November 27, 2017

Dear SBARE Members,

There were many people who thought the Philadelphia Eagles were crazy to trade up to the number 2 spot in the draft to pick a quarterback from North Dakota named Carson Wentz. After all, what kind of pro football quarterback could come out of North Dakota? It turns out, a possible MVP (Most Valuable Player) quarterback can come out of North Dakota. When you watch the Eagles games or read game posts, you often see “North Dakota Tough” in reference to Carson.

In the tree and shrub world, we are starting to see “North Dakota Tough” references too. Many of the tree and shrub varieties developed and released as a result of NDSU research are making their mark on the plant world. If they grow in North Dakota, they’ll grow anywhere is how some people refer to the releases. And, that is what we need – North Dakota Tough - plants that can grow in our soil, pH, wind, heat, and cold.

Other plant development programs are geared to produce plants for large population centers as they are more profitable. 30 below may keep the riff raff out, but it also does a number on the non-adapted tree and shrub species too. Our plants are facing a huge number of insect and disease issues in the future. We need new and improved plants to combat these problems. Our industry organization of 250 member greenhouses, garden centers, landscapers, nurseries, and suppliers rely on the important tree and shrub research being done at NDSU. More importantly, every person who has or wants a tree in their yard relies on the important research being done at NDSU.

We would ask you to please keep supporting the important work of plant development being done at NDSU. Let’s keep turning out those MVP tree and shrub candidates that are North Dakota Tough!

Mary Holm
Executive Director

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