

Common Ground: Renewables and Agriculture Working Together

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Nebraska
Wind & Solar
CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION



Jess Baker, Director of Special Projects
NelnetEnergy.com



CENTER FOR
Infrastructure & Economic
Development

Common Ground:

Agriculture & Renewables Working Together





Our Mission

The Center for Infrastructure and Economic Development works with local leaders seeking to transition their communities to adapt to and realize benefits from emerging infrastructure and energy technologies. Our goal is to help counties and municipalities stay centered on their core community identities while enabling sustainable, long-term economic growth that benefits local residents and businesses.



The Honorable Heidi
Heitkamp

National Co-Chair



The Honorable Terry
Branstad

National Co-Chair and



The Honorable Mike
Johanns

National Co-Chair and

National Leadership

Farmers Facing Headwinds



Farmers Facing Headwinds

USDA projecting decrease
in farm net incomes levels
from 2022

23% ↓ income

Direct government
payments decrease

19% ↓ payment

Projected loss wipes
out gains from 2021-
2022

\$42 B. ↓

Production expenses
rise

\$458 B. ↑

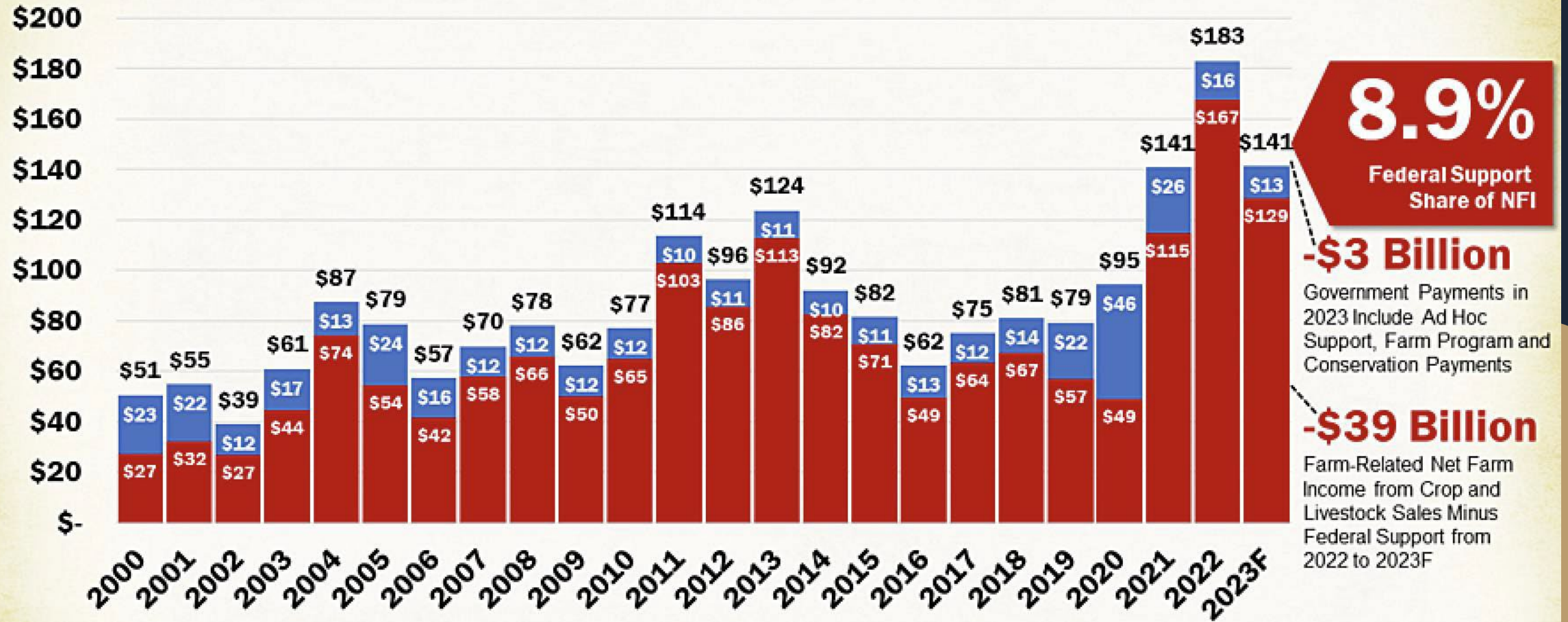
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/farm-sector-income-finances/highlights-from-the-farm-income-forecast/>

Farmers Facing Headwinds

FIGURE 1: NET FARM INCOME

With and without Federal Support

U.S. Farm Sector Net Farm Income, Billion Dollars



Let's Support Our Farmers



Local Governments Must Support Family Farms



According to Columbia Law School:

Since March 2022



121 local policies restricting new wind & solar projects across 31 states -
a 17.5% increase over findings reported in September 2021



Landowners, developers,
and local governments
should work together to
get to “YES”

Diversifying Income Key to Thriving Farms



Flexibility



Minimized Risk



Consistent Revenue



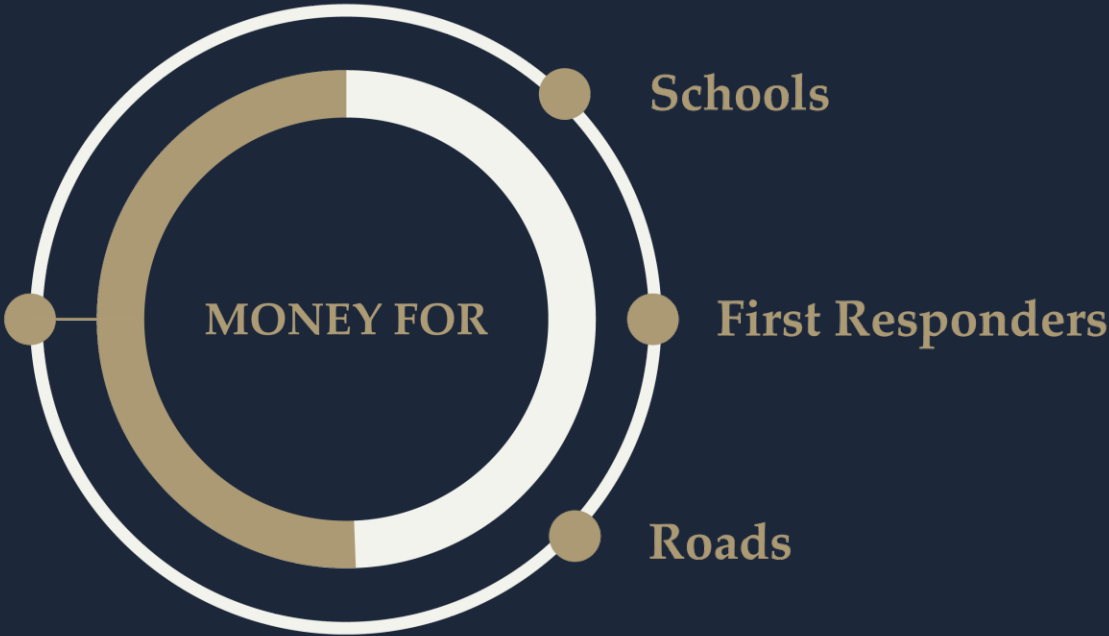


Farmer Lease Income in Nebraska

in 2022 alone, Nebraska farmers, ranchers and landowners earned \$17.6 million in drought-proof lease payments.

When Farmers Do Well Our Communities Do Well

\$17.3 million
in property, state and local
taxes in 2022 in Nebraska



For example:

Grand Prairie Wind Project in Holt & Antelope Counties

- ✓ \$2.6 million in taxes to the counties each year
- ✓ \$3.87 million in taxes so far for public school improvements
 - New classrooms
 - Classrooms for special needs children
 - New music room
 - State of the art science classrooms
 - Ended busing students due to lack of facilities!



Renewable Energy Projects Preserve Farmland

Maintaining

Resting & regenerating

Conservation



Balanced Local Policy Matters



How can The Center assist?



