

R024-D: Developing a Biomass Industry in North Dakota

Submitted by NDSU

Principal Investigator: Nancy Hodur

Request for \$364,158; Total Project Costs \$728,316

Technical Advisor Comments

- All three reviewers recommended fund.
- The 50% match comes from MBI (\$251,056 – cash, \$113,102 – in-kind).
- All three reviewers felt that the objectives were achievable. One reviewer commented, “...It’s specifically worth calling out and commending the go/no-go decision that occurs between each of the FEL phases. If granted funding, perhaps actual disbursement should be tied to these stage-gates...”
- While all reviewers felt the methodology was appropriate, one reviewer felt that more information was needed regarding price points for biomass and pellets.
- All three reviewers felt the scientific contribution of the proposal has potential to be very significant.
- One reviewer would have liked more information about the qualifications of the project’s team, as well as more information in the budget about the percentage of time that would be allocated to each individual.
- One reviewer had concerns about the willingness of ranchers to adopt AFEX-treated corn stover in their operations and felt that the team should include an expert on technology adoption rural sociology models.
- One reviewer felt focus groups and interviews should be conducted on the front end of the project.

Technical Advisor Recommendations

Fund. This proposal would be strengthened by industry support such as ND Stockmen’s Association or Corn Growers Association. However, all of the reviewers felt that the project was achievable, the individuals involved with the project are knowledgeable, and that the impact of the project could be significant if successful. This proposal is a tangible step forward in the utilization of biomass.

Suggested Contingencies If Funded

- Funding is provided for focus group work regarding producers’ willingness to sell residues and utilize treated pellets first, with subsequent funding released if focus groups indicate a willingness to move forward with the project.
- Letters of support from ND Stockmen’s Association and ND Corn Growers Association.