

Dear Members of the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education,

My name is William Hejl; I am a farmer from Amenia, North Dakota. I am writing to express my strong support for additional SBARE investment in NDSU's Center for Agricultural Policy and Trade Studies (CAPTS).

I have served as the first American President of the World Association of Beet and Cane Growers; which represents over 5 million farmers in 37 Associations from 34 countries who produce 60% of world sugar production. Additionally, I have also been a Board member of the American Crystal Sugar Company and President of the Red River Sugarbeet Growers Association as well as the North Dakota National Guard Association.

North Dakota agriculture depends on sound, timely information, especially when policy or market conditions shift quickly. CAPTS already delivers decision-ready, North Dakota-specific analysis on agricultural policy, markets, trade, logistics, and economic impacts. Those products are practical, credible, and useful to producers, agribusinesses, educators, and policymakers across the state. Federal and state elected officials have also publicly recognized the value of CAPTS' work.

The opportunity now is to strengthen CAPTS' rapid-response capacity so the program can deliver more frequent, practical outputs that stakeholders can use. With expanded staffing and analytic resources, CAPTS can respond faster, increase the relevance of its work, and broaden its reach across North Dakota and the upper Great Plains.

A key gap today is capacity. Adding three analyst positions would materially increase CAPTS' ability to produce timely issue briefs, applied analyses, and stakeholder-facing tools. That additional capacity is especially important because trade and logistics remain critical for North Dakota agriculture. Dedicated focus on trade flows, transportation bottlenecks, market access, and competitiveness is invaluable to producers and the broader agricultural economy.

Improved data access and analytic capability would also help CAPTS provide more timely and credible information through North Dakota-focused dashboards and decision tools. CAPTS outputs, now and with strengthened support, include short issue briefs, rapid-response memos, data dashboards, and targeted briefings and workshops across North Dakota and the region.

Finally, CAPTS should be connected to national and international agricultural policy networks and professional associations so it can anticipate world market fluctuations and federal policy developments and quickly interpret the implications for North Dakota. CAPTS serves as a statewide resource and hub by linking university research with Extension and stakeholder needs. Additional support would strengthen that bridge and increase impact.

For these reasons, I support additional SBARE investment in CAPTS. This is a timely investment that will enhance North Dakota's ability to anticipate and respond to the policy, market, and trade changes affecting agriculture.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William Hejl

Amenia, North Dakota