



North Dakota State  
***NDSSD***  
Seed Department

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**North Dakota State Seed Department  
2004-2009 Long Range Plan**

**January, 2004**

The North Dakota State Seed Commission launched a long-range planning process in November 2002. The Commission, serving as the board of directors for the State Seed Department, believed that accelerating change in the seed and agriculture industries called for an assessment of the future direction of the Seed Department. At that time, the Commission outlined a vision, mission statement and preliminary long-term goals to serve as a foundation for continued research and discussion in the planning process.

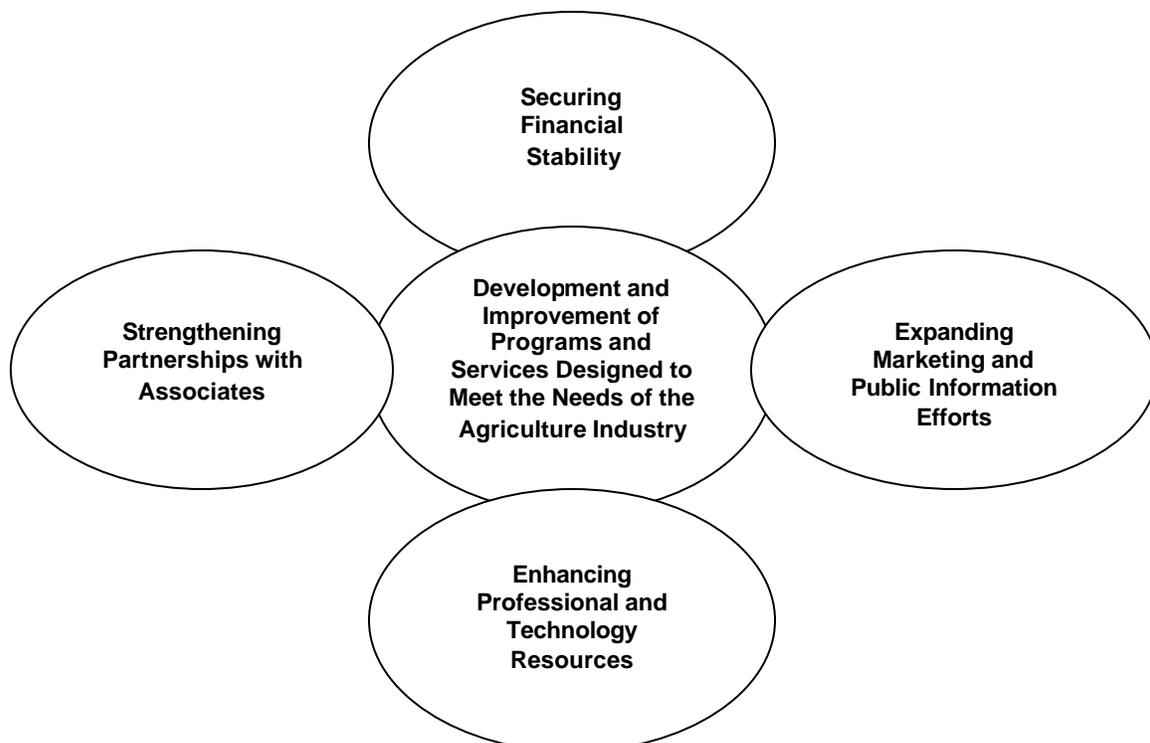
***Vision***

The North Dakota State Seed Department is an internationally recognized leader in services for the seed industry.

***Mission***

To assure integrity of the seed industry through a commitment to client service and product quality.

Since that time, the Commission has involved a broad cross-section of industry and staff representatives in developing the framework surrounding the initial vision, mission and goals of the agency. By virtue of the agency's statutory purpose, it became clear during plan development that one goal would be central to the organization, regardless of any other factors. The final plan surrounds this statutory or basic goal with complementary goals essential to satisfying the mission of the Seed Department.



### Components of the Planning Process

The following factors were among those discussed in development of agency vision and mission statements, and subsequently incorporated into dialogue and discussion during the planning process.

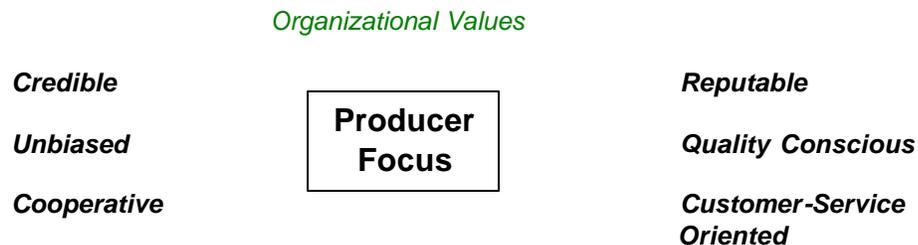
*Identification of **Organizational Values***

*Identification of Stakeholders*

*Identification of Opportunities*

*Identification of Threats/Challenges*

As with any business entity, the most critical aspect in providing service are the values held by the leadership and staff of the organization. A common organizational value or purpose prevails within the Commission and Seed Department, one that drives the delivery of programs and services to the seed industry: **a focus on producers**. Other basic organizational values have been identified as critical in achieving objectives of the long-range plan.



### Solicitation of Industry Input

This planning project was undertaken for the purpose of guiding the agency direction into the next decade. The Commission believes that recognizing needs and appropriately planning for change demands broad input from producers, clients, customers, partners and other industry stakeholders. This project includes input from all of these groups, accomplished through meetings with representatives from throughout the industry

It should be noted that a unique quality of the Seed Department is its standing as a state agency in direct competition with private industry in many areas of our program operations. This feature is recognized as both an advantage and a challenge for the agency.

