

Matching funds being raised for facility upgrades at Agricultural Research Centers
Dave Wichman Feb 4 2009 issue

For over 100 years, the research centers (RC) of the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) have conducted and promoted studies, scientific investigations and experiments related to agriculture production, natural resources and rural life, and diffused the acquired information, through the Montana Extension Service, among the people of Montana. Some of the regularly used structures, particularly at NARC-Havre and CARC-Moccasin, are 87 to >125 years old. These older structures were built for purposes vastly different from their current day uses. Military fort structures, built in anticipation of a major war with our plains Indians, now house labs for seed, livestock, soils, and global positioning systems (agronomic and livestock) research. Dairy cow and work horse barns are now wet chemistry and seed processing labs.

Through out the existence of the MAES research center systems existence, >100 years, research center scientists have been creative and efficient in using limited funds to maintain and adapt available research center structures to house current day research equipment and laboratories. The 2001 and 2007 Montana legislative assemblies saw the need for new construction and facility upgrades at the RCs for MAES scientists to continue to conduct pertinent research to enhance and sustain Ag production which in-turn is critical to the economic well being of most of Montana's communities and towns.

The 2001 legislative assembly authorized the spending of \$2 million and appropriated \$1 million for construction and renovations at research centers. A million dollars in matching funds were raised through donations from 83 individuals, businesses and organizations in the "Million Dollar Match Campaign." The 2007 legislature authorized the expenditure of \$ 6.5 million, and appropriated \$ 5 million, toward addressing the greater than \$10 million worth of facility upgrades needed at eight MAES research locations.

A fund raising campaign, \$5-Million Plus, has been underway for the past year to generate \$1.25 million in non-state, private, business and industry contributions matching the \$5 million in legislative appropriation for a total of \$6.25 million. Every dollar donated to the \$5-Million Plus campaign will result in five dollars worth of improved facilities at the research centers! More matching funds are needed to reach the \$1.25 million goal.

Although the current "\$5 Million Plus" projects involves a variety of large and small individual facility improvement projects at eight locations across the state, approximately \$1,800,000 has been earmarked for major facility improvements at NARC, \$156,000 for improvements at CARC, and \$300,000 for WTARC-Conrad. The minimum matching funds needed in north central Montana: NARC-Havre needs to raise a minimum of \$360,000 in donated matching funds, CARC-Moccasin needs to raise \$31,200, and WTARC-Conrad needs to raise \$60,000.

The proposed new facilities at NARC, to replace the use of certain historic Fort Assiniboine buildings, include an office/meeting facility, a research laboratory and seed facility, a calving barn and a chemical storage and handling facility. The CARC projects include needed electrical, heating, insulation and structural upgrades for two former livestock barns converted long ago to laboratory facilities. Renovation of CARC's artesian well is also proposed. WTARC will be building a new research seed processing laboratory. Seed and sample processing operations there are currently being conducted in WTARC's shop.

Contribution checks are to be made out to LRBP-COA (Long Range Building Project-College of Agriculture). If you wish to designate your donation to a specific research center's projects, add the research center's acronym to "Pay to" line. ex.: LRBP-COA-CARC and mail it to that research center. Otherwise mail donation to:

LRBP-COA
Lisa Duffey, Assistant to the Dean
College of Agriculture
P.O. Box 172860
Bozeman, MT 59717-2860

Research Center addresses:

Supt. Gregg R. Carlson, Northern Agricultural Research Center, 3848 Fort Circle, Havre, MT 59501-8409. Tele: (406) 265-6115. E-mail gcarlson@montana.edu.

Supt. David M. Wichman, Central Agricultural Research Center, 52583 US Highway 87, Moccasin, MT 59462-9512. Tele: (406) 423-5421. E-mail: dwichman@montana.edu.

Supt. Gregory D. Kushnak, Superintendent, Western Triangle Agricultural Research Center, P.O. Box 974, Conrad, MT 59425. Tele: (406) 278-7707. E-mail: gkushnak@montana.edu.

Contributor names will be included on permanent plaques affixed to each new or renovated facility. Donor recognition levels for the permanent plaques are: Donor = \$100 to \$999, Friend = \$1,000 to \$4,999, Builder = \$5,000 to \$9,999, Leader = \$10,000 to \$99,999 and Founder = \$100,000 and up.

Receiving donations today is critical to having the projects completed in the 2009 construction season. Further, delaying construction reduces actual quantity of building due to inflating building costs. Thank you for support and investment in Montana's agriculture and the future well being of our state.