**Invitation to participate in the**

**Corn hybrid testing program for Eastern ND**

Dear Company Representative,

Your company is invited to participate in the NDSU corn hybrid testing program that will focus on generating corn hybrid performance data for eastern North Dakota & NW Minnesota.

Hybrid selection has been recognized as one of the most important management decisions that a farmer makes. High quality hybrid performance data generated in representative environments is critical to this decision process. Furthermore, research has shown that multi-location testing significantly improves the predictability of data with regards to the performance of hybrids in subsequent seasons. Therefore, this program will continue to replicate trials in multiple locations and strive for the highest standard in data quality. Some of the features of this program are:

* Treatments will be replicated four times per location, using advanced statistical designs to reduce experimental error.
* Trials with the same hybrids will be established in up to four locations (one, in conventional trials) within three broad production zones. Since farmers are interested in the performance of hybrids with a range of maturities within these zones, we encourage the submission for testing of a wide range of maturities within each of these zones.
* Plots will be planted with a precision planter using openers that are commercially available to growers for most locations. We plant all trials at a rate of 34,000 seeds per acre.
* An experienced technical team will plant and harvest all of the plots. We will strive for uniformity in key management practices across all locations. The ND Corn Council is partially funding the lead technician in this program to ensure focus and continuity for this year.
* Testing sites will be selected in collaboration with the local county extension agents and the local county crop improvement associations where possible. Additionally, cooperators from 2017 who are still interested will be again collaborated with in 2018 for continuity of the program. This will facilitate local involvement in the testing program and will allow for crop tours to be organized at a county level.

Please refer to the ‘Corn Procedures 2018’ file attached to this e-mail for details and directions on entering your hybrids into the trials. The Excel file ‘2018 NDSU Corn Hybrid Test Entry Form’ contains the application documents. There are separate tabs in the spreadsheet for GMO and conventional hybrids. **Entries and payment checks must be e-mailed or postmarked by Monday, April 2, and seed delivery is due Friday, April 13.**

We are well aware of the substantial cost to you associated with third party testing. With the financial assistance of the ND Corn Council, we have tried to establish a moderate entry fee. We firmly believe that with your support and our dedicated effort we can produce information that will help farmer’s effectively select appropriate hybrids and will help you market and showcase the hybrids that you have identified for marketing in ND and MN.

If you have questions or suggestions about this program, please do not hesitate to contact us. Also, if I have sent this to the wrong representative of your company, please forward it to the appropriate contact person, and copy me on the email so that I may keep my contact lists up to date.

Sincerely,

Joel Ransom Darin Eisinger

Extension Agronomist for Cereal Crops Research Specialist, Corn Hybrid Performance Testing