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OCT 15 2021

VP Agricultural Affairs

October 11, 2021

State Board of Agricultural Research and Education  
NDSU Department 7520  
P O Box 6050  
Fargo, ND 58108-6050

Dear Board Members,

I am a currently certified Master Gardener and a certified Master Gardener Diagnostician. I have deeply appreciated the research and training provided by the Horticulture Department at NDSU as well as their invaluable research on trees and agricultural/home garden produce.

I have heard that the horticulture greenhouse at NDSU is slated to be demolished. This is most distressing. In a time when climate change is impacting our trees, our gardens, and our food security, it seems to me that to walk away from research on crops that can adapt to these changes to be a dereliction of duty to the residents of the state of North Dakota as well as to future generations. The drought of this last year alone was devastating to home gardens alone much less to the food stores of our nation.

Please support the replacement of Waldron Hall to allow for the continued horticultural research, and to support the Extension Service to continue. Please support legislative funding of operating funds for horticulture through the initiative of Food Security and of Outdoor Space.

We are going to need to rely on new species of trees and shrubs to contribute to our oxygen supplies as well as for shade to reduce cooling expenses of homes in our now increasing summer heats. Given the current health of our windbreaks, we very nearly came into a new "dust bowl" in many parts of North Dakota this year. Our Cotton Woods are dying, our Elms are at risk, and our Ash trees may very well become endangered. We are going to need new species of home gardening species for feeding our families, particularly now in these times of lack of access given the dwindling infrastructure/delivery systems. Home gardeners who own yards had great difficulty harvesting vegetables this year given our water restrictions and limited resources. Home gardeners who rent have a new interest in growing vegetables in containers: we need new varieties to support this. We also need research to find new agricultural species that can provide food stuffs for the larger market given our inability to rely on water supplies, predictable weather patterns, and temperature fluctuations.

In a critical time of climate change, we cannot afford to simply toss out these invaluable research options within North Dakota or, in fact, in the larger community of food production. To defund these resources is short sighted and lacks future planning.

Please do not abandon horticultural research at North Dakota's Land Grant University. The results of abandoning this financial support could be catastrophic for our communities.

Sincerely,



Emily K Hilgers

Master Gardener

Master Gardener Diagnostician

Master of Social Work

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