



## News and Notes

### July 2015

#### *A Progress Report on the Northern Plains Nitrogen Fertilizer Production Facility*

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#### **From the President's Desk**

Like most major industries, agriculture is experiencing a rapid transformation as more technology and information become available. New technology makes it easier to plan and tend to crops, track growth and time harvests. Expanded research leads to new products and experience allows farmers to operate with best practices.

Our goal at NPN is to provide farmers with easy access to the most advanced nitrogen fertilizers currently available. Many farms across the U.S. are already relying on the new and improved products. Farmers in our region often have been at a disadvantage in purchasing nitrogen fertilizer because of high shipping costs and unpredictable deliveries.

Spring floods, late ice-outs or a shortage of rail cars all can contribute to the uncertainty of fertilizer deliveries and spike costs. As technology develops and offers farmers better and more efficient options, farmers will need to have the latest developments to stay competitive. The proposed NPN facility in Grand Forks will provide farmers with more consistent delivery and the most effective products in use all over the country.

Technology also makes it easier for us to stay in touch with investors and other stakeholders through monthly newsletters like this one. If you haven't received our monthly newsletters on a regular basis, they may be getting caught in your

email spam filter. You can assure email delivery by adding [info@northernplainsnitrogen.com](mailto:info@northernplainsnitrogen.com) to your contact list. If you have questions about how to assure that the NPN emails get through to you, please email Amanda Horner at [Amanda@hornerstrategies.com](mailto:Amanda@hornerstrategies.com). And, if you think you have missed some previous issues, you can catch up on any newsletters on the NPN website [here](#)

Sincerely,  
*Darin Anderson*  
Darin Anderson  
President, NPN Board

## **The Future of Farming**

The number of farms in the U.S. has dropped from its peak in 1935 of 6.8 million to only 2.2 million, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Today, less than 1 percent of Americans claim farming as an occupation. Despite the decline in farms and farmers across the country, the demand for agriculture related products has risen dramatically. New technology, large-scale mechanization, improved fertilizers, pesticides and crop variety have helped the agriculture community meet the high demand. But the efficiency and effectiveness of farmers producing a reliable supply of cheap food is causing many non-farmers to take agriculture for granted.

In this environment, when the vast majority of Americans have little to no connection to farming, it's easy to impose new burdens on farmers. This year, for example, Minnesota passed legislation that will mandate buffer strips up to 50 feet (with a minimum of 30 feet) along most waterways, including many public ditches. In spite of protests from ag groups arguing that it was an expensive, "one-size-fits-all" approach, the legislation passed with broad support.

