

Prairie Fare: A Balanced Plate Starts In The Morning

By Julie Garden-Robinson, Food and Nutrition Specialist, NDSU Extension

"There was nothing for me to eat on the breakfast buffet, Julie."

"Remember, I have diabetes," he added as I sat next to him at one of the tables.

I had noticed the buffet was filled with sweet rolls and lacked high-protein options.

"It was heavy on carbs," I agreed. "I was hoping for some scrambled eggs."

He drove to a nearby fast-food restaurant to pick up a breakfast sandwich.

I didn't have the heart to tell him his choice wouldn't earn a gold star in nutrition, but it was likely a better option than sugary rolls.

Diabetes is a condition in which the body either does not make enough insulin or cannot use insulin effectively. Insulin helps move glucose (blood sugar) into the body's cells, where it is used for energy.

When I was studying nutrition to become a dietitian, Type 1 diabetes was often called "juvenile diabetes" because it was most commonly diagnosed in young people. Today we know it can occur at any age, although it often develops in children, teens and young adults. People with Type 1 diabetes need daily insulin.

Gestational diabetes occurs during pregnancy. In many cases, blood sugar levels return to normal after the baby is born.

Type 2 diabetes is far more common than Type 1. Risk increases with factors such as excess body weight, being over 45, a family history of diabetes, and certain racial and ethnic backgrounds, including African American, Hispanic or Latino, and Native American or Alaska Native populations.

Prediabetes means blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not yet high enough for a diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes.

In addition to age, family history and genetics, factors such as inadequate sleep, physical inactivity and high blood pressure can increase diabetes risk. Uncontrolled diabetes can affect many parts of the body, including the heart, kidneys, eyes and nerves.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that about two in five U.S. adults have prediabetes, and most (about 80 percent) do not know it.

Symptoms of unmanaged diabetes may include increased thirst, frequent urination, fatigue, blurry vision, slow-healing sores and tingling in the hands or feet.

If you notice these symptoms, see a health care provider for an accurate diagnosis. "Dr. Google" is not a reliable primary care provider.

For those with prediabetes, lifestyle changes (such as healthy eating, regular physical activity and modest weight loss) can delay or prevent the onset of Type 2 diabetes.

People can live long, healthy lives with well-managed diabetes. Working with a registered dietitian or certified diabetes care and education specialist can help you develop a personalized plan to manage your condition.

Technology for tracking blood sugar continues to improve. Continuous glucose monitoring, for example, operates with a sensor placed on your skin.

Check whether your community or local medical center offers diabetes support groups or education programs. Many Extension organizations across the U.S. offer programs designed to help prevent or manage diabetes.

A little planning goes a long way when providing food. Everyone deserves to find something they can enjoy at the table, regardless of their medical conditions.

Here's a simple breakfast idea developed by registered dietitian Toby Amidor for the American Diabetes Association (<https://diabetes.org/about-diabetes>). It appears in "The Create-Your-Plate Diabetes Cookbook."

Avocados provide heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, and whole-grain toast adds fiber, both of which provide a satisfying breakfast or snack. Avocados brown ("oxidize"), so be sure to eat this right away.

Avocado Toast with Tomato and Turkey Bacon

2 slices turkey bacon
1 ripe avocado, pitted and halved
2 slices whole-wheat bread, toasted

1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1 small tomato, thinly sliced

Coat a medium skillet with non-stick cooking spray and place it over medium heat until hot. Add the turkey bacon and cook until crispy, 8 minutes, flipping the slices over halfway through. Transfer the bacon to a paper towel-lined plate. Scoop out the flesh from each avocado half onto a slice of toasted bread. Mash the avocado with a fork until flattened. Sprinkle with sea salt and black pepper. Top each avocado toast with 1 slice of turkey bacon and half of the tomato slices.

Makes two servings. Each serving (1 slice) has 230 calories, 8 grams (g) protein, 16 g fat, 23 g carbohydrate, 5 g fiber and 430 milligrams sodium.

