

Applicants must complete the ADD application form and submit a complete business plan, current balance sheet and income statement along with full sources and use of funds.

ELIGIBILITY

A value-added agriculture business registered with the North Dakota Secretary of State's office or a North Dakota resident that diversifies a crop or animal industry and provides collateral uses for agriculture resources. Businesses with a majority ownership comprised of North Dakota residents will have priority over majority non-North Dakota-owned applications. Companies outside North Dakota must have an established relationship with a North Dakota partner which includes an individual, company or agency to validate the credibility of the proposal and comply with the intent of the Code. The types of projects may include but are not limited to:

- Food production and processing facilities
- Feed or pet food processing facilities
- Commodity processing facilities
- Agriculture product manufacturer
- Animal production facilities

Priority consideration is given to projects most consistent with the mission of the Agriculture Diversification and Development Committee as established in North Dakota Century Code 4.1-01.1. Emphasis will be given to those proposals deemed most likely to generate economic returns and support agricultural-based prosperity of a region or sector of the state.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Proceeds may be used to:

- Purchase or lease equipment.
- To establish a value-added agriculture business.
- To expand an existing value-added agriculture business.

Proceeds may not be used to:

- Fund salaries or operating expenses normally associated with standard business practices.
- Refinance an existing loan or debt.

ADMINISTRATION

ADD COMMISSIONERS

The ADD committee consists of 11 board members. The Agriculture Commissioner appoints five members and the Governor appoints one member.

The board also includes three statutory members: the North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner, the Director of the Department of Economic Development & Finance, and the President of North Dakota State University, or their designees. The remaining two members must be representatives from Independent Community Banks of North Dakota and North Dakota Bankers Association.



RACHEL RETTERATH, CHAIR
Commissioner's Appointee



MATTHEW GLESSNER, VICE CHAIR
Commissioner's Appointee



DAN KALIL
Commissioner's Appointee



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DENNIS WALSH
Independent Community
Banks of North Dakota



DIANNE PIERCE
North Dakota
Bankers Association



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DOUG GOEHRING
Agriculture Commissioner



DAVID COOK
NDSU President

ADD STAFF



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Business, Marketing
& Information Division
Director



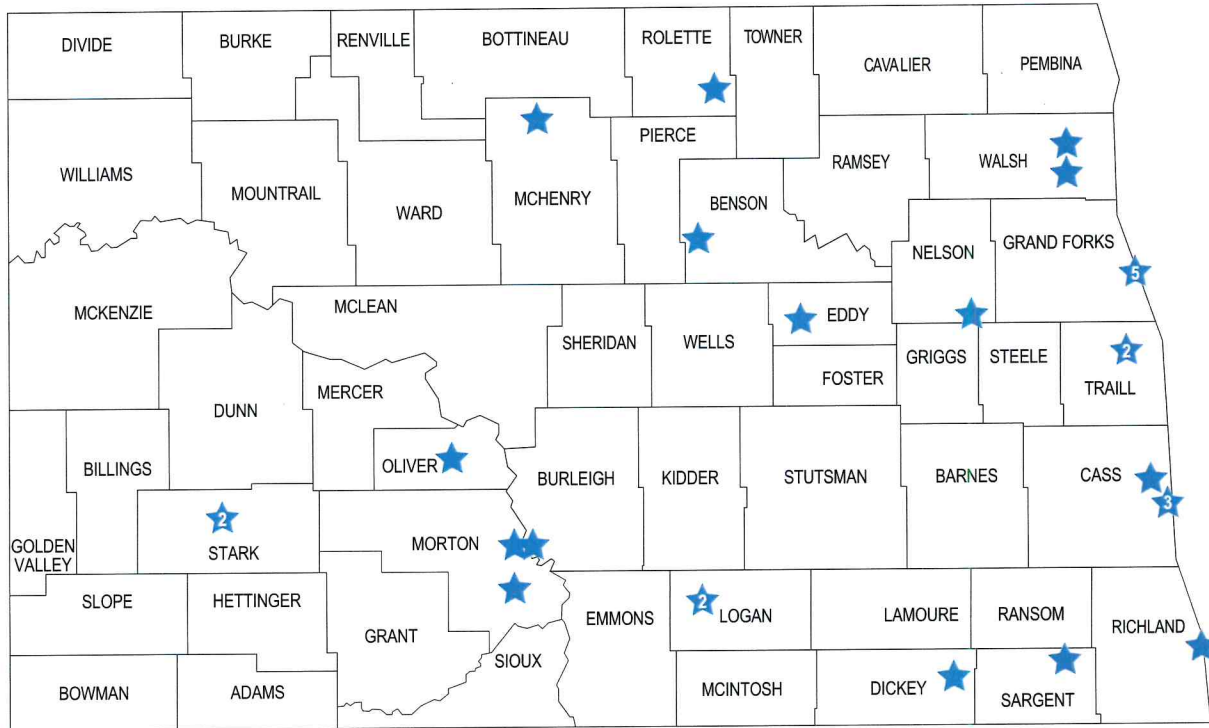
HEATHER LANG
Ag Business Development
Coordinator