National scope of
policy best practices



Access to policy
experts

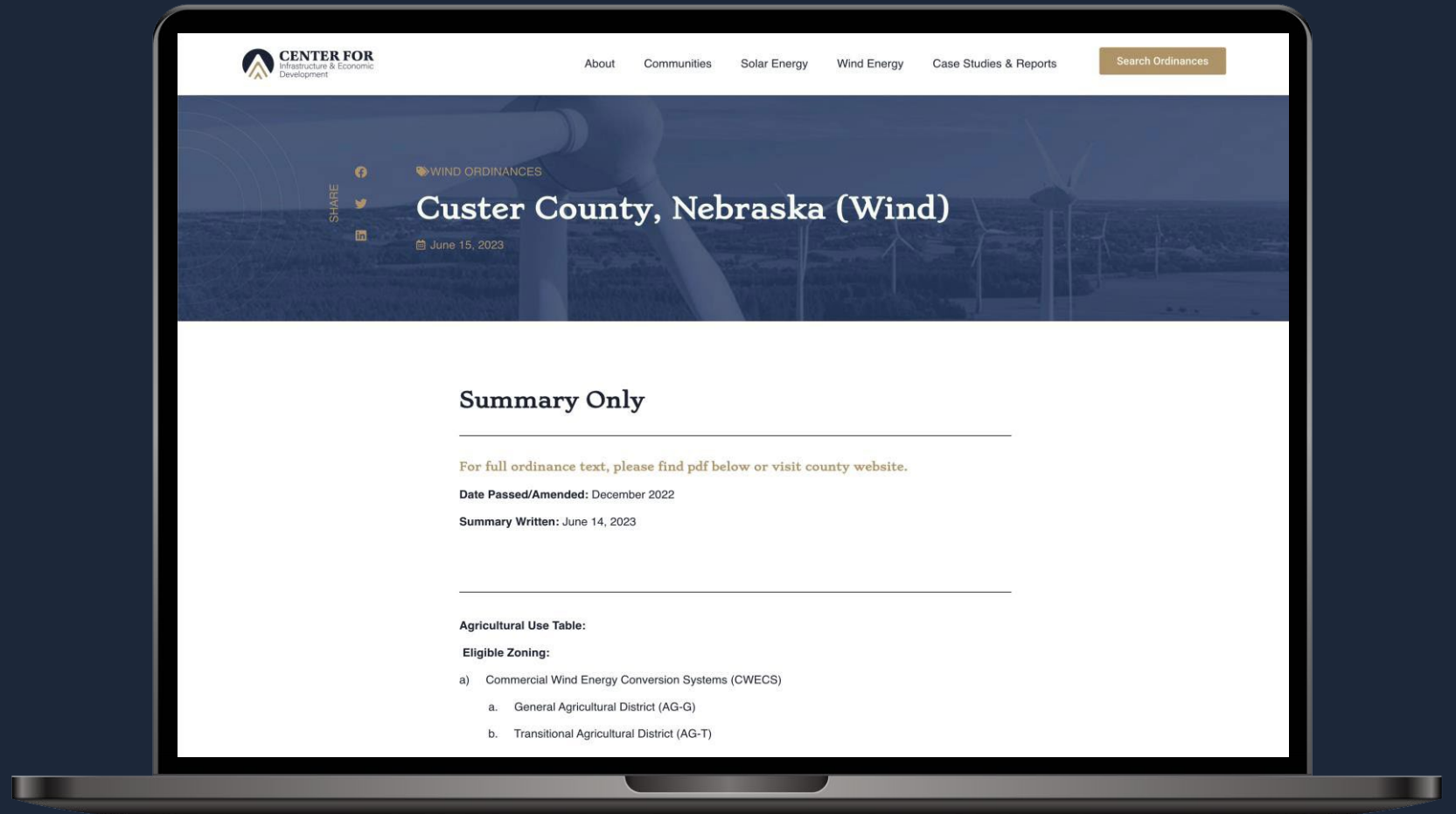


Ordinance review and
suggested guidance



Information
resource

Ordinance Reviews



Featured Case Study



Kingman County, KS Uses Millions in Wind Farm Revenue to Protect Citizens

Kingman County, Kansas officials made smart decisions over a decade ago when they approved the Flat Ridge 2 wind project, following by two more wind developments over the next eight years. Those projects have provided the county over \$10 million in revenue over the last decade, allowing Kingman County and the communities within to invest in their public safety and local infrastructure.

[READ MORE >](#)



REPORTS



7 Steps of a Decommissioning Plan

1. The removal should be to a depth specified by ordinance (typically three to four feet) unless the landowner desires otherwise.

[READ MORE >>](#)



Op-Ed: Economists Warn of Revenue Loss for Farmers; Former Secretary of Agriculture Suggests Diversifying Income

