

**2025 HOUSE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS**

**HB 1334**

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Political Subdivisions Committee Room JW327B, State Capitol

HB 1334  
1/30/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to designating rhubarb as the official state vegetable.

9:14 a.m. Chairman Longmuir opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Longmuir, Vice-Chairman Fegley, Vice-Chairman Jonas, Representatives Bolinske, Hager, Hatlestad, Heilman, Klemin, Motschenbacher, Ostlie, Toman, Warrey

Members Absent: Representative Davis

### Discussion Topics:

- History of rhubarb
- Traditional rhubarb recipes

9:14 a.m. Representative Matt Heilman, North Dakota Representative for District 7, introduced the bill and provided testimony #34440.

9:15 a.m. Tamara Steckler and family, Steckler Academy, testified in favor and provided testimony #32015.

9:26 a.m. Kathlene Donoghue, Bismarck Citizen, testified in favor.

9:29 a.m. Chairman Longmuir closed the hearing.

*Wyatt Armstrong, Committee Clerk*

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee, we thank you for your time and consideration of Bill #1334 in trying to make rhubarb the official state vegetable of North Dakota. We are a homeschool family and when we were studying North Dakota history, our kids recognized that North Dakota did not have a state vegetable and thought it would be great to give our favorite vegetable that honor. We then began our journey into learning how we could make rhubarb our state vegetable and we contacted our district representative Matt Heilman to help us down this path.

We believe rhubarb is a very worthy candidate for this honor as it has a large part in many cuisines and recipes of the heritages in North Dakota such as German, Scandinavian, and Russian/Ukrainian cultures. There are communities such as the Rugby, Aneta Community Orchard, and Grand Forks that hold annual summer festivals with rhubarb tasting competitions. Rhubarb even had a part in helping North Dakotans survive the Dust Bowl during the years of the Great Depression as described in the book *Prairie Cooks* by Carrie Young with Felicia Young. In the book there is a chapter titled "Entire County Saved By Rhubarb" and tells tales of a huge rhubarb patch in Williams County, North Dakota.

Due to its use in jams and jellies, breads, pies and other various desserts, some people incorrectly think it is a fruit, but this very distinct vegetable is much like North Dakotans as it is tolerant of cold weather and can survive below zero temperatures, and that makes it a perfect vegetable to grow in upper Midwest states like North Dakota. It has a tart and tangy flavor in its vibrant red and green stalks and also has many health benefits as it contains potassium, vitamin C & K, calcium, fiber, and antioxidants and is very low in calories.

Again we believe rhubarb is a worthy candidate to be the state vegetable of North Dakota and we thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

The Steckler Homeschool Academy



# North Dakota House of Representatives

STATE CAPITOL  
600 EAST BOULEVARD  
BISMARCK, ND 58505-0360



## Representative Matthew Heilman

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## COMMITTEES:

Education  
Political Subdivisions

January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Chairman Longmuir and members of the committee,

My name is Matt Heilman. I am a state representative from North Dakota's seventh legislative district in Bismarck. I am here today to testify in favor of HB 1334 to make rhubarb the state vegetable. This bill was requested to me by my constituent Tamara Steckler, who has uploaded testimony. Rhubarb has had a bigger role in North Dakota than you may think. I don't want to steal Tamara's thunder, so I will let her take the stage.

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Political Subdivisions Committee Room JW327B, State Capitol

HB 1334  
1/30/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to designating rhubarb as the official state vegetable.

11:06 a.m. Chairman Longmuir opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Longmuir, Vice-Chairman Fegley, Vice-Chairman Jonas, Representatives Bolinske, Hager, Hatlestad, Heilman, Klemin, Motschenbacher, Ostlie, Toman, Warrey

Members Absent: Representative Davis

### Discussion Topics:

- Heritage of Rhubarb in North Dakota
- Committee Action

11:06 a.m. Representative Heilman moved a Do Pass.

