

**Branch Research Centers
Budget No. 628
Senate Bill No. 2020**

	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
2025-27 legislative appropriation	107.16	\$21,970,567	\$21,850,183	\$43,820,750
2023-25 legislative appropriation	<u>111.81</u>	<u>19,683,598</u>	<u>20,964,971</u>	<u>40,648,569</u>
2025-27 appropriation increase (decrease) to 2023-25 appropriation	(4.65)	\$2,286,969	\$885,212	\$3,172,181

Item Description

Full-time equivalent changes - The Legislative Assembly authorized 107.16 FTE positions for the branch research centers for the 2025-27 biennium, a decrease of 4.65 FTE positions from the 2023-25 biennium. The 4.65 FTE positions were removed pursuant to Section 10 of House Bill No. 1020 (2023), which authorized the State Board of Higher Education to adjust FTE positions at entities under its control. Section 9 of Senate Bill No. 2020 continues the authorization of the board to adjust positions at entities under its control during the 2025-27 biennium.

New and vacant FTE pool - The Legislative Assembly transferred \$1,528,106 from the branch research center line items to the new and vacant FTE pool line items and reduced the amount to \$1,089,674 for estimated savings from vacant FTE positions.

Transfer authority - In Section 8 of Senate Bill No. 2020, the Legislative Assembly authorized the Director of the Main Research Center, with approval from the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education, and appropriate branch research center directors, to transfer appropriation authority within the Extension Service, Northern Crops Institute, branch research centers, and Main Research Center.

Mineral rights income - In Section 4 of Senate Bill No. 2020, the Legislative Assembly authorized the Dickinson Research Center to spend up to \$755,000 of revenues received during the 2025-27 biennium from mineral royalties, leases, or easements for ongoing operational expenses. Any revenues received in excess of \$755,000 may be spent only for one-time expenditures for the 2025-27 biennium.

In Section 5 of Senate Bill No. 2020, the Legislative Assembly directed the Williston Research Center to report to the 70th Legislative Assembly on amounts received and spent from mineral royalties, leases, or easements in the 2023-25 biennium and the 2025-27 biennium.

Status/Result

No additional changes to FTE positions were made by the 2025 Legislative Assembly.

Through February 2026, the branch research centers have not received any funding from the new and vacant FTE pool. The branch research centers had estimated vacant FTE position savings of \$423,680 during the first 7 months of the 2025-27 biennium. The branch research centers used \$391,474 of the savings for temporary salary funding, accrued leave payouts, and overtime funding. The number of vacancies in the agency has ranged from 11 to 15 FTEs with an average monthly vacancy rate of 12.43 FTE positions.

To date there have been no transfers of appropriation authority within the Extension Service, Northern Crops Institute, branch research centers, and Main Research Center, and the agency does not anticipate making any transfers during the remainder of the 2025-27 biennium.

Through April 2026, the Dickinson Research Center has received \$151,829 from mineral rights and estimates it will receive \$200,000 in total during the 2025-27 biennium. The Dickinson Research Center is using the revenue to support operations at the branch research center.

Through April 2026, the Williston Research Center has received \$19,900 from mineral rights and estimates it will receive \$25,000 in total during the 2025-27 biennium. The Williston Research Center is using the revenue to support operations at the branch research center.