TALEY DAVIS
Ag Development Specialist

PROJECT MAP

In 2023-24, ADD funded 29 projects in 20 North Dakota communities.



- Aneta - Larsgaard Wool Mill LLC
- Bismarck - Homeland Hempcrete
- Buxton - Central Valley Bean Cooperative
- Buxton - NoKota Packers, Inc.
- Center - Square Butte Farm
- Dickinson - Badlands Feeds LLC
- Dickinson - Key-Lix of ND, LLC
- Esmond - Rhino Meat Processing LLC
- Fargo - Dakota Hurd Co LLC
- Fargo - North American Bison LLC
- Fargo - Proof Artisan Distillers LLC
- Grafton - Campbell, Inc.
- Grand Forks - Associated Potato Growers, Inc.
- Grand Forks - Billie's Soap
- Grand Forks - Epitome Energy LLC
- Grand Forks - Three Farm Daughters LLC
- Grand Forks - Red River Potatoes, LLC
- Harwood - Pingree Transload LLC
- Mandan - Holle Farms Trucking LLC
- Milnor - The Dairy Dozen-Milnor, LLP
- Minto - Lone Wolf Farms
- Mylo - Lewey's Meat Shop
- Napoleon - Gross Cattle Company LLC
- Napoleon - Rock Valley Feeders LLP
- New Rockford - North American Bison LLC
- Oakes - Four Star Ag
- St. Anthony - St. Anthony Meats
- Upham - 1481 Meats Inc.
- Wahpeton - Giant Snacks Inc.

PROJECTS



Pinto beans

VOLM PACKAGING MACHINE AND PALLETIZER

Associated Potato Growers, Inc.
Mike Torgerson, Grand Forks

Grant Amount: \$250,000

Associated Potato Growers Inc. has been a cooperative since 1948, comprising 14 growers who cultivate a variety of red and yellow potatoes. At APGI, they wash and pack potatoes for wholesale customers. As demand continues to rise, they recognize the need to add additional packing equipment to facilities. By purchasing an additional packaging machine and palletizer, they will be able to significantly increase productivity, create new jobs, and enhance profitability for growers. This investment will not only support the cooperative's growth but also strengthen their ability to meet the needs of customers in an expanding market.

FEEDMILL EXPANSION

Badlands Feeds LLC
Heather Buckman, Dickinson

Grant Amount: \$100,000

This project aims to establish a connection between already existing pelleting equipment and newly installed storage bins, allowing Pingree to maximize the use of additional space. By implementing this connection, they will be able to install new elevator legs, which will significantly increase product storage capacity. This expansion will also enable them to diversify product offerings, enhance operational capabilities and overall efficiency.

BILLIE'S SOAP GRAND FORKS EXPANSION

Billie's Soap
Billie & Dale Kellar, Grand Forks

Grant Amount: \$500,000

Billie Soap is seeking to raise \$1.4 million to support its expansion in the Grand Forks area, which will include the establishment of a larger manufacturing facility. This initiative aims to create both full-time and part-time job opportunities, contributing to local employment growth. Additionally, the expansion will facilitate the production of new products utilizing North Dakota agricultural resources and enhance our

research and development efforts to explore potential new product lines. This strategic investment not only strengthens our operational capabilities but also reinforces our commitment to supporting the local economy and sustainable practices.

