

**The Honorable Mike Flood, representing Nebraska First Congressional District**  
**House Appropriations Committee – Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development,**  
**Food, and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies**  
**Member Day Testimony – March 26, 2026**

Chairman Harris, Ranking Member Bishop, members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to share exciting updates about an important project to my district and to the next generation of United States agriculture.

Specifically, I would like to call to your attention to, a project that should be very familiar to the Subcommittee, the **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) National Center for Resilient and Regenerative Precision Agriculture**. This co-located facility at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln will anchor a national network comprised of ARS research units and land-grant universities committed to addressing one of the most critical science gaps to advancing innovation in American agriculture.

I want to begin by thanking the Subcommittee for their support of this project in the previous appropriations package. I was extremely pleased to see the Subcommittee meet the full funding ask last year and recognize the important need for investments in cutting-edge agriculture. **I have requested \$16 million for this facility as my top-priority Community Project Funding (CPF) request for in Fiscal Year (FY) 2027.** As we approach the final years of construction funding required, we must keep up the momentum to secure significant construction funds in the upcoming fiscal year.

Congress appropriated \$11.2 million for planning and design in FY 21. Congress the appropriated construction funds of \$20 million in FY 22, \$25 million in FY 24, and \$16 million in FY 26. USDA broke ground on the first phase of construction in May 2024, which includes a 15,000 square-foot greenhouse, 10,000 square feet of headhouse space and connection with the existing University of Nebraska Greenhouse Innovation Center. The second phase of construction, which will commence when Congress appropriates all funds, will go towards constructing a laboratory and office building on the Nebraska Innovation Campus. ARS will utilize these new facilities for scientists and staff in the two existing Research Units: Agroecosystem Management and Wheat, Sorghum, and Forage

During the groundbreaking celebration in May 2024, USDA leadership, members of the Nebraska Congressional delegation, University leadership, stakeholders and producers across the state and region were there to support of this new facility. On June 18, 2025, I hosted Chairman Cole in Lincoln to share firsthand the transformative vision guiding this facility. Last month, the ARS Administrator visited the University of Nebraska to observe the significant potential of this facility and its research for advancing agriculture across the country.

Precision agriculture is a key piece of Nebraska's agricultural fabric, and it makes sense that this project has found its home in the Cornhusker State. A January 2024 GAO report showed Nebraska is at the forefront of utilization and adoption of precision ag technology and practices. The report showed Nebraska is second in nation in the use of precision agriculture with 55% of Nebraska producers using precision ag tools.

The Nebraska Innovation Campus in Lincoln, where the National Center will be located, also is home to *The Combine* and *The Heartland Robotics Cluster*, which support small businesses and spin-offs from agricultural research. **These small businesses are driving student entrepreneur interest in precision agriculture technologies in Nebraska.**

**Advancing research will reshape agriculture in Nebraska and beyond.** Precision agriculture in Nebraska is rapidly transforming the state's farming landscape, driven by advanced technologies that help producers improve efficiency, profitability, and sustainability. Nebraska farmers are national leaders in adopting tools such as GPS guidance, variable-rate input application, yield monitoring systems, and drones. Additional research and innovation will further accelerate progress by providing large-scale, real-world test beds that help producers make more informed, data-driven management decisions. This research will advance innovations in crop and livestock production, irrigation, water management and soil stewardship. Furthermore, the University of Nebraska continues to build out field platforms to deploy precision agriculture technologies and solve future challenges in production agriculture on its 9,600 acre nationally unique demonstration research farm called *NFARMS*. These innovative sites will serve as the proving grounds where precision agriculture technologies, developed through University and USDA research collaborations within the National Center, are deployed and field-tested. *NFARMS* is a collaborative public-private partnership platform for industry sponsored research and development, technical testing, and workforce development. *NFARMS* creates accessible, experiential learning for workforce development and to accelerate the use and promotion of precision ag technologies.

**Most importantly, this project has resounding community support.** Commodity groups across the state have advocated for the development of the ARS National Center including Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation, Nebraska Cattlemen, Nebraska Corn Growers, Nebraska Soybean Association, Nebraska Wheat Growers, Nebraska Pork Producers, Nebraska State Dairy Association, and Renewable Fuels Nebraska. State elected officials have demonstrated their strong support through appropriations. Local business groups have emphasized the workforce development potential a project like this will bring.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the **USDA ARS National Center for Resilient and Regenerative Precision Agriculture**. I look forward to working with you to support cutting-edge research, agriculture resilience, rural prosperity and the people of Nebraska's First Congressional District.