Farming has always been a high-risk enterprise but when farmers do well, rural

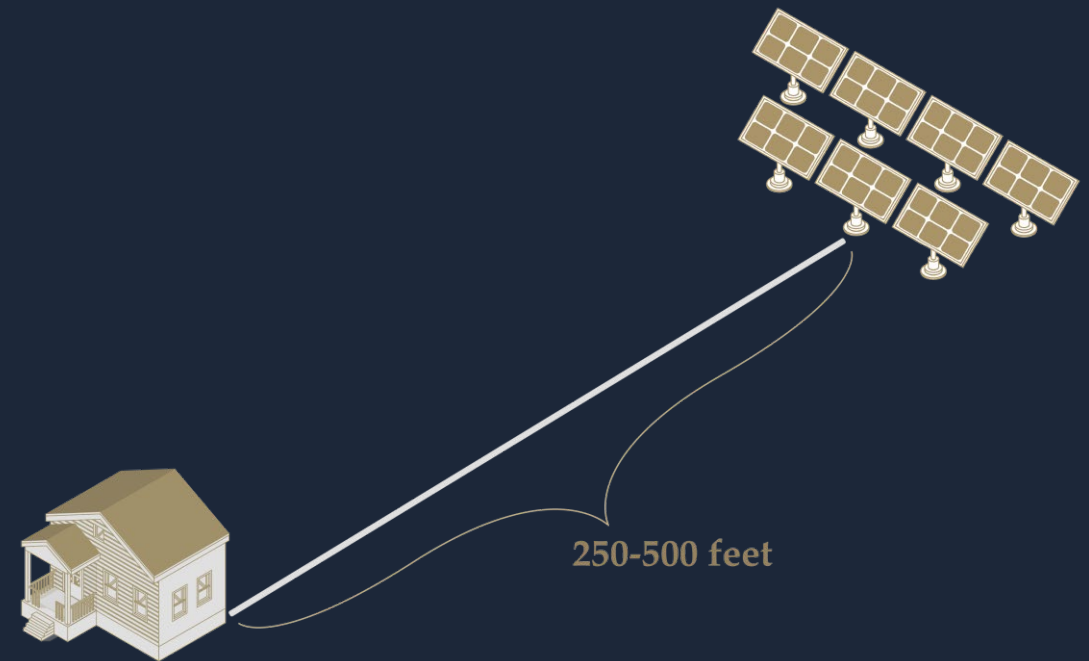
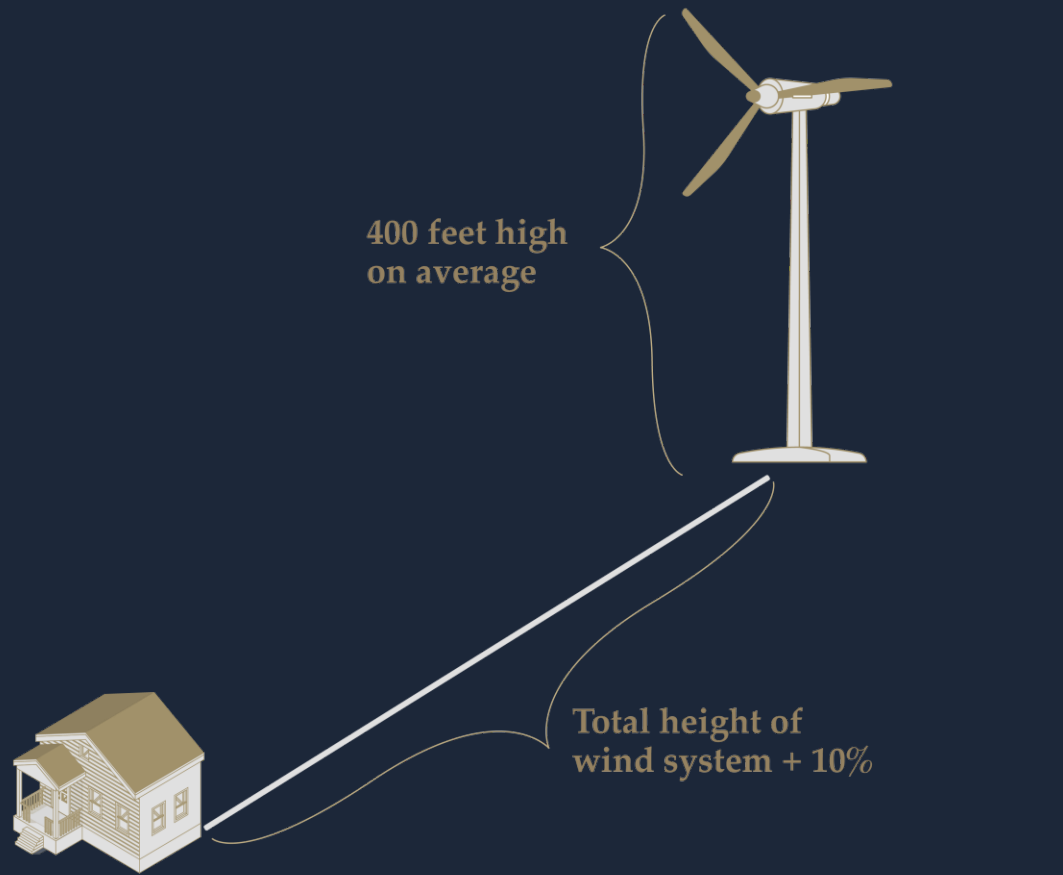
Case Studies



National Scope of Best Practices

Setbacks

Best Practices:





Decommissioning

Important Elements:

- Reasonable timelines
- Abandonment determination of 1 year following no power generation
- Removal depth to 4 feet below the ground surface
- Appropriate financial assurance mechanisms



Shadow Flicker (wind)

Best Practice:

Mitigation efforts must be made to reduce as much as possible the amount of shadow flicker on neighboring residences.