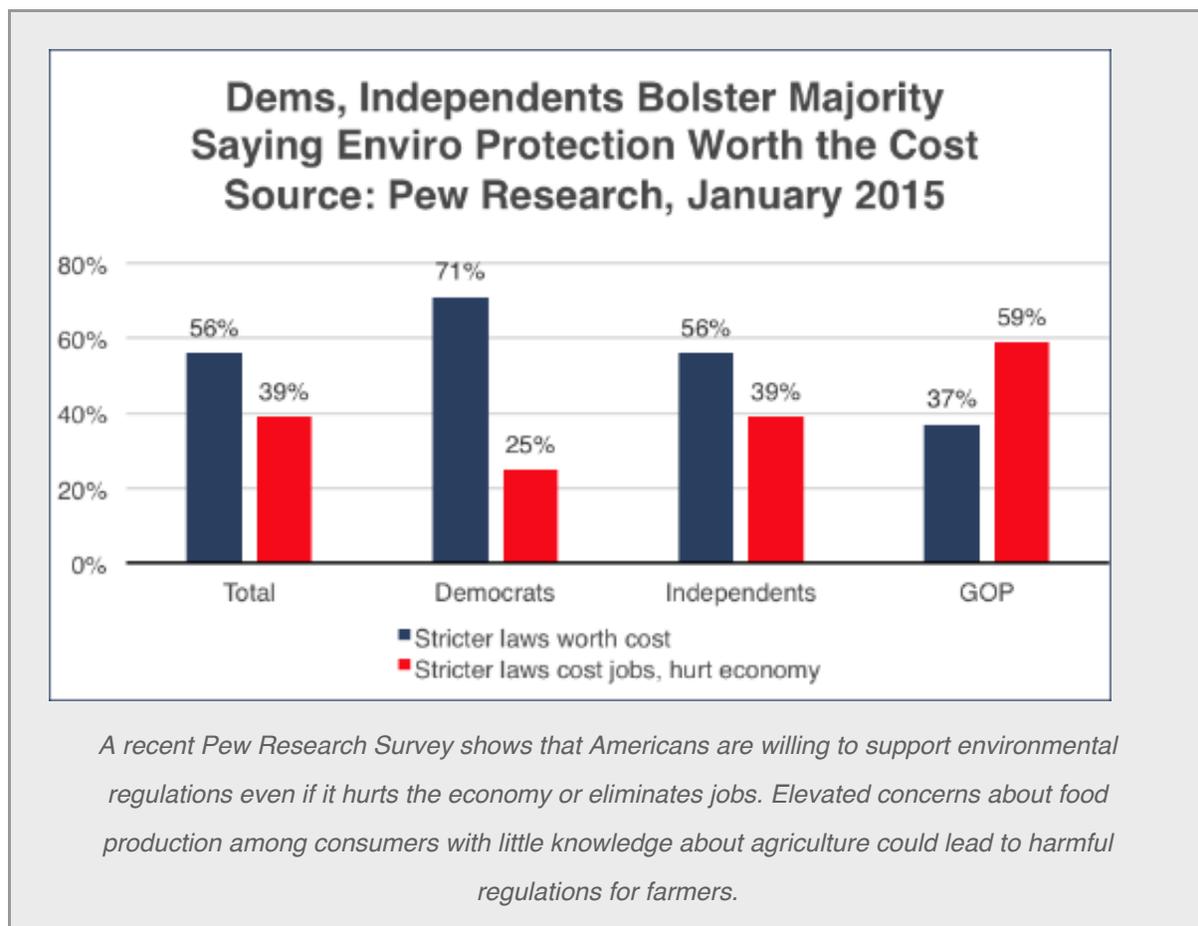
Responsible stewardship of the land, air and water is nothing new among farmers. A survey conducted by the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance (USFRA) found that nearly all (99 percent) farmers and ranchers say that protecting the environment is a very or somewhat important goal or practice related to their business. New advancements in technology and increased availability of certain products allow farmers to manage crops effectively while minimizing the environmental impact.

Urea ammonia nitrate (UAN), a nitrogen fertilizer already popular across America and one Northern Plains Nitrogen will make more readily available to farmers in the

Upper Midwest and Canada, allows farmers to tailor the amount and timing of fertilizer each crop receives. The attributes of UAN can help deliver the right nutrition to crops at the right time, spoon-feeding the crop while countering run-off and leaching issues that occur when nitrogen accumulation in the soil exceeds crop uptake capability over a period of time.

Feeding the world and protecting the environment always have been priorities for farmers. The choice isn't "either-or"; it's "and." Nitrogen is an essential building block of plants. It is necessary nourishment to produce the crop yields needed to feed a growing global population and, in the case of a crop like corn, to assure a sufficient supply for the expanding industrial and energy uses, many of which have important environmental values.

Unfortunately, in today's contentious political environment and 24/7 media whirlwind, complicated issues like nitrates often get boiled down to simplistic polarizing positions. The USFRA survey also found that 72 percent of consumers admit to knowing nothing or very little about farming or ranching, yet 69 percent of consumers think about food production at least somewhat often. That's a dangerous mix for farmers.



Farmers are losing the perception battle and facts alone aren't enough to change the

course. Farmers have to do a better job of telling their story to the non-farming public. There is easier access to more information—good and bad, true and untrue—today than ever before. It's up to farmers to educate the non-farming public of the stewardship, conservation and responsible farming practices used everyday.

Northern Plains Nitrogen is committed to contributing to the conversation. First, by being good stewards of the land (our commitment to re-use gray water is just one example), promoting UAN and state-of-the-art safety measures, but also telling the region's story. Farmers in this region are the most cost-effective and efficient producers of crops in the world and responsible stewards of our shared environment. We at NPN look forward to being partners in this continuing success story.

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