North Dakota Ag Research Leadership To Expand Under USDA Reorganization

Senator John Hoeven, Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Committee and a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, said North Dakota will expand its agriculture research leadership under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reorganization plan. Specifically, North Dakota will gain 45 additional Agricultural Research Service (ARS) employees and ten new research projects totaling approximately \$28.5 million in annual research that will be reassigned from Maryland's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC). Hoeven has been working to ensure that USDA utilizes the state's agriculture research expertise as part of the department's plan to relocate its services closer to farmers, ranchers and rural communities. Hoeven hosted USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins and Under Secretary for Agriculture Research, Education and Economics Scott Hutchins in North Dakota to showcase the state's ag leadership as the department developed its reorganization plans.

USDA's reorganization will include moving two research projects totaling \$3.8 million and 17 ARS employees to Fargo. Meanwhile, Grand Forks will receive 8 new research projects totaling \$24.7 million and 28 ARS employees.

"With North Dakota State University, the University of North Dakota, Grand Farm, and our existing ARS facilities, North Dakota is already a premier agriculture research hub, so it only makes sense that USDA would bring new, ongoing research projects and additional ARS employees to our state as part of efforts to refocus USDA on its core missions," said Hoeven. "We appreciate Secretary Rollins for recognizing North Dakota's ag research leadership and utilizing our state more fully in USDA's work. USDA's reorganization plan will expand North Dakota's ag research leadership and keep our state at the forefront in helping our agriculture producers increase their productivity and success."

The recent announcement builds on Hoeven's work to build North Dakota into the premier agriculture research location. Earlier this month, Hoeven announced that North Dakota's Grand Farm will serve as the National Program Manager for USDA's National Proving Grounds Network for AgTech (NPG-Ag). Beginning in 2024, Hoeven secured funding to create the Agriculture Risk Policy Center at NDSU to make the university one of the leading resources for policy research in the nation.

WSC Bringing Additional Bachelor's Degree Opportunities To Williston With New Partnerships

Williston State College (WSC) has expanded its innovative Degree Bridge program through new partnerships with Minot State University and Valley City State University, creating additional opportunities for students to earn a bachelor's degree without leaving the Williston community.

The announcement follows an earlier press conference on campus, where leaders from all participating institutions outlined how the expanded collaboration will provide more accessible and flexible pathways to four-year degrees. Minot State University and Valley City State University now join Dickinson State University, alongside Mayville State University, which was announced as an early partner and is preparing to launch its pathways, in delivering bachelor's degree completion options directly connected to WSC.

The Degree Bridge program is designed as a co-matriculation model, allowing students to begin at WSC while simultaneously working toward a bachelor's degree through a partner university. With aligned coursework, coordinated advising, and shared resources, students can complete both their associate and bachelor's degrees in a streamlined and cost-effective way, all while remaining in their home community.

"This expansion represents a major step forward in how we serve stu-

dents in northwest North Dakota," said Dr. Bernell Hinning, President of Williston State College. "Degree Bridge was designed to remove barriers. By bringing more university partners to our campus, we're creating real access, allowing students to stay here, remain connected to their community, and still achieve their long-term academic and career goals."

Through the partnership with Minot State University, students can pursue a range of in-demand bachelor's degrees, including: Psychology, Addiction Studies, Social Work, Corporate Fitness and Wellness Management, and Exercise Science and Rehabilitation.

Each pathway is intentionally structured so that coursework completed at WSC directly contributes to a student's progress toward their bachelor's degree, reducing both time and cost.

"Minot State is proud to partner with WSC in creating new opportunities for students seeking bachelor's degrees in a broad range of academic areas," said Dr. Steven Shirley, President of Minot State University. "We have a deep history at MSU in the fields of Psychology, Addiction Studies, Social Work, Corporate Fitness and Wellness Management, and Exercise Science and Rehabilitation, and look forward to this new collaboration with

WSC and the positive impact on students we'll educate."

The addition of Valley City State University introduces a focused pathway in education, allowing students to earn a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education while staying in Williston. The program prepares future educators to teach grades 1-8 and emphasizes real-world classroom experience without requiring students to transfer campuses. Students can further customize their degree through endorsements in early childhood education, kindergarten, special education, and teaching English language learners, as well as certificates in middle school education, reading, and STEM education.

