

volume 6, issue 3

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# commerce matters



## North Dakota product served for school lunch

More than 600,000 pounds of North Dakota SunButter has been sold to school lunch programs in 12 states so far in 2005. SunButter, a sunflower seed product with a texture and taste similar to peanut butter, was developed in 2001 by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) scientists in cooperation with Red River Commodities of Fargo. Red River Commodities, Inc. markets SunButter. "SunButter, which began just five years ago as an experiment in cooperation with the USDA, is now on school lunch tables across the country," said Gov. John Hoeven. "It is a delicious new food, a real benefit for children with peanut butter allergies and a source of profit for North Dakota farmers and processors seeking new markets."

In 2004, SunButter achieved USDA Commodity Status, opening the door to large-scale sales under the National School Lunch Program. ●



**NORTH DAKOTA RANKS BEST IN THE NATION!** That's the message you will find on the back side of this eye-catching postcard. The postcard is the first in a quarterly series the North Dakota Department of Commerce is mailing to key business contacts, location advisors and other targeted executives to reiterate the message that companies grow and prosper in North Dakota. For a list of the most recent high-profile rankings for the state, see the next page of *commerce matters*.

## Session wraps up

While the adjournment of the 59<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly on April 23 marks the end of the 2005 legislative session, it marks the beginning of several exciting new initiatives for economic development.



Linda Butts

Gov. John Hoeven's Centers of Excellence plan was backed by overwhelming support of the legislature with their commitment of \$50 million with \$20 million on the front end. The plan combines education and economic development to expand the economy and create higher-paying jobs and more opportunities for North Dakota's citizens, especially our youth. When leveraged with federal and private funding, the amount available could be as much as \$150 million. The initiative makes the North Dakota University System and all of our campuses dynamic partners in building the economy of our state and creates a vehicle for our institutions of higher education to become engines of economic development.

The legislature also approved funding for several economic development initiatives and studies, including:

- Targeted Industry Identification Study
- Establishment of Statewide Image Information and Business Hotline Program
- Professional Economic Developer Certification Program
- Dakota Manufacturing Initiative
- Intellectual Property Rights Study
- Economic Development Incentives Study
- Business Climate Initiative
- Increased Venture and Risk Capital

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- Expansion of the Seed Capital Tax Credit

Finally, reflecting the input of state and local developers, the legislature approved comprehensive legislation aimed at bringing greater accountability to our economic development efforts across the state. The legislation ensures the new requirements will be attainable from a practical and hands-on perspective. The accountability measures take the right approach by ensuring more accountability without hindering current economic development efforts or imposing bureaucratic burdens on our state's developers.

Look for a more comprehensive report about these and other economic development initiatives resulting from the 2005 legislative session in our upcoming special edition of *commerce matters*. ●

### Redesign of [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com) is underway

The ED&F Research Team has begun a comprehensive redesign of the state's economic development marketing web site – [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com). Minor enhancements were made during the last few years, and it is now time for a new look and new features that helps economic development professionals and location consultants get the information they need easier and more quickly. "Our team has reviewed over 100 community, regional and state economic development web sites. We have interviewed location advisors to learn what they look for and need in a web site, and we've received great suggestions from several parties who completed an online assessment of the current web site. We believe we are developing a site that will position [www.growingnd.com](http://www.growingnd.com) as one of the best web sites in our industry," said Cory Finneman, vice president of ED&F research. The team plans to go live with the new site this fall. ●

### Commerce offers developer orientation

If you would like a refresher on the many programs offered through the North Dakota Department of Commerce or if you

are new to your economic development role in the state, plan a day in Bismarck at the DOC offices and get acquainted or reacquainted. We work to structure the day so you meet with Commissioner Lee Peterson and the four division directors as well as two to three additional program directors in your specific areas of interest. Contact Tracy Finneman at 701-328-5352 or [tfinneman@state.nd.us](mailto:tfinneman@state.nd.us) to schedule your DOC visit. ●

### Too much work and not enough time? Consider Operation: Intern

Operation: Intern is a statewide program designed to help you develop an internship program that meets the needs of your organization and delivers student work experience associated with academic credit.

Launched in 2004 by the North Dakota Governor's Office, the program provides a toolkit with every-

thing you need to host an intern(s) at your place of business. Each year, North Dakota colleges and universities prepare talented, enthusiastic and motivated young people eager to make a contribution to society.