CAMPBELL INC WASH PLANT RENOVATION

Campbell, Inc.
Greg Campbell, Grafton

Grant Amount: \$50,000

Campbell Inc. of Grafton, ND, is currently undergoing a renovation of its potato washing and packing facilities, which began in July 2023. This renovation includes a 30 by 80-foot addition featuring concrete flooring, electrical wiring, and insulation, along with the installation of three new bathrooms. A key component of the project is the implementation of a fully automated packaging line that will automatically weigh, stack, and palletize bags or bulk containers of potatoes, preparing them for truck delivery. This additional packaging line, sourced from another facility, will be completely refurbished to fit the new layout. Furthermore, five new conveyors are being installed to streamline connections between all machinery. In July 2024, an Oculus automated potato sorter will be added to ensure that all products meet quality specifications for accounts receiving potatoes. This comprehensive upgrade aims to enhance efficiency and improve product quality at Campbell Inc.

EDIBLE BEAN WAREHOUSE MODERNIZATION AND EXPANSION

Central Valley Bean Cooperative
Daniel Fuglesten, Buxton

Grant Amount: \$250,000

Central Valley Bean Cooperative (CVBC) is

a member-driven cooperative with over 400 members, established in 1982 by edible bean growers seeking a processing facility in Eastern North Dakota. Serving growers within a 200-mile radius of Buxton, ND, CVBC plans to demolish its outdated bagging and palletizing equipment and invest in new automated systems. This upgrade will include expanding and heating the current warehouse to accommodate the new machinery. With a primary focus on pinto beans, CVBC's processing plant in Buxton is recognized as a leading facility in the industry. Supported by satellite receiving stations across North Dakota's edible bean growing regions, CVBC efficiently markets its products both locally and globally. This project will enhance operational efficiencies, creating a safer and more enjoyable work environment for employees, while providing significant value to growers and improving service for an expanding customer base.

DAKOTA HURD CO

Dakota Hurd Co LLC
Justin Berg, Fargo

Grant Amount: \$125,000

Dakota Hurd Company is an industrial hemp processing facility located in Wahpeton, ND, specializing in the harvesting of hemp hurd, the inner woody core of the hemp stalk. Renowned for its lightweight, strength, durability, and absorbent properties, hemp hurd is increasingly sought after for various applications. The primary focus of Dakota Hurd Company is to meet the specifications of the building-grade hurd market, particularly in the production of hempcrete, a sustainable construction material. Through their operations, they aim to contribute to the growing demand for eco-friendly building solutions while ensuring high-quality standards in the products.

EPITOME ENERGY LLC

Epitome Energy LLC
Dennis Egan, Grand Forks

Grant Amount: \$500,000

Epitome Energy LLC plans to construct, own, and operate a new soybean crush facility on a +/-70-acre site near Grand Forks, North Dakota. Once fully operational, the facility is expected to process up to 42 million bushels of soybeans annually into soybean oil, soybean meal, and soybean hulls. The project is projected to generate approximately \$680 million in revenue against \$645 million in expenses. This facility will provide certainty for soybean growers by opening new market opportunities and enabling investors to capture financial returns. Additionally, the operation will create 50-60 permanent jobs and indirectly support around 800 jobs in the Grand Forks area, contributing to economic growth and enhancing the value of the region's robust agribusiness sector.

ONION PACKAGING AUTOMATION

Four Star Ag
Barry Vculek, Oakes

Grant Amount: \$200,000

The project involves the addition of an automated weigher, automated bagger, and automated palletizer, along with related conveyors, to enhance the onion bagging operation at Four Star Ag. This automation will significantly speed up the bagging process and reduce labor requirements, enabling the company to meet sales goals during peak demand periods. By streamlining operations, Four Star Ag aims to increase overall sales and total revenue, positioning the company for greater efficiency and profitability in the competitive agricultural market.