"This effort reflects a shared responsibility to develop highly skilled educators for the future," said Dr. Allen Burgard, interim president of Valley City State University. "By aligning our programs, we're helping students move confidently into teaching careers while addressing the increasing demand for qualified teachers."

Students typically complete their first two years at WSC before transitioning into upper-level coursework through their partner institution, often while continuing to live and learn in Williston. This approach allows students to maintain their support systems, reduce relocation costs, and remain engaged in the region they are preparing to serve.

Students interested in learning more about Degree Bridge opportunities can visit willistonstate.edu/DegreeBridge or contact WSC Admissions at 701-774-4200.

Proceedings Of The Board Of County Commissioners

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MOUNTRAIL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

1. OPENING & ROLL CALL

The Board met in regular session on Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 9:00 A.M. in the Emergency/Community Room, Mountrail County Courthouse, Stanley ND with Commissioners Trudy Ruland, Wayne Olson, Joan Hollekim, John DeGroot and Jason Rice present. State's Attorney, Wade Engert was present.

Chairman Ruland called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. BUSINESS

A. AGENDA

Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Rice, to review and approve the agenda as corrected. Upon roll call, all present voted yes. Motion carried.

B. MINUTES

Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. Hollekim, to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2026 meeting as corrected. Upon roll call, all present voted yes. Motion carried.

C. FEES

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. Olson, to approve the March Grant collection for Corrections. Upon roll call, Olson, Hollekim, Ruland, DeGroot and Rice voted yes. Motion carried.

D. PAYROLL

Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Hollekim, to approve the appointed officials time off requests for March. Upon roll call, Ruland, Rice, Hollekim, Olson and DeGroot voted yes. Motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. Olson, to approve the Regular Full Time Employee Classification for Eli Rushing as a Correctional Officer I with Corrections in the amount of \$28.61 per hour/\$59,500 per year. Upon roll call, DeGroot, Hollekim, Ruland, Olson and Rice voted yes. Motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Rice, seconded by Comm. Olson, to approve the Regular Part time Employee Classification for Joshua Rushing as a Correctional Officer I with Corrections in the amount of \$28.61 per hour not to exceed 32 hrs. per week/1664 per year. Upon roll call, Ruland, Rice, Olson, DeGroot and Hollekim voted yes. Motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. Rice, to approve the Regular Full time Employee Classification for Truman Sorensen as a Dispatcher with Sheriff in the amount of \$25.75 per hour/\$53,550 per year. Upon roll call, Olson, Rice, Ruland, Hollekim and DeGroot voted yes. Motion carried.

E. QUIT CLAIM DEEDS

Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Olson, to approve signing the quit claim deeds from the County to Aemilia Lindquist for Lot 1b, Block 3, Coulee Original Townsite & Tahnee King for Lot 1a, Block 3, Coulee Original Townsite. Upon roll call, DeGroot, Hollekim, Ruland, Rice and Olson voted yes. Motion carried.

F. SPONSORSHIP

Discussion was held on the sponsorship for the Summit on Behavioral Health in Dickinson from June 17th & 18th. More discussion will be held at the next commissioner meeting.

G. AMTRAK LETTER OF SUPPORT

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve sending a letter of support for upgrading Amtrak equipment & expanding the routes specifically for the Empire Builder Route that benefits Mountrail County. Upon roll call, all present voted yes. Motion carried.

H. TRANSFERS

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. Rice, to approve the mill levy relief for 2025 from the General Fund to the Veterans Services totaling \$68,960; County Agent totaling \$180,162; Weed Control totaling \$553,019; Emergency Fund totaling \$94,908 & Parshall Bay Camping Upgrades totaling \$500,000 with a grand total of \$1,397,049. Upon roll call, DeGroot, Rice, Olson, Ruland and Hollekim voted yes. Motion carried.

I. BILLS

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. Rice, to approve the bills totaling \$1,338,060.97 & March 1 through March 14 payroll, checks #20205-20210 and direct deposits #1-164 totaling \$626,561.32 & March 15 through March 28 payroll, checks #20211-20216 and direct deposits #1-179 totaling \$601,935.45. Upon roll call, Hollekim, DeGroot, Olson, Rice and Ruland voted yes. Motion carried. (A complete list of bills is posted on a regular basis on the Mountrail County website @ www.co.mountrail.nd.us under the County Commissioner heading and/or are

available for review in the Auditor's Office during normal business hours).

