

To: State Board of Agriculture Research and Education

From: North Central Research Extension Center, Board of Visitors

Mr. Mark Birdsall, SBARE Chair, and SBARE Members:

The North Dakota State University, North Central Research Extension Center (NCREC) met on November 7, 2019. During this meeting, we discussed the current and future needs of the NCREC. After much discussion, we have ranked these as the top priorities for the NCREC.

1. Extension Livestock Specialist: Refill the position last held by John Dhuyvetter. The off-campus livestock specialist is an integral part to the NCREC and NDSU Extension team. Livestock producers depend on this position and their expertise. NDSU Extension agents are not all trained in livestock and need an expert they can connect with on a regular basis.
2. Horticulture/Urban Agriculture/Value-Added Specialist: Establish an Extension or AES position to provide expertise in urban agriculture. Minot is an urban center and many stakeholders have questions on horticulture. Many Extension agents also reported that many questions are horticulture related, and they have limited expertise in this area. Additionally, there a many high-value crops produced. This crops tend to be horticultural in nature and NDSU could be a great resource for unbiased, scientific information.
3. Technical Support: Due to budget cuts and resignations the last few years, the NCREC technical support monies are limited. Currently, the NCREC employs eight Research Specialists or Ag Research Technicians to aid in the many aspects of agriculture research and Extension efforts. With the limited amount of state-appropriated dollars, scientists and PIs spend much time working to fund personnel. An increase in state-appropriated dollars will ease this burden. Of the eight full-time positions, only 1.9 are state-funded, approximately 23%.

The NCREC Board of Visitors would like to express our gratitude to SBARE, and thank them for the hard work and support of NDSU. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Troy Coons

NCREC Board of Visitors Chair