This document outlines the goals, objectives and initial strategies the Department intends to pursue to improve programs and service delivery in the next five years. The Long Range Plan will be reviewed for progress on a yearly basis, and will be considered flexible in terms of incorporating new strategies as needed.

The North Dakota State Seed Department intends to execute the organization’s long range plan with attention to the agency’s main purpose, and a continued focus on the foundation of North Dakota agriculture: **the seed industry**.

The following objectives and strategies are followed by a program area in parentheses ( ), denoting the lead program area assignment when applicable.

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- 1. Implement customer survey identifying future service needs of industry. (Admin)**
- 2. Refine Regulatory Program to the benefit of consumers and industry. (Field Seed)**
  - Create regional regulatory presence
  - Research and evaluate “Report all Piracy” information tool/source
  - Expand regulatory examinations to on-farm sites
  - Improve publicizing of violations
  - Expand sampling and testing processes to verify label claims
- 3. Complete development and launch of Identity Preservation services. (Field Seed)**
  - “Planting to Product” source identification ability
- 4. Establish Potato Seedstock partnerships to satisfy grower demand and needs. (Potato)**
  - Research and evaluate alternative production methods (ex. NFT, aeroponics)
  - Expand greenhouse facilities through acquisition or expansion
- 5. Expand transgenic testing services. (Lab Service)**
  - Research and create testing programs for pharmaceutical crops
  - Identify and implement testing services for GM traits common to region
  - Develop quantitative DNA testing capability
- 6. Improve or replace current diagnostic testing capabilities. (Lab service)**
  - Network with NDSU to improve staff training and validate testing results
  - Investigate and implement PCR testing alternatives
  - Replace Dome test with PCR bacterial blight test
- 7. Expand commercial testing, grain grading and inspection services. (FS/Lab Serv)**
  - Malting barley, soy oils, other
  - GM/Non-GM inspection and sampling
  - Organic

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**Enhancing  
Professional and  
Technology  
Resources**

1. Upgrade Internet resources for utilization in marketing and information areas. (Admin)
2. Integrate GPS/GIS and handheld technology applications in field programs. (FS, Potato)
3. Create staff continuing education policy. (Admin)
4. Increase budget allocation to staff technical training. (Admin)
5. Seek membership and leadership opportunities in seed trade organizations.
6. Create succession plans and crossover training strategies in each program unit. (Admin)
7. Seek reclassification of positions commensurate with technical or educational advances. (Admin)

**Expanding  
Marketing and  
Public Information  
Efforts**

1. Coordinate existing Public Information efforts with NDSU partnership.
2. Utilize existing FTE position to hire Public Information/Marketing position.
3. Complete yearly promotional plan or needs assessment by program area.
4. Expand regional public relations presence at trade/industry venues.

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**Strengthening  
Partnerships with  
Associates**

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Create alliance or joint venture with NDSU for research and delivery of advanced testing services.   | (Admin)       |
| 2. Create alliances with trait providers for acquisition of materials and methods for test development.   | (Lab Service) |
| 3. Build educational programs and enforcement procedures in concert with variety developers in public and private sectors.  | (Regulatory)  |
| 4. Identify partners to expand test plots/growouts for purpose of identifying physical traits in seed and commodities.  | (FS, Reg.)    |
| 5. Cooperate with on-campus entities to provide short-term marketing and public information solutions.  | (Admin, all)  |
| 6. Maintain legislative relationship that provides for flexibility in budget and staffing authority, allowing agency to respond quickly in building and implementing programs and services. | (Admin)       |

**Securing  
Financial  
Stability**

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| 1. Explore grant administration resources and pursue grants from various state and federal sources to fund program expansions and improvements. |         |
| 2. Achieve break-even financial outcomes in each agency program enterprise.   | (Admin) |
| 3. Stabilize reserve fund balance at 75% of fiscal year budget.   | (Admin) |
| 4. Perform biennial service and labeling fee evaluation with objective of maintaining a 1.5X ratio of cost recovery.                            | (Admin) |
| 5. Create budget allocation cost centers that identify research spending.   |         |

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## **Conclusions**

The NDSSD Long Range Plan expresses the Commission, industry and staff discussion on re-focusing operations and resources in response to the changing environment in agriculture.

The agriculture industry is becoming noticeably “high-tech”, demanding a similar approach by service providers such as the Seed Department. This expansion of technology impacts each area of Department programming. It requires a different approach to the management of resources, interaction with seed partners and virtually all business practices of the organization.

History indicates the same types of change seen in corn and soybean seed certification, quality assurance and testing programs are possible, if not likely, in many northern-grown crops. Export customers and food processors, among others, may (at some point) require source identification, trait verification or some other type of analysis on many agricultural products. Borrowing on the examples in other areas of agriculture, the speed and intensity of change in these areas are evidence enough of the need to prepare our agency to act appropriately in fulfilling our mission on behalf of producers.

Regardless of our status as a state agency (and the advantages it provides), it is incumbent on the Seed Department to **operate and think** like a private business in a competitive business environment, exploring new and improved services on a continual basis. This contradiction in terms must be understood by the legislature and embraced by the agency to benefit the entire agriculture industry in the future. It will take patience and endurance for this “double-edged sword” to be utilized effectively, in collaboration with partners, to carry out the goals of this plan.

This document is intended as a statement of organizational intent to pursue the agency’s mission in a forward-looking mode; to capitalize on strengths; build in areas of need; and maintain an approach to providing service to the state’s seed and agriculture industries that is “ahead of the curve”.

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