J. WAIVER OF RENTAL FEE FOR SOUTH COMPLEX

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve the rental fee waiver for the Stanley City Park Board fundraiser at the South Complex on April 10th. Upon roll call, Olson, DeGroot, Ruland, Rice and Hollekim voted yes. Motion carried.

K. BOARD CONCERNS

The board recognized the passing of the former County Commissioner District #5 Gary Jacobson.

3. APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED

9:10 A.M.
Corey Bristol, Sheriff presented the board with quotes from Puklich, Ryan Chevrolet & Prairie Ford for four new patrol vehicles.

Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Olson, to approve the 4 trade ins and purchase of one ¾ ton pickup and three half ton pickups totaling a net cost of \$137,388 from Puklich. Upon roll call, Olson, Rice, Hollekim, DeGroot and Ruland voted yes. Motion carried.

9:15 A.M.
Melissa Vachal, P&Z Administrator met with the board to discuss amending the contract for the moratorium on animal feeding operations with SRF Consulting.

Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Olson, to approve amending the contract with SRF Consulting for the moratorium on animal feeding operations within the Land Development code in the amount of \$22,397.20. Upon roll call, Hollekim, Ruland, DeGroot, Rice and Olson voted yes. Motion carried.

9:30 A.M.
Amy Werremeyer, NDSU Pharmacist, Lisa Nagel, NDSU Director of Operations, Justine Sharp and Terry & Twana Dick, Stanley Dakota Drug Pharmacist met with the board to discuss the possibility of having a methadone dispenser installed at Dakota Drug. Also present was Laurie Johnson, Administrator for Corrections. Administrator Johnson stated this would be very beneficial for the community.

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve a letter of support to NDSU in order to install a methadone dispenser at Dakota Drug in Stanley. Upon roll call, Rice, DeGroot, Ruland, Hollekim and Olson voted yes. Motion carried.

9:50 A.M.
Jessica Niemitalo, Treasurer met with the board to discuss the renewal of two certificate deposits (CD's) one for \$2 million and one for \$3 million at Liberty State Bank.

Moved by Comm. Rice, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve renewing the two certificate of deposits (CD's) one for \$2 million & one for \$3 million with Old National Bank for 12 months. Upon roll call, Ruland, DeGroot, Rice, Olson and Hollekim voted yes. Motion carried.

10:00 A.M.
Dustin Roise with the Powers Lake Ambulance presented a quote of \$436,000 for a new ambulance and requested support of \$200,000 from the Fire & Ambulance Fund. The City of Powers Lake will be giving \$40,000 towards the new ambulance and a request will be made to Burke County also as the Powers Lake Ambulance District lies in Mountrail and Burke counties.

Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Hollekim, to approve the request from Powers Lake Ambulance for a new ambulance not to exceed \$200,000 from the Fire & Ambulance Fund. Upon roll call, Olson, DeGroot, Hollekim, Ruland and Rice voted yes. Motion carried.

Dustin Roise, Cottonwood Township discussed the water level in Cottonwood Lake and stated he did submit a petition to the State of ND Water Commission concerning the levels of the lake.

10:10 A.M.
Farren Wold, Monte Billadeau, and Brian Severance with the Parshall Fire presented a quote for two new fire trucks and equipment.

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve the request from Parshall Fire for 2 new grass fire trucks totaling \$254,600 and 12 self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) safety devices including spare tanks totaling \$154,176 not to exceed \$408,776 from the Fire & Ambulance Fund. Upon roll call, Olson, Hollekim, Ruland, DeGroot and Rice voted yes. Motion carried.

10:20 A.M.
Jana Hennessy, Road & Bridge (R&B) Engineer met to discuss Road & Bridge. Also present were Craig Mizera & Matthew Huettl with HDR Engineering.