Why not capitalize on that talent to help you meet peak workloads and special projects? Why not tap this cost-effective resource for potential employee recruitment and public relations agents? To learn more about Operation: Intern, visit [www.ndinterns.com](http://www.ndinterns.com) ●



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### North Dakota ranks best in the nation

Here are a few examples of recent national rankings where North Dakota comes out on top:

- North Dakota's employers pay, on average, the lowest workers' compensation premium rates in the nation.  
*Source: Oregon Department of Consumer & Business Services, December 2004*
- North Dakota ranks #1 in growth of Industry Research & Development Performance by State for 1998-2001.  
*Source: National Science Foundation, January 2005*
- North Dakota ranks #3 for best Overall Ranking of State Liability Systems.  
*Source: U.S. Chamber of Commerce State Liability System Ranking, March 2005*
- North Dakota ranks #4 for the best Health Care Cost Quotient.  
*Source: Expansion Management, March 2005* ●

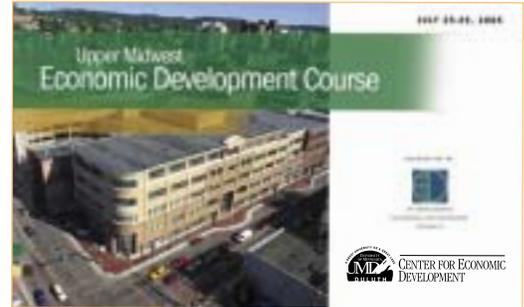
### Small Business Development Centers realize growth and increased services

North Dakota's Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) have grown to 10 centers that serve over 1,000 potential and existing entrepreneurs each year with one-to-one counseling and advising. Another 1,000 individuals attend a variety of SBDC training events. Over the last two-year period, 325 businesses were started, expanded or retained; they accessed \$43.5 million in loans; and they created or retained over 1,300 full- and part-time jobs. The estimated state taxes paid by these businesses will be over \$5 million.

The Economic Development & Finance Division of the North Dakota Department of Commerce invests in the SBDCs and State Director Christine Martin-Goldsmith has her office with the DOC. For more information about accessing the SBDC programs, contact Christine at 701-328-5375. ●

### IEDC basic economic development course offered July 25-29 in Duluth, MN

The Center for Economic Development at the University of Minnesota Duluth will offer a Basic Economic



Development Course on July 25-29. The course is accredited by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). This basic economic development course serves as the equivalent to IEDC's *Introduction to Economic Development* course in preparation for the Certified Economic Development (CECd) exam. The course registration fee is \$600. For more information, visit [www.umdced.com](http://www.umdced.com) or call 218-726-7298. ●

### North Dakota in the News

- *Berlingske Tidende*, Three stories on Global Electric Motorcars in Fargo, LM Glasfiber in Grand Forks and the Research Corridor, December 2004 - January 2005, advertising equivalency: \$19,276 (Danish newspaper)
- *Production Technology News*, "Running Lean, Flying High," February 2005, advertising equivalency: \$35,928 (story on Goodrich Corp. in Jamestown)
- *USA Today*, "Speed Demon Becomes Sled Builder Par Excellence," March 3, 2005, advertising equivalency: \$170,412 (story on PrairieBilt Sleds)
- *Chicago Tribune*, "North Dakota Visits to Lure Business," March 5, 2005, advertising equivalency: \$11,600 (story on Chicago Business Gathering and Chicago-land recruitment efforts)
- *Oregon Business*, "North Dakota Wants the Procreative Class," March 2005, advertising equivalency: \$1,135 (story on Pacific Northwest recruitment efforts) ●

economic development association of north dakota



## EDND plans summer meeting June 13-15 in Wahpeton

*Welcome to Wahpeton!*

*Our thriving, dynamic community has a wealth of resources and an outstanding quality of life. I welcome you to the state's most industrialized city, the location of nationally known North Dakota State College of Science, and the home of the Wahpeton Huskies. I am pleased that the city will host the 2005 Economic Development Association of North Dakota Summer Conference June 13-15 and invite you to visit the magnificent artistry of the Prairie Rose Carousel and the ever-entertaining Chahinkapa Zoo. If you desire a unique challenge, the Bois de Sioux Golf Course has nine holes in North Dakota and nine in Minnesota! We have acres of rolling green parks with countless activities from recreational programs to swimming to camping and fishing at Kidder Dam. And you will want to visit "Wahpper," the World's Largest Catfish structure – a super photo opportunity!*

*This year's summer conference theme is **Gone Fishin'** and what better way to spend your learning experience but at the head of the Red River of the North, in one of the most fertile valleys in the world! Please come this June and discover Wahpeton...a fun place to visit – a great place to live!*

*Duane "Bud" Schmitz, Mayor  
City of Wahpeton*