11:06 a.m. Representative Klemin seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Donald W. Longmuir	Y
Representative Clayton Fegley	Y
Representative Jim Jonas	Y
Representative Macy Bolinske	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	A
Representative LaurieBeth Hager	Y
Representative Patrick R. Hatlestad	Y
Representative Matthew Heilman	Y
Representative Lawrence R. Klemin	Y
Representative Mike Motschenbacher	Y
Representative Mitch Ostlie	Y
Representative Nathan Toman	Y
Representative Jonathan Warrey	Y

11:10 a.m. Motion passed 12-0-1

11:10 a.m. Representative Heilman will carry the bill.

11:11 a.m. Chairman Longmuir closed the hearing.

*Wyatt Armstrong, Committee Clerk*

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**HB 1334 ([25.1029.01000](#))**

**Political Subdivisions Committee (Rep. Longmuir, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1334 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

**2025 SENATE AGRICULTURE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**HB 1334**

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1334  
2/20/2025

A bill relating to designating rhubarb as the official state vegetable.
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3:21 p.m. Chairman Luick opened the hearing.

Members present: Chairman Luick, Vice-Chair Myrdal, Senator Marcellais, Senator Weston, Senator Weber, Senator Lemm

### Discussion Topics:

- Homeschooled families
- Family recipes
- Ritzy Rhubarb Family Cookbook
- Facts about rhubarb
- History and resilience of rhubarb

3:22 p.m. Representative Matt Heilman, District 7, testified in favor and introduced the bill.

3:23 p.m. Tamara Steckler, resident of Bismarck, ND, testified in favor.

3:25 p.m. Bridget, Steckler, resident of Bismarck, ND, testified in favor

3:27 p.m. Sierra Steckler, resident of Bismarck, ND, testified in favor.

3:27 p.m. Justin Steckler, resident of Bismarck, ND, testified in favor.

3:28 p.m. Alyssa Steckler, resident of Bismarck, ND, testified in favor.

3:29 p.m. Jay Steckler, resident of Bismarck, ND, testified in favor.

3:37 p.m. Kathleen Donahue, resident of Bismarck, ND, testified in favor and submitted testimony #38248.

3:39 p.m. Chairman Luick closed the hearing.

3:39 p.m. Senator Weston moved a Do Pass.

3:39 p.m. Senator Weber seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	A
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y

Senator Richard Marcellais	Y
Senator Mark F. Weber	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y

Motion passed 5-0-1.

Senator Weber will carry the bill.

3:40 p.m. Chairman Luick closed the hearing.

*Audrey Oswald, Committee Clerk*

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**HB 1334 ([25.1029.01000](#))**

**Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee (Sen. Luick, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (5 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1334 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

Dear Chair Luick and Committee Members:

My name is Kathleen Donahue, and I live in District 32 of Bismarck. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of House Bill 1334.

The Steckler children and their parents make a persuasive case for rhubarb as our state vegetable. Given your passion for feeding our nation, I hope you will support their effort.

It's impressive to me to see children engaged in the legislative process. This initiative by the Steckler family demonstrates careful research by the children, who began this journey as part of their coursework to study North Dakota state history. As you have learned, the children's discovery that North Dakota did not have a designated state vegetable led to this initiative.

Who says you can't learn from the younger generation? It was the Steckler children who taught me that rhubarb is a vegetable and not a fruit. Rhubarb is as resilient as our state's settlers and first Americans. Perhaps this comparison is more from a hazard mitigation planner perspective, but I notice rhubarb survives drought and extreme cold temperatures to come back each year.

Until I moved to North Dakota, I never had a rhubarb dish; it quickly became a favorite ingredient for me when cooking my favorite desserts, rhubarb delight and rhubarb cake. I am looking forward this spring to making a roasted rhubarb salad. No wonder this versatile vegetable is a staple across our state and a favorite at family meals and at diners.

The Steckler family's work with Representative Matthew Heilman to make this bill a reality speaks volumes to their dedication and interest in learning about our state's legislative processes. Their unflagging commitment to seeing a bill become law underscores the importance of teaching children their civic responsibilities. Their passion is inspirational. The Steckler children are on their way to being engaged, outstanding citizens, and I hope you will reward them by making rhubarb our state vegetable.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kathleen Donahue*  
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