Project: **USDA/ARS Animal Biosciences Research Facility**

Brief Description: Montana State University requests support for USDA ARS for construction of an Animal Biosciences Research Facility that would include research laboratories, specialized facilities and technology transfer capabilities. The research facility would be part of a larger teaching and research complex. The MSU College of Agriculture has pledges, cash, State of Montana and a MSU Foundation commitment that total over $15M allowing the completion of the allied and complementary teaching and distance learning facility. The MSU facility is under construction and is scheduled to be operational in Spring/Summer 2010. The USDA ARS facility has completed construction documents and requires a final 'bricks and mortar' appropriation.

Executive Summary: Agriculture is the largest basic industry in the Montana economy and the livestock industry is its largest segment. The progressive evolution of animal and range sciences has generated increasingly complex opportunities for research, teaching and outreach. Montana is a global leader in the production of high quality seed stock, resource stewardship and exports resources around the world. The research facility scientific collaborations and programmatic efforts will use the bovine genome sequence to identify ways to improve the economic and environmental sustainability in the production of safe, high quality and consistent beef products by: identifying genes and their function, developing tools to control disease, improving nutrient utilization, management and production efficiency and enhancing the nutrient composition of a safe supply of beef for the consumers in the United States and abroad. Enhancing the strong relationships with USDA ARS at Fort Keogh and MSU scientists will strengthen research and teaching outcomes in animal and range sciences. This research and teaching complex combination will be unique to Montana and the intermountain region.

Congressional Action Needed: A final appropriation of $10 million for construction ($13 million appropriated thus far) of the research facility is requested. This will match the Montana commitment and complete this unique partnership.

Importance to Montana: The production of high quality livestock and the unique seedstock industry significantly contribute to Montana's and the region's economy. Cutting-edge research, teaching and outreach programs are essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of livestock production and profitability. An Animal Biosciences Research Facility would bring the combined federal and state genomic expertise together in a location and using unique herds and large-scale rangeland facilities to increase the quality of Montana seedstock and the commercial livestock industry. At the same time, this will improve northern Great Plains cattle and range production practices, management and enhance food safety and quality for consumers everywhere, through collaborative research and outreach activities for the range-livestock sector of Montana agriculture.

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