

NORTH DAKOTA STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION November 13, 2025 MEETING MINUTES | Minot, ND

The State Board of Agricultural Research and Education met for a regular meeting on **November 13, 2025**. Present: Jim Bahm, Tom Bodine, Mike Clemens, Pres. David Cook (Virtual), John Dhuyvetter, Aaron Galbreath, Chair Pam Guleson, Scott Huso, Greg Lardy, Rep. Alisa Mitskog (Virtual), John Nordgaard, Scott Ouradnik, and Julie Zikmund. Absent: Doug Bichler, Doug Goehring, and Sen. Jerry Klein.

Chair Guleson called the meeting to order at **8:30 a.m. CST**

Approval of September 9, 2025 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Jim Bahm made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mike Clemens seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Board Strategy Session

SBARE worked with Mike Meagher from Agency on strategic aspects of the SBARE process. The session included a working lunch.

Administrative Update from David Cook, President of NDSU

Dr. Cook announced his acceptance of the position as the next president of Iowa State University, effective March 1, 2026, and expressed gratitude on behalf of himself and Dr. Katie Cook to NDSU, NDSU Agriculture, and SBARE.

He provided updates on interim legislative committees, strategic planning, and transitional teams for NDSU. He noted that the North Dakota University System leadership title changed from Chancellor to Commissioner in September 2025, with Brent Sanford appointed to the position. He announced that the provost search is nearing completion following Dr. David Bertolini's three years of service as provost.

Administrative Update from Greg Lardy, Joe and Norma Peltier VP for Agriculture, Dean, Director, Director

Dr. Lardy expressed his thanks to both Dr. David Cook and Dr. Katie Cook for their contributions to NDSU and the state of North Dakota. He welcomed new SBARE member Aaron Galbreath who will serve as the representative for Extension Multicounty Program Units seven and eight.

He announced that Dr. Heidi Pecoraro will become the NDSU Director of Animal Resources/Attending Veterinarian, effective January 1, 2026, and an internal search should be completed for the Interim VDL Director position before her departure. He noted that Randy Mehlhoff, director of the Langdon Research Extension Center, will retire in December and an interim director will be selected following an internal search. He also shared that Brent DeKrey has been hired as the new director of facilities management following the retirement of longtime director Mike Ellingson, who served in that role for 15 years.

Dr. Lardy gave several REC capital project budget and appropriations updates, as well as effects of the government shutdown.

He also reported on two Medallion Ceremonies at NDSU. The September ceremony honored Peltier Institute Endowed Chair and Director Dr. Rex Sun and Endowed Professor of Practice Matt Olhoft, recognized the first cohort of ten student Peltier Scholars, and celebrated the philanthropy of the Peltier family. On November 14, Mike Boland will be recognized as the inaugural AgCountry Endowed Chair in Agribusiness.

Dr. Lardy announced the launch of the NDSU Master of Agriculture program, which can be completed fully online. He also shared that on Giving Day, NDSU Agriculture raised \$537,000 to support students, faculty, staff, and programs. Lastly, the 51st annual Harvest Bowl will be held at NDSU on November 14-15.

Administrative Update from Lynette Flage, Associate Director of NDSU Extension

Dr. Flage reported the change in title of the legislatively funded Carbon Specialist position to an Agriculture and Energy Specialist, and noted that an offer for the role has been extended. The long-running SNAP-Ed program, which has provided food stamp education for the past 30 years, has concluded due to changes in federal funding.

Last summer, NDSU Extension provided testimony to an interim legislative committee on farm safety in support of insurance discounts for farmers and ranchers. Extension is also engaged in discussions regarding rural health transformation funding for the state. A proposed federal grant for North Dakota would provide \$100 million annually for five years to improve health care in rural areas. NDSU Extension has been involved in rural health transformation efforts through “aging in communities” initiatives, particularly important in light of Medicaid cuts. 4-H youth development remains a strong area of impact, reaching approximately 40,000 young people each year—about one in four youth. Research from Tufts University shows that 4-H participants are four times more likely to give back to their communities and twice as likely to make healthy choices and pursue STEM pathways.

In addition, North Dakota disaster response updates highlighted the role of Extension programs and networks in gathering critical data, helping the state secure approximately \$19 million in disaster aid between June and October.

Administrative Update from Frank Casey, Associate Director of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station

Dr. Casey presented updates on the Bolley Laboratory facility. He reported that construction remains on schedule, with building completion and departmental moves planned for May. One of the three greenhouses is nearly finished, work is progressing on the remaining two, and exterior paving and related site work are advancing.

He outlined the drone replacement program funded by a \$9 million appropriation in Senate Bill 2018 to the North Dakota Department of Commerce and administered by the Northern Plains Unmanned Aircraft Systems Test Site. He noted that the Agricultural Experiment Station has submitted a request of 58 drones designated for research and education purposes.

Dr. Casey emphasized the strong return on investment from agricultural research, estimating that each dollar invested generates approximately \$37 in long-term benefits. He highlighted

examples of impact, including precision agriculture technologies that use wireless platforms and drones to improve field research efficiency, as well as NDSU spin-out companies developing microbial inoculants and data-driven tools that accelerate plant breeding and crop management decisions.

Comments from Chair Gulleason and Vice Chair Nordgaard

Chair Gulleason and Vice Chair Nordgaard provided an overview of the strategic planning process for SBARE that is currently underway in collaboration with Sagency.

They also expressed gratitude to the participants of the input session and outlined the upcoming input session for the board.

North Central Research Extension Center Update from Dr. Shana Foster

Dr. Foster provided an update of the current activities at the North Central REC.

Input Testimony

- Dr. Mike Ostlie - NDSU Carrington Research Extension Center
- David Hill - ND State Soil Conservation Committee
- Miki Miheguli - ND Soybean Council & ND Soybean Growers Association
- Daryl Becker - ND Meat Goat Association
- Dr. Carrie Johnson - NDSU Extension Family & Community Wellness
- Ryan Gregg - ND Farmers Union

Meeting adjourned at 3:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Erin McCall