

December 2, 2019

TO: State Board of Agricultural Research and Education

RE: Livestock Research Extension Specialist Position at NDSU Williston Research Extension Center

I offer my support for the requested Livestock Research Extension position of Livestock at WREC. Livestock is being recognized as a missing key for enhancing soil health using cover crops and crop residues. Dr. Don Tanaka who has been a life time pioneer in researching Soil Quality and Cropping Systems, has expressed this concern to me and has asked why cropping research plots did not match soil quality impacts observed by diversified crop and livestock producers.

My personal experience after 30 years of practicing and observing impacts of time controlled and planned recovery grazing; we have side by side fields. One has been wheat fallow for over 75 years and had measured 1.4 percent organic matter, and never any livestock grazing. Field next door with same crop history has 4.5 percent organic matter using livestock grazing and mixed cropping including grass planting.

The current economic cycle seems to be on a flat commodity price period similar to the 1990s. Management strategies seem to be combination of adding value to production, increase production, or reduce input costs to maintain a viable business. Livestock can be an integral part of all these strategies.

I ask you to consider and recommend the requested Livestock Research Extension Specialist at WREC.

Sincerely,

Wayne Berry