GIANTS PALLETIZING PROJECT

Giant Snacks Inc
Robert Schuler, Wahpeton

Grant Amount: \$500,000

Giant Snacks aims to increase automation within their company to facilitate growth and enhance workplace safety. Repetitive motion jobs are the leading cause of occupational injuries, accounting for nearly two-thirds of workplace incidents. To address this issue, they plan to implement a robotic system that will automate the palletization of our finished products, which are packaged in boxes. Each typical pallet contains between 187 and 240 cases, and manual palletizing involves approximately 320 repetitive motions per day. By introducing this automated equipment, they will significantly reduce the physical strain on workers, thereby creating a safer work environment while improving efficiency in operations.

BEEF CONFINEMENT BARN

Gross Cattle Company LLC
Donovan Gross, Napoleon

Grant Amount: \$50,000

The project involves the construction of an advanced beef confinement barn designed to optimize cattle-raising operations for Gross Cattle Co. Key components of the facility will include a concrete floor, a wooden structure, roofing, and a roll-up curtain on the north wall, with a comprehensive cost breakdown totaling \$1.7 million. This strategic investment aims to enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs, and ensure effective climate control. Ultimately, these improvements will enable the company to compete more effectively in the wholesale meat market, positioning Gross Cattle Co. for sustained growth and success.



Sunflower seeds

TRUCKING OPERATION

Holle Farms Trucking LLC
Andrew Holle, Mandan

Grant Amount: \$175,000

In response to the abrupt closure of the creamery in Mandan, North Dakota, this team has developed a strategic plan to transport milk for Land O'Lakes and two additional dairies to market. Effective immediately, they will facilitate the shipment of two loads of milk daily to Pollock, South Dakota, and one load every other day to Perham, Minnesota. This arrangement will ensure that the needs of Land O'Lakes and the other dairies are met efficiently. Additionally, they will utilize non-Land O'Lakes product to top off each load, maximizing capacity and ensuring that all shipments are conducted with full loads to enhance operational efficiency.

OFFSITE BUILDING COMPANY, HOMELAND HEMPCRETE, EXPANDING OPERATIONS

Homeland Hempcrete
Matt Marino, Bismarck

Grant Amount: \$148,250

Homeland Hempcrete has developed an innovative process that merges the efficiencies of off-site construction with natural building practices. The company has designed a panelized system that uses hempcrete as the insulation for their wall assemblies, prioritizing the use of locally sourced materials. In 2023, Homeland Hempcrete will achieve a significant milestone by utilizing stalks derived from North Dakota industrial hemp for the first time. As this goal comes to fruition, the next step is to enhance manufacturing capacity to complete the North Dakota supply chain, as there are currently few state-wide or regional outlets for industrial hemp without a manufacturer like Homeland Hempcrete. The company has been actively designing custom equipment and processes to scale operations in line with the burgeoning industry, and the upcoming task is to begin constructing and implementing these solutions.

KEY-LIX OF NORTH DAKOTA, LLC FACILITY

Key-Lix of ND, LLC
Jed Archibald, Dickinson

Grant Amount: \$150,000

Key Lix of ND LLC is a livestock supplement agriculture processing manufacturer dedicated to producing the highest quality products while maintaining competitive pricing. The company is currently constructing a new manufacturing facility in Dickinson, ND, which will utilize canola meal and molasses sourced from North Dakota producers as raw materials. This facility will manufacture a range of products, including tubs, loose minerals, pastes, and custom supplements.

At launch, the facility is expected to employ 10-15 individuals, with projections to increase to over 20 employees once production reaches full capacity. Key Lix of ND LLC is registered with the North Dakota Secretary of State and is a newly established subsidiary of Utah-based Key Lix LLC, a family-owned and operated business since 1941. This expansion reflects the company's commitment to supporting local agriculture while delivering quality livestock supplements to the market.

LARSGAARD WOOL MILL

Larsgaard Wool Mill LLC
Judy Larsgaard, Aneta

Grant Amount: \$50,000

This report seeks approval for funding to support the construction of a wool mill, which will enhance local agricultural productivity by processing up to 350 pounds of wool and fleece per month. The facility will add significant value to these raw materials, fostering economic growth within the region and promoting sustainable



Bison

practices in the wool industry.

