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USDA breaks ground for the Precision Agriculture Research Center at Nebraska Innovation Campus

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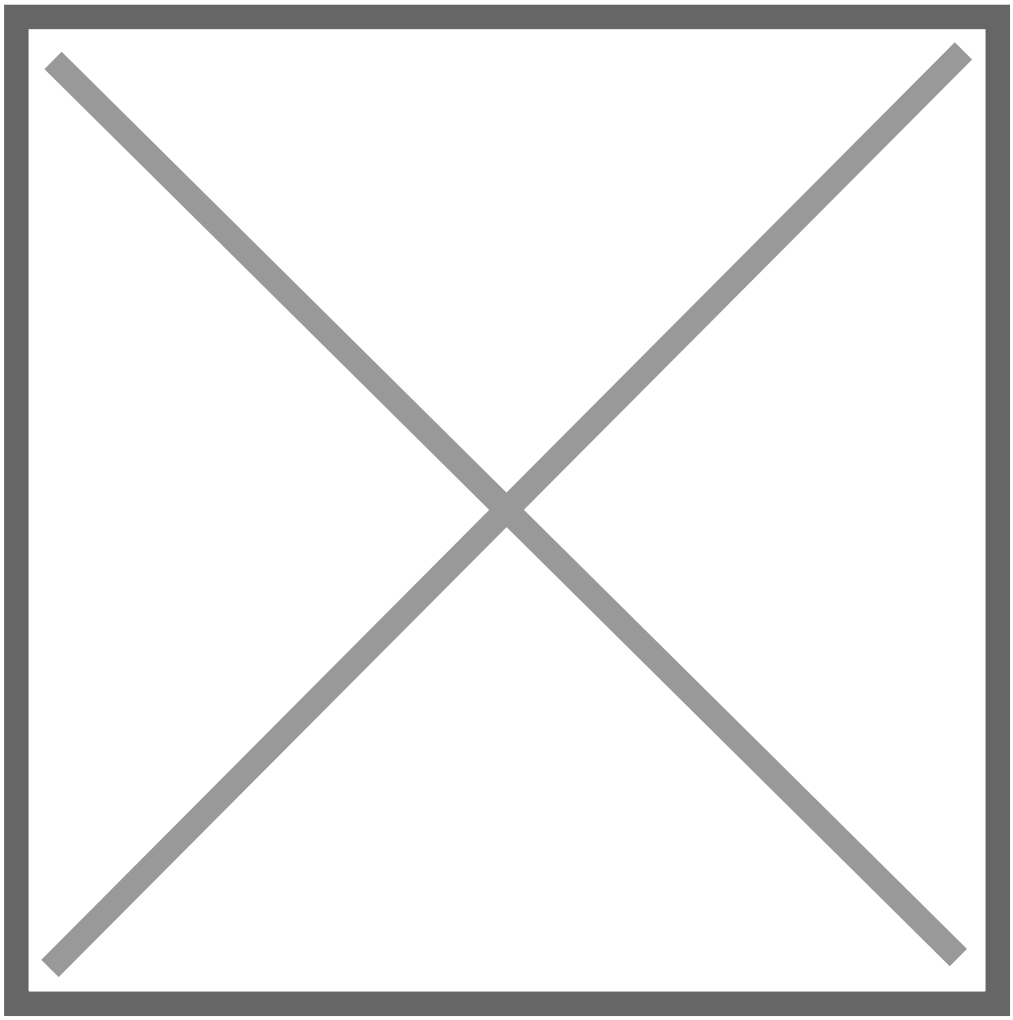
The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Agricultural Research Service (ARS), the University of Nebraskaâ??Lincoln (UNL), and Nebraska Innovation Campus held a groundbreaking ceremony to launch the construction of the National Center for Resilient and Regenerative Precision Agriculture. The state-of-the-art research center will be located on Nebraska Innovation Campus in Lincoln, Nebraska. It will primarily focus on the challenges and opportunities in agricultural innovation for the 21st century. The Center will focus on key research areas to address these challenges and promote sustainable, resilient, and highly efficient agriculture practices.

Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young, USDA Chief Scientist and Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics explained that â??Updated facilities ensure our best and brightest scientists work in the environment and with the tools they need to successfully meet the challenges agriculture faces.â?•

â??This project is a testament to the long history of innovation, ingenuity, and adaptability of agricultural producers across the United States and right here in Nebraska. It celebrates an incredibly productive 120-year partnership between USDA-ARS and the University of Nebraskaâ??Lincoln, and it exemplifies the passion and dedication of agricultural, state, and federal leaders,â?• said Mike Boehm, NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor for UNLâ??s Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.



Construction will start with state-of-the-art greenhouses that will allow ARS to perform research on wheat, barley, sorghum, forage and bioenergy grasses and other crops. Research on how these plants respond to emerging pests and pathogens under a full-range of environmental conditions will empower scientists to make cutting-edge discoveries with the goal of developing climate-resilient crops for the U.S. agriculture industry.

Once fully completed, the 120,000-square-foot agriculture research complex will function as a central hub for multidisciplinary experts, scientists and engineers who will collaborate with industry and producers to improve water and food security, increase the resilience of agricultural landscapes, and enhance agricultural profitability.

The establishment of the National Center for Resilient and Regenerative Precision Agriculture will further strengthen the long-lasting collaboration over the past century between ARS and UNL. These partnerships are instrumental in advancing research on sustainable bioenergy crops and production systems in an age where agriculture is expected to supply 40 percent of U.S. liquid fuels within the next three decades, in addition to providing food and fiber to the nationâ??s growing population.

TheÂ Wheat, Sorghum and Forage Research UnitÂ and theÂ Agroecosystem Management Research UnitÂ are currently located on UNLâ??s campus. The scientists working at these units are making significant contributions to crop and livestock production systems by improving productivity, stability of production, sustainability, and profitability.