

Enhancing Animal Welfare

A manure management system and feedlot expansion project was started in 2009, but never finished. Over 700 feet of concrete pad has sat idle since then as the feedlot project was not completed (Figure 1). Bunks, windbreaks, and fencing are needed to better accommodate the herd. This would allow us to winter more cattle at ranch headquarters. Whereas, many head winter nearly three miles west of ranch headquarters (Figure 2). Wintering those cattle at ranch headquarters would improve our ability to care for livestock during inclement winter weather. Finishing this infrastructure project could open opportunities to conduct feeding trials that focus on distillers' grain, bio-diesel and locally grown crop biproducts.



Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Dickinson Research Extension Center ranch with the unfinished pens.

Several miles of perimeter fence are in need repair or replacing. Many full-scale farm machines are required to care for Dickinson Research Extension Center livestock. Implements are currently stored outside. A machinery shed with heated wash bay would help increase equipment longevity.

Current working facilities are cumbersome and pose safety concerns. Updating the working facilities with smart-chute technologies would create a safer work environment, increase the efficiency of working cattle, and improve data collection.



Figure 2. Heifers at the remote wintering pasture ready to calf during April blizzard.

Our Request: Support to complete the unfinished feedlot, repair existing livestock infrastructure, improve cattle handling facilities, and a machinery shed.

Improving Agriculture and Public Relations

There is a need for horticulture programming in western North Dakota. The energy industry has encouraged thousands of people to move to western North Dakota. “Winter hardy” is a term that many are not familiar with. Home weed management is poor and poses a threat to farmers and others as the inadequate weed management provides a seed bank and may encourage the propagation of herbicide resistant weeds. These issues and more have created a need for an urban agriculturalist to deliver programming to new and existing North Dakotans.



Figure 3. Dickinson Research Extension Center pollinator garden

The existing Dickinson Research Extension Center horticulture area (Figure 3 and 4) would serve as an excellent classroom and laboratory for this program.

Our Request: Support for an Urban Agriculturalist



Figure 4. Dickinson Research Extension Center horticulture tour.

Increasing Operating Budget

Operating costs have risen greatly over the past three years. Figure 5 shows that fuel, motor pool, and seed/feed/fertilizer/herbicides have risen by 41, 9, and 18% respectively.

Our Request: Support for an increase in the operating budget.

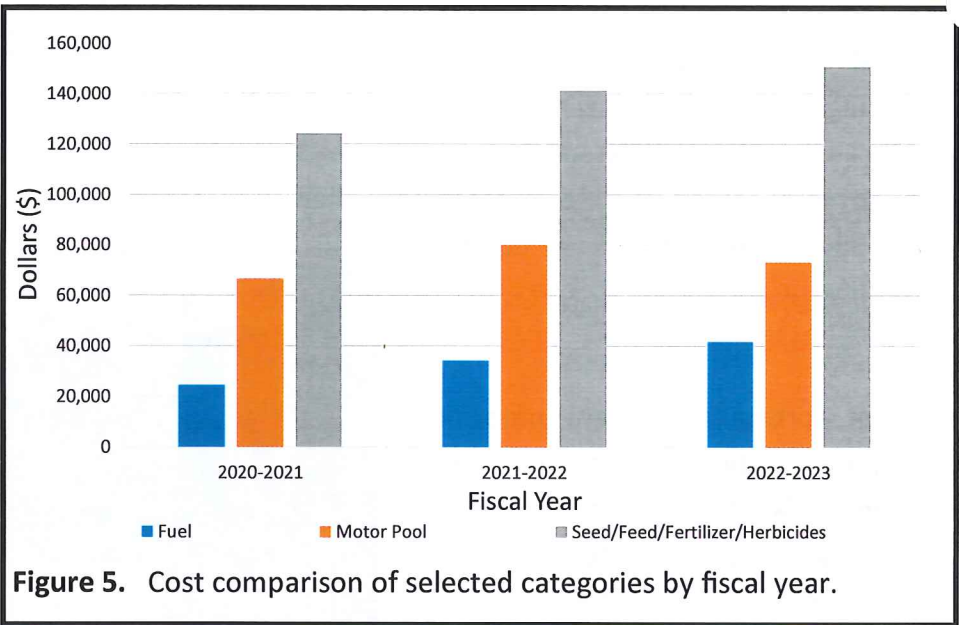


Figure 5. Cost comparison of selected categories by fiscal year.

For More Information:

Chris Augustin

Director—Dickinson Research Extension Center

chris.augustin@ndsu.edu 701-456-1103

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