IMPLEMENTING NEW TECHNOLOGY TO OPTIMIZE QUALITY FOR BUSINESS LONGEVITY

Lone Wolf Farms
Christopher Bjerneby, Minto

Grant Amount: \$50,000

Lone Wolf Farms will engage Techmark Inc. and Samson Electric to provide equipment and technical expertise for the installation of advanced computer control and refrigeration systems. This project will encompass modern computers, wiring, sensors, frequency drives, refrigeration equipment, and software designed to enhance product quality. By leveraging a combination of fresh air and refrigeration when necessary, the systems will optimize product quality and longevity while maintaining reasonable power consumption levels, as determined by new computer software. Studies indicate that the implementation of frequency drives and automated controls can reduce energy consumption by up to 35%, resulting in significant electricity savings and a positive environmental impact. Additionally, Lone Wolf Farms will collaborate with Exeter Engineering to develop AI software capable of categorizing potato defects according to USDA standards 1 and 2. This initiative aims to minimize food waste, further reducing our environmental footprint and promoting sustainability.

NOKOTA PACKERS

NoKota Packers, Inc.
Carissa Olsen, Buxton

Grant Amount: \$250,000

For 44 years, Nokota Packers has been a premier potato wash plant in the Red River

Valley, shipping red and yellow potatoes from September to May, sourced from farming operations within a 100-mile radius of Buxton, ND. Thanks to its state-of-the-art storage facility, the company can supply the fresh potato market throughout this extended season. Nokota provides essential services, including storage, washing, packing, and shipping for its contracted growers, delivering potatoes to customers nationwide. This automation project is a critical step toward ensuring the sustainability of Nokota Packers in the fresh potato industry. The initiative will enhance efficiency by increasing washing capacity, improving the quality of the finished product, and addressing vacant positions that are often abandoned due to the repetitive and physically demanding nature of the work. Importantly, the existing workforce will be able to focus on other responsibilities, as the automation will not result in job losses. Upgrading outdated technology and equipment while adding automation to our packaging lines will enable Nokota Packers to expand its capacity, improve efficiencies, and create greater opportunities for growth and profitability.

NORTH AMERICAN BISON, LLC - ANIMAL WELFARE AND PRODUCTION FACILITY

North American Bison LLC
Jim Wells, Fargo

Grant Amount: \$500,000

The project involves the completion of an upgraded Animal Welfare facility designed to enhance the safety of animal handling during offloading and management. This development coincides with the enhancement of employee work transition areas, aimed at expanding existing SQF (Safety and Quality Processes). Key components of the project include the design and construction of a new entry barn facility and an improved animal handling area, featuring upgraded unloading docks for both semi-trucks

and stock trailers. Additionally, the project will enhance employee parking and transition areas, promoting proactive measures to address any concerns related to quality and safety for the workforce and the products produced.

PINGREE TRANSLOAD

Pingree Transload LLC
Carl & Julie Peterson, Harwood

Grant Amount: \$175,000

Currently, there is no rail facility available for shipping niche grain products in the prime growing areas of North Dakota. Pingree Transload believes that the lack of cost-effective shipping options is causing buyers to overlook local producers. Their goal is to capture new Identity-Preserved (IP) business, which could provide significant benefits to regional farmers, potentially generating nearly \$1 million in contract premiums within the first year. Pingree Transload, LLC is an identity-preserved grain handling and transportation facility located in central North Dakota, with direct access to the RRVW railroad in Stutsman County. They aim to facilitate the successful management of IP projects between developers and end purchasers by offering a range of logistics services tailored to meet customer needs. These services include variety testing, seed increases, grower contracting and in-season crop management, product cleaning, product storage, and transportation.

