



**THE NEBRASKA
WHEAT GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

52

P.O. Box 95063
Lincoln, NE 68509

Telephone (402) 471-2358
FAX (402) 471-3446

December 14, 2009

The Honorable E. Benjamin Nelson
United States Senate
720 Senate Hart Building
2nd & C Streets, NE
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

On behalf of the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association (NWGA), I am writing to thank you for your actions on behalf of Nebraska and the agriculture industry in particular. The NWGA is seeking your support for the Bioengineering Wheat for a Global Market earmark.

As you are already aware, the wheat industry is an extremely important part of the Nebraska agricultural economy especially in areas of the state with limited rainfall or access to irrigation. Given the water issues facing Nebraska, wheat could play an even larger role in the future agricultural economy of our state. One of the challenges that has led to a decline in wheat acres is the rapid advances other crops, particularly corn and soybeans have made due to genetic engineering. You are probably aware of other states such as Kansas attempting to be the leader in wheat genetics. We are asking for your support to ensure that Nebraska plays a leading role in developing, testing and educating farmers how to deploy these new traits in wheat.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UNL-IANR), with support from the Nebraska Wheat Board and a private donor, have started on an aggressive plan for integrating biotechnology into modern wheat breeding to enable Nebraska and U.S. wheat growers to remain competitive in the global wheat production and utilization market. Although significant resources have been allocated toward wheat genomics, minimal effort has been put forth in both the public and private sector to translate this knowledge into novel input and output traits. We believe UNL-IANR is positioned well to evaluate transgenes in wheat as a means to deliver yield enhancement and grain quality traits.

As mentioned above, UNL-IANR has identified a donor interested in this project. The donor is interested in the donation of a significant amount of land, both rain-fed and irrigated in the targeted region. The NWGA feels that the combination of IANR, the Nebraska wheat industry, the Federal Government and this private donor would make ideal partners in forging a new era in wheat productivity in Nebraska and the world.

Once again, thank you for the vital work you do on behalf Nebraska's citizens and agricultural research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Zoe E. Olson".

Zoe E. Olson
Executive Director