

SB 2020 Testimony for the NDSU Dickinson Research Extension Center

Submitted by Christopher Augustin, Director Dickinson Research Extension Center

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House Appropriations Committee

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and Members of the Appropriations Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to communicate to you the value of the Dickinson Research Extension Center and how it can improve the lives of more North Dakotans. I am Chris Augustin and have served as director of the Dickinson Research Extension Center since last April.

The Dickinson Research Extension Center improves the lives of North Dakotans through sensible and sustainable science-based research and outreach. This task is exemplified by the integrated crop and livestock systems program led by animal scientist, Doug Landblom. Range scientist, Lee Manske's grazing and rangeland work has improved thousands of acres and benefited many livestock producers.

I would like to thank the Senate for their SBARE focused additions to SB 2020. In addition to their amendments, the SBARE Ag Experiment Station Plant initiative which is the number two priority will greatly benefit farmers in western North Dakota. Dickinson Research Extension Center Extension cropping systems specialist, Ryan Buetow often has to extrapolate information from other REC's or other states to help farmers. The plant initiative would fund a much-needed research agronomist stationed at the Dickinson Research Extension Center. That person will address current and emerging agronomic issues that will increase producer's bottom line through locally applied research. Research conducted by this agronomist could help address much needed work on drought management, crop disease management, new crop technology assessment, and developing best management practices of new crops to our area like industrial hemp and soybeans. An opportunity on the horizon is expanding oil seed research in Dickinson as the Marathon biofuel plant is expected to produce renewable diesel fuel in 2022. This initiative will empower crop producers through locally generated agronomic data that is more applicable to the citizens we serve.

The Dickinson Research Extension Center team has and will continue to work hard to better the lives of the people we serve. I look forward to the future and building on our solid foundation of agricultural outreach and research. Thank you for your time.