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# RESULTS OF THE NORTH DAKOTA LAND VALUATION MODEL FOR THE 2025 AGRICULTURAL REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT

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## ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the 2025 results of the North Dakota Land Valuation Model. The model is used annually to estimate average land values by county, based on the value of production from cropland and non-cropland. The county land values developed from this procedure form the basis for the 2025 valuation of agricultural land for real estate tax assessment. The average value for all agricultural land in a county from this analysis is multiplied by the total acres of agricultural land on the county abstract to determine each county's total agricultural land value for taxation purposes. The State Board of Equalization compares this value with the total value assessed to agricultural property in each county.

The average value per acre of all agricultural land in North Dakota increased by **0.36** percent from 2024 to 2025 based on the value of production. The formula cost of production index value used in the 2024 analysis was **234.80**. The formula capitalization rate was **4.47** percent. The capitalization rate had a larger effect on higher valuations compared to recent years.

Cropland value increased, on average, **0.24** percent. Across individual counties, the cropland valuation ranged from a decrease of 5.34 percent to an increase of 5.67 percent. County values had increases and decreases depending on crop mix and changes in cropland to non-cropland ratios. Non-cropland values increased **0.94** percent.

Changes in market value are included for comparison. Market value data are from the annual County Rents and Prices survey conducted by the North Dakota Department of Trust Lands.



**Key Words:** land valuation, real estate assessment, agricultural land

# RESULTS OF THE NORTH DAKOTA LAND VALUATION MODEL FOR THE 2025 AGRICULTURAL REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT

Ronald Haugen[1]

## NORTH DAKOTA LAND VALUATION MODEL

North Dakota state statute mandates that the Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics at North Dakota State University annually compute an estimate of 1) the average value per acre of agricultural lands on a statewide and countywide basis, and 2) the average value per acre for cropland and non-cropland (N.D.C.C. 57-02-27.2). These estimates are provided to the State Tax Department.

The model determines agricultural land values as the landowner share of gross returns divided by the capitalization rate. *Landowner share of gross returns* is the portion of revenue generated from agricultural land that is assumed to be received by the landowner, and is expected to reflect current rental rates. The Legislature has specified that the landowner share of gross returns is calculated at 30 percent of gross returns for all crops except sugar beets and potatoes, 20 percent for sugar beets and potatoes, 25 percent for non-cropland and 50 percent of the dryland rate for irrigated land.

### Capitalization Rate

The capitalization rate is an interest rate that reflects the general market rate of interest adjusted for the risk associated with a particular investment or asset (in this case, agricultural land in North Dakota). The Legislature specified the gross Federal Land Bank (Agri-Bank, FCB) mortgage interest rate for North Dakota be used as the basis for computing the capitalization rate. The capitalization rate used in the North Dakota Land Valuation model is a twelve-year rolling average with the high and low rates dropped. The 2003 Legislature amended the capitalization rate formula by introducing a minimum level of 9.5 percent with no upper limit. The 2005 Legislature amended the capitalization rate formula again, specifying a rate no lower than 8.9 percent to be used for the 2005 analysis. For subsequent years the capitalization rate was not to be lower than 8.3 percent. The 2009 Legislature amended the capitalization rate formula to set a minimum of 8.0 percent for 2009, 7.7 percent for 2010 and 7.4 percent for 2011. The minimum rate was allowed to sunset after 2011.

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The capitalization rate was calculated based on the formula for the 2025 analysis. This rate was 4.47 percent. Increasing the capitalization rate from 4.32 percent for 2024 to 4.47 percent decreases the values by **3.47** percent without any other changes. The interest rate for the latest year in the data set (2023) was 6.76%. This replaces the rate for 2011 which was 4.34%.

**Cost of Production Index**

Beginning with the analysis for the 1999 assessment, a cost of production index was incorporated into the land valuation model to account for the increasing proportion of the total cost of production represented by variable costs. The source of data for this index is the *Items Used for Production, Interest, Taxes and Wage Rates* from the *Prices Paid Index Annual Average* published by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service. The index developed for this analysis was determined by averaging the values of the latest ten years after dropping the high and low values; and dividing this value by the base index. The base index was developed by averaging the index values from the years 1989 through 1995 after dropping the high and low values. The base index value is 102.

The index used for 2025 increased from 231.50 in 2024 to 234.80, for a one-year change of 3.30 points. This change in the cost of production index had the effect of reducing calculated land values by **1.43** percent from 2024.

The index value used in the 2025 analysis was 234.80, which resulted in a reduction in the landowner share of gross returns of 57.41 percent. The landowner share of gross returns is the amount that is capitalized to determine the land values. Therefore, land values are 57.41 percent lower than they would have been if the cost of production index were not included in the model.

**Combined Effect**

The cost of production index and the capitalization rate apply equally to all land in all counties. The net impact of the change in value from the previous year for these two factors was to decrease land values by **4.90** percent. Therefore, any change in county values more or less than a negative 4.90 percent from the 2024 values is due primarily to an increase or decrease in productivity. Values may also be impacted by a shift in the ratio between cropland and non-cropland acres.

## RESULTS: ALL AGRICULTURAL LAND VALUE

