

North Dakota NRCS Urban Agriculture Subcommittee CHARTER

Background: Nationally, a growing urban agricultural economy is emerging to address the needs of local communities. Urban agriculture can play a vital role in creating more resilient local and regional food systems and applying climate smart agriculture practices to mitigate various resource concerns. An urban and small farm subcommittee will improve the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS's) ability to provide conservation assistance and impact on a growing sector of land stewardship. Through this assistance a subsequent impact will positively benefit rural economic development, nutrition security and assistance, climate, and regenerative agriculture, while addressing food access challenges through community agriculture and education. Due to this growing need North Dakota has created an Urban Agriculture Subcommittee to assist NRCS with implementation of its conservation programs.

Purpose: The Subcommittee will assist NRCS State Conservationist with the implementation of conservation programs in ND communities and small acreage production systems across the State by providing technical assistance and support. It will foster and promote urban agriculture within the State by supporting communities, farmers and partners who are working to develop, implement, and promote new and innovative practices and address natural resource concerns on urban and small-scale producers.

1. Committee's Official Designation

The official designation of this committee is the North Dakota Natural Resources Conservation Service Urban Agriculture Subcommittee, hereafter referred to as the UAS, NDUAS.

2. Authority

The authorizing statutes and regulations for this opportunity are under section 1261 and section 1240H of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-334). This subcommittee is being established in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. 2.

3. Objectives and Scope of Activities

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 supports the development of a State Technical Committee subcommittee with the mission to encourage and promote urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural practices. The objective of the

subcommittee is to be the primary advisor to the North Dakota NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) chaired by the North Dakota NRCS State Conservationist (STC) regarding urban agricultural conservation.

4. Description of Duties

The UAS will assist the STAC and STC by:

1. Identifying local urban /community agriculture needs, emerging practices, resource concerns, and potential partnering entities to support urban, small-scale, and innovative production.
2. Identifying local barriers to successful implementation of conservation strategies by urban, small-scale, and innovative agriculture, especially for new and beginning farmers.
3. Evaluating and reviewing ongoing innovations in agriculture production and conservation and extension activities relating to urban and community agriculture, including compost, food waste reduction, and innovative production.
4. Developing recommendations on outreach strategies that meet the unique and complex conservation issues facing producers in urban environments.
5. Providing additional relevant assistance and advice to the STC.

5. Agency or Official to Whom the Committee Reports

The UAS reports to the STAC chaired by the STC.

6. Support

NRCS will provide the necessary administrative and logistical support for the UAS.

7. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings

The UAS is estimated to meet two to four times per fiscal year.

8. Duration

The UAS is anticipated to exist for a continuing duration of time to carry out its purposes.

9. Termination

The UAS will terminate upon decision of the STC. The UAS will not meet or take any action without a valid charter.

10. Membership and Designation

- a. The UAS will be composed of agricultural producers and other professionals that represent a variety of disciplines in the soil, water, wetland, wildlife, and natural resource sciences, small communities, and urban/community ag education.

For-profit urban and small farm producers	Technical experts from Land Grant University
Non-profit urban and small farm producers	Technical experts from higher education
Representative(s) from Tribal Leader groups	RMA representative(s)
FSA representative(s)	AMS representative(s)
Technical experts from the private sector and other entities	NRCS employees working with and advocating for urban and small acreage producers as government representatives

- b. There are no legal limitations to the number of members who may serve on UAS.
- c. Equal opportunity practices in accordance with USDA policies will be followed in all appointments to the UAS. To ensure that the recommendations of the UAS have considered the needs of the diverse groups served by USDA, membership will include to the extent possible, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.
- d. USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.
- e. UAS advisory committee members will serve without compensation.

11. Recordkeeping

The records of UAS or other subgroups of the committee will be handled in accordance with NRCS General Manual, Title 120, Part 408. These records will be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

The committee will collaboratively create a report to present at the State Technical Committee meetings. A copy of the written report shall be provided before or on the day it is presented to the State Technical Committee.

Review Schedule: The subcommittee will review the charter annually and update it as necessitated by changes to the needs of urban and small acreage producers, NRCS policy, and the goals of the State Conservationist of NRCS North Dakota.

12. Filing Date

12/7/2021