Height restrictions (solar)

Best Practices:

Have a minimum height requirement around 2-3 feet from the ground's surface and height maximums must take into account the panel's height when at full tilt.



Battery Energy Storage Systems

Best Practice:

Create siting standards within your solar ordinance and ensure those standards are as similar as possible.

Nebraska

✓ Engaged with 60 of the 93 counties.

✓ Provided formal guidance to 4 counties, with more on the way.

✓ Provided informal consultation to numerous other counties.

Nebraska State Team



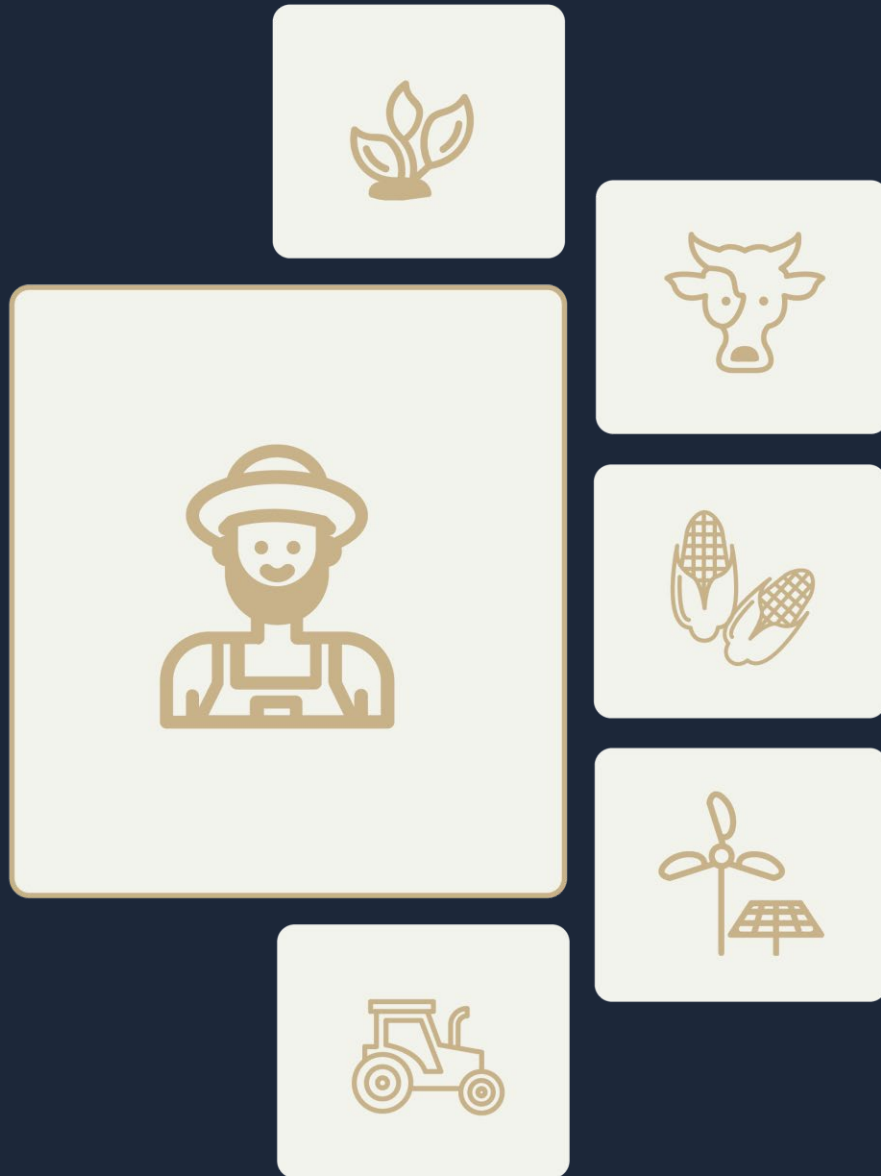
The Honorable Mike Johanns



Cale Giese, State Director
Mayor of Wayne, NE



Jim Smith, Special Advisor
Former President of Blueprint Nebraska
Former State Senator



Renewable Energy Projects Work Alongside Agriculture



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