

SBARE Stakeholder Input 2019

Email address *

eric.eriksmoen@ndsu.edu

Name *

Eric Eriksmoen

Organization (If Applicable)

North Central Res. Ext. Center

Please describe your Agriculture and/or Extension needs and potential solution. *

3 needs: 1. People, 2. Salaries and 3. Equipment and storage

1. people - over the past 3 legislative sessions, state employees have been put on the back burner. We have continually been told to do more with less. When an employee goes away through retirement or resignation, there is often no consideration by upper administration as to the impact that is created by that void. The person went away but the workload and responsibilities have not gone away. Examples of this are county Extension agents and state specialists. Too many times, that workload is dumped onto the remaining personnel, causing resentment, causing work overload and causing a work environment that is counter to our mission of serving the citizens of North Dakota. In my case, my sole FTE technician was eliminated. My research priority has now shifted from supporting farmer needs to chasing after grant dollars to support my soft funded technical staff. I am requesting SBARE, with the help of REC and Extension directors, identify essential personnel and support a legislative initiative to reinstate FTE needs.

2. Salaries - in connection with the above needs, our leadership along with SBARE need to recognize the financial worth of it's employees. A 2% salary increase after 3 years of no increase is not financially meaningful, was an insult to employees and is demoralizing. Recruitment, retention and salary compression are issues that become harder to deal with whenever they're not addressed. Employees are willing to share the burden during hard times, but need to be included during the good times. SBARE must take leadership and insist in providing meaningful employee compensation.

3. Equipment and storage - specifically, REC equipment such as small plot seeders, harvesters, foundation seed cleaning equipment, livestock equipment and equipment storage facilities. Big ticket items that are difficult or impossible to purchase with the current biennial equipment appropriation. I am suggesting that SBARE put together a one time equipment and storage initiative.