1. CHIP SEAL/PM2026
Engineer Hennessy presented the bid opening results for the Chip Seal/PM2026.

Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. Rice, to approve signing the Notice of Award to Morris Sealcoat &

ND Announces \$3.6 Million In School And Community-Based Grant Opportunities For Rural Health Transformation

The North Dakota Health and Human Services (HHS) recently announced three new grant opportunities for rural communities. The grant opportunities include a Zero Hour Physical Education initiative, community gardens projects, and community-based walking programs.

Grant applications will be accepted from April 22, 2026 through May 22, 2026 at 5 p.m. CT. Information and applications can be found at hhs.nd.gov/rural-health-transformation/funding. Additional funding opportunities for health care, school and community-based organizations will roll out in coming weeks.

According to Trust for America's 2023 State of Obesity Report, 71 percent of North Dakotans are overweight or obese. Additionally, nearly ten percent have been diagnosed with diabetes, according to the American Diabetes Association. HHS' new funding opportunities serve as investments in the health and well-being of North Dakota citizens.

"It's time to break habits such as isolation and excessive screen time with healthier alternatives that ultimately decrease the burden on our health care system," said HHS Commissioner Pat Traynor. "The RHPT funding opportunity is unique in that it allows us to address not only the delivery of health care in rural North Dakota, but also to support community- and school-based efforts to improve the physical, mental and social well-being of our residents."

Zero-Hour Physical Education Initiative: These grants are open to rural schools and will focus on improving middle and high school students' health and academic outcomes by providing physical activity opportunities before the start of the school day. Research shows early-morning physical activity can enhance academic performance, brain function, strength and endurance. Classes are typically 30 to 45 minutes in length. Federal funding of approximately \$700,000 is available in the first year, with awards ranging from \$10,000 to \$70,000 each.

State School Superintendent Levi Bachmeier said this initiative aligns with broader wellness-oriented efforts to support student academic success through home and school-based strategies.

"As a track and field coach, I know the importance of purposeful movement, quality diet, adequate sleep, and screen time management cannot be overstated for all North Dakota's students, Bachmeier said. "It is not just important for athletes; it is essential for all young people."

Community Gardens Project: This grant is open to rural schools, civic groups, municipalities, health care facilities, parks and recreation entities, public health units, and non-profit organizations. It supports community garden initiatives that bring people together to plant

and grow food. Expected outcomes include improved health and nutrition through increased access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables, enhanced physical and mental well-being and stronger community connections through volunteerism. Approximately \$300,000 in federal funding is available in year one, with awards ranging from \$5,000 to \$30,000 each.

Community-Based Walking Programs: This grant is open to rural civic groups, municipalities, health care facilities, parks and recreation entities, public health units, and non-profit organizations. Research published in The Lancet shows that walking 7,000 steps daily is associated with a 47 percent lower risk of death, and community-based walking programs can improve health and well-being, expand social connections, increase community engagement and boost community pride. Grant program components include strong leadership to oversee activities, a communications campaign to recruit participants and efforts to celebrate individual and collective achievements. Approximately \$2.6 million in federal funding is available in year one, with awards ranging from \$25,000 to \$125,000 each.

Through its Rural Health Transformation Program (RHPT), HHS is investing in creating new access points to care, modernizing how care is delivered and empowering local organizations to meet the unique needs of their communities. These grants will fund initiatives that serve as catalysts for lasting lifestyle changes. Recipients that demonstrate success in year one for any of these funding opportunities may be eligible for annual renewal, up to five years, contingent upon continued federal funding. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services awarded North Dakota \$199 million for the first year of the Rural Health Transformation Program, a significant investment to strengthen rural health systems, expand access to care and promote prevention of chronic disease for residents in rural communities. Future funding amounts will be determined by CMS based on the state's progress in implementing the program.

The Rural Health Transformation Program is supported by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$198,936,969.55, with 100 percent funded by CMS. The contents are those of North Dakota Health and Human Services and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CMS, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the U.S. government.

Apply online at: www.hhs.nd.gov/rural-health-transformation/funding.

ND Newspapers work for YOU!

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS are relied on more than any other media for information on:

- local government
- community schools
- local high school sports
- health and medicine



NEWSPAPERS: Yesterday, Today, & Tomorrow

Source: Coda Ventures Market Study 2020