

# Dakota

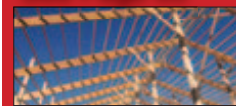
## FARMER

**Northern Seed Extra**
**New seed  
for Dakotas**

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**Top tips for  
livestock  
permitting**

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**RAILROAD BACKERS:** South Dakota Corn Growers Association and South Dakota Corn Council directors show support for the DM&E expansion project at a hearing in Huron, S.D. Pictured are (front to back) Reid Jensen, Burbank; Bill Chase, Wolsey; Jerry Rubendall, Mitchell; and Mike Randall, Dell Rapids.



# Ag pulls for rail

By LONTONNESON

**F**ARMERS and ranchers across the Dakotas are working overtime on railroads.

And supporters of a major expansion by the Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern Railroad in South Dakota and the building of several container shipping facilities in North Dakota may be about to drive the golden spike, like railroads did in the 1800s when they completed the first transcontinental lines.

### South Dakota expansion

In South Dakota, farm leaders are backing the controversial expansion and upgrade of the DM&E. The project is in its final stages of federal review.

Designed to haul coal from Wyoming mines to power plants as far away as Chicago, the line would also improve service for

### Key Points

- Farm, commodity groups unite to back railroad improvements.
- South Dakota's DM&E project is in final stages.
- Container loading facilities needed in North Dakota.

grain and ethanol shippers, provide a more direct route to Pacific Northwest grain ports, and create competition among railroads. The result, according to some reports, would be a 20-cent hike in the price of all grain sold and a reduction in freight rates in South Dakota.

"This is the single most important expansion of railroad service in South Dakota in a century," says Reid Jensen, president of the South Dakota Corn Growers Association.

### North Dakota projects

In North Dakota, farmers are behind plans to build con-

tainer loading centers in Minot, Bismarck and Dilworth, Minn. Should any or all of the facilities be completed, it would dramatically increase the state's ability to compete in organic, non-GMO grains and specialty markets in the Pacific Rim. No longer would containers have to be trucked to Minneapolis to be loaded on railcars before beginning their journey west.

North Dakota lawmakers also may create a permanent railroad litigation fund. Two years ago, they approved

spending \$1 million to file a rate case against Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad for overcharging and underserving grain shippers. The North Dakota Wheat Commission, North Dakota Grain Growers, North Dakota Farm Bureau, North Dakota Farmers Union and North Dakota Grain Dealers Association contributed \$100,000 to the effort.

The case hasn't been filed yet, but the threat alone may have produced \$10 million in rate cuts, according to Public

Service Commissioner Tony Clark.

### Turnaround

At a recent rally for the DM&E project, John Sumption, a Frederick, S.D., farmer and South Dakota Farmers Union director, expressed his support for rail projects.

"All my life I have watched railroads go downhill," he says. "It's time to turn it around."

■ Read more about the projects on Pages 8-9.



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