DISTILLED SPIRITS, RTD CANNING LINE AND EQUIPMENT FOR WHISKEY AND CORN VODKA PROCESSING

Proof Artisan Distillers LLC
Joel Kath, Fargo

Grant Amount: \$100,000

Proof Artisan Distillers grant funds will be

utilized to procure equipment for an aluminum canning line for ready-to-drink cocktails, allowing them to transition existing products such as Fargo Whiteout, White Russians, and Red River Mudslides, as well as new seltzer offerings, from plastic bottles to more readily recyclable aluminum cans. Additionally, they will invest in whiskey production and chill filtering equipment, which will increase whiskey production capacity and enhance the quality of their already award-winning whiskeys. This expansion will also support contract bottling for out-of-state brands and provide additional capacity for corn vodka contract distilling and bottling. Proof Artisan Distillery is committed to producing nationally acclaimed spirits crafted from locally grown agricultural products, including corn, potatoes, and barley.

RED RIVER POTATOES PRODUCTION EXPANSION

Red River Potatoes, LLC
Jack Wiegand, Grand Forks

Grant Amount: \$200,000

Red River Potatoes, a prominent potato waste dehydration plant, is pleased to announce a significant expansion of its operations. Established in 2021, the facility has effectively transformed potato by-products into valuable ingredients for livestock and pet food. This expansion project, funded through a combination of financial institutions and private investments, aims to triple the plant's current capacity.

ADDITION/STATE INSPECTION

Rhino Meat Processing LLC
Ryno Conradie, Esmond

Grant Amount: \$100,000

This project aims to enhance facilities by adding

space for value-added processing, establishing an office for North Dakota Meat Inspection, and creating a retail area for local sales. Additionally, they will upgrade existing refrigeration systems to include a drip cooler and box cooler, which will enable an increase in slaughter volumes and expand the customer base. The project will incorporate several key pieces of value-added equipment, including a smokehouse and various processing tools. They anticipate that this expansion will result in a 50% increase in production volume and support the hiring of 1-2 additional full-time and part-time employees.

BISON FEEDING OPERATION

Rock Valley Feeders LLP
Cole Johnson, Napoleon

Grant Amount: \$500,000

The project aims to construct facilities that will enhance the management and finishing of bison in North Dakota, focusing on meat sales, consumption, and the promotion of bison as a viable product. This initiative is designed to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of bison production, ultimately contributing to the growth of the bison industry in the region.

SQUARE BUTTE FARM BEEF

Square Butte Farm
Joshua Albers, Center

Grant Amount: \$110,000

The project aims to annually grow and finish 980 cattle sourced from their own herd or purchased within North Dakota. The facilities will be designed for functionality across all seasons while prioritizing the well-being of the cattle and the surrounding environment, featuring a contained waste bed pack design. Cattle will be fed for ten months and harvested upon

reaching finish. To promote sustainability, most feed products will be grown on-site, with the remainder sourced locally from North Dakota. Waste management will adhere to an NRCS manure application plan to ensure responsible handling of materials. Additionally, by utilizing North Dakota contractors for construction and operations, this initiative will bolster the local economy and create opportunities for the next generation of family to enter the business.

ROBOTIC MILKING BARN

The Dairy Dozen-Milnor, LLP
Richard Millner, Milnor

Grant Amount: \$150,000

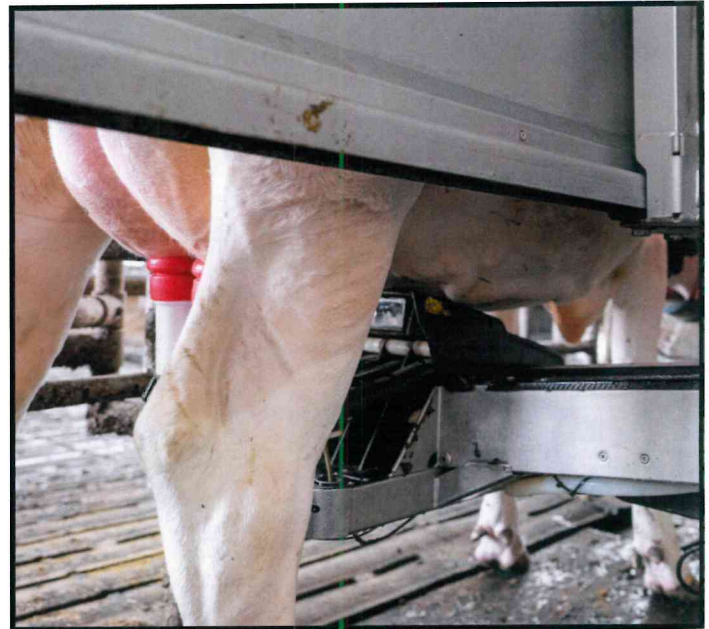
Five Star Dairy is investing \$300,000 to add a new robotic milking barn to its operations. Recently, the dairy converted its milking parlor to robotic milking, driven by numerous advantages. This transition aims to enhance milk production, improve cow comfort, and promote herd health, while also reducing labor hours and employee turnover. Additionally, it creates higher-skilled labor positions, increases operational efficiency, lowers overhead costs, and decreases feed expenses. The project is expected to improve milk production and quality, ultimately boosting profitability. This expansion also lays the groundwork for advancing robotic dairies in North Dakota.

THREE FARM DAUGHTERS

Three Farm Daughters LLC
Mollie Ficocello, Grand Forks

Grant Amount: \$51,581

The project involves the construction of a new co-packing plant and warehouse facility in Grand Forks, ND. This facility will be food-grade compliant and will focus on co-packing bulk



Robotic dairy

pasta, with the potential to expand into additional product lines. It will provide ample warehouse space to support the growing business of Three Farm Daughters, while also offering services to other companies seeking food-grade co-packing and warehousing solutions in the region. This new facility aims to enhance local food production capabilities and create additional opportunities for collaboration within the food industry.

1481 MEATS ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

1481 Meats Inc.
Tyler & Kelani Welstad, Upham

Grant Amount: \$70,881

1481 Meats in planning to purchase several key pieces of equipment for use in a custom and state inspected slaughter facility. The acquisition of a burger former will enable the production of high-quality ground meat products. Additionally, a tumbler will be purchased to enhance product quality by improving tenderness, flavor, and appearance. The purchase of an elevating offal



Meat processing

cart is requested to eviscerate animals under inspection, a tool preferred by North Dakota state inspectors to ensure compliance with regulatory standards.

LEWEY'S MEAT SHOP

Lewey's Meat Shop
Steve Lewis, Mylo

Grant Amount: \$133,209

Lewey's Meat Shop is an exciting new start-up located in Mylo, ND, specializing in locally raised, high-quality beef and pork. The full-service shop, owned and operated by Steve and Patsy Lewis, is set to open early 2025. With over 40 years of industry experience, Steve brings a wealth of knowledge to ensure the shop's success and its distinction from local competitors. Lewey's Meat Shop will source meats from ND farmers, support the local economy, and create employment opportunities.

ST. ANTHONY MEATS CUSTOM PROCESSING

St. Anthony Meats
Steve Gotta, St. Anthony

Grant Amount: \$250,000

St. Anthony Meats plans to purchase 2 acres of land on Highway 6 in St. Anthony, ND, to establish a slaughter and processing facility that will serve local livestock producers. The facility is designed to have the capacity to slaughter, age, and process up to 15 beef per week, offering custom slaughter and processing services to ND producers. The commercial facility will feature state-of-the-art equipment and ample space to meet the requirements for becoming a federally inspected facility in the future. This project aims to support livestock producers and enhance the availability of high-quality products for local customers.

NORTH AMERICAN BISON - OUT-BARN PROCESSING AND HANDLING

North American Bison LLC
Jim Wells, New Rockford

Grant Amount: \$200,000

NAB, LLC is exploring new uses for various components of the bison carcass, including hides and other offal, which were previously unused. These materials will be processed into proteins and supplements for human consumption by third-party companies producing finished products. To support this new production category, NAB plans to establish a production space, separate from the current facility for the proper preparation, packaging, storage, and shipping of these raw materials. The project involves constructing a pre-fabricated steel barn unit that will be insulated, creating a safe, clean, climate-controlled environment for handling and processing bison hides.

FUNDING

ADD's appropriation for the 2023-2025 biennium totaled \$7,500,000.

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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