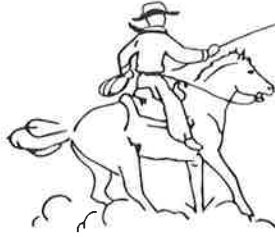


*North Dakota*  
**STOCKMEN'S ASSOCIATION**



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**North Dakota Stockmen's Association**  
**Testimony to the**  
**House Appropriations Committee on HB 1431**  
**Feb. 1, 2021**

Good afternoon, Chairman Delzer and members of the House Appropriations Committee. For the record, my name is Julie Ellingson and I represent the North Dakota Stockmen's Association, a 91-year-old beef cattle trade organization representing approximately 3,000 North Dakota cattle-ranching families across the state.

The Stockmen's Association wants to add its support to HB 1431 and, specifically, the funding provided for the Agricultural Products Development Center. The Center will include multiple agricultural components. The piece most significant to the state's livestock industry is its meats laboratory.

Replacing the existing meats laboratory has long been a priority project of our association and the broader livestock industry, as the current facility is archaic. Built back in the age of poodle skirts and sock hops, the facility has had trouble meeting inspection specs because of its age. It hampers modern teaching and science techniques and fails to prepare students for the future of food production or help the current North Dakota meat industry reach its potential.

We are blessed to have some of the nation's top meat scientists working at North Dakota State University. They have been a part of game-changing research over the course of their careers that has done everything from identify the most tender

muscle in the beef carcass to scientifically refute the commonly held myth that eating beef contributes to premature puberty in adolescents. Still, these world-class scientists are conducting their work in a substandard facility that no longer meets today's rigorous standards or models a modern-day meat processing facility. Their resourcefulness and ingenuity can only be expanded with access to an up-to-date and well-equipped facility.

The Agricultural Products Development Center is expected to pay dividends to the agricultural industry and, ultimately, the entire state as its no. 1 industry grows and flourishes. Additionally, it will help us train students in these important areas that will likewise benefit our industry and overall economy.

To demonstrate our commitment to this effort, the Stockmen's Association has committed \$25,000 of its own money to help support this major agricultural endeavor.

We are grateful to the 66th North Dakota Legislative Assembly for its \$20 million appropriation and \$20 million matching fund authority for the Agricultural Products Development Center. We respectfully request that this assembly advance this critical project with your do-pass recommendation on HB 1431.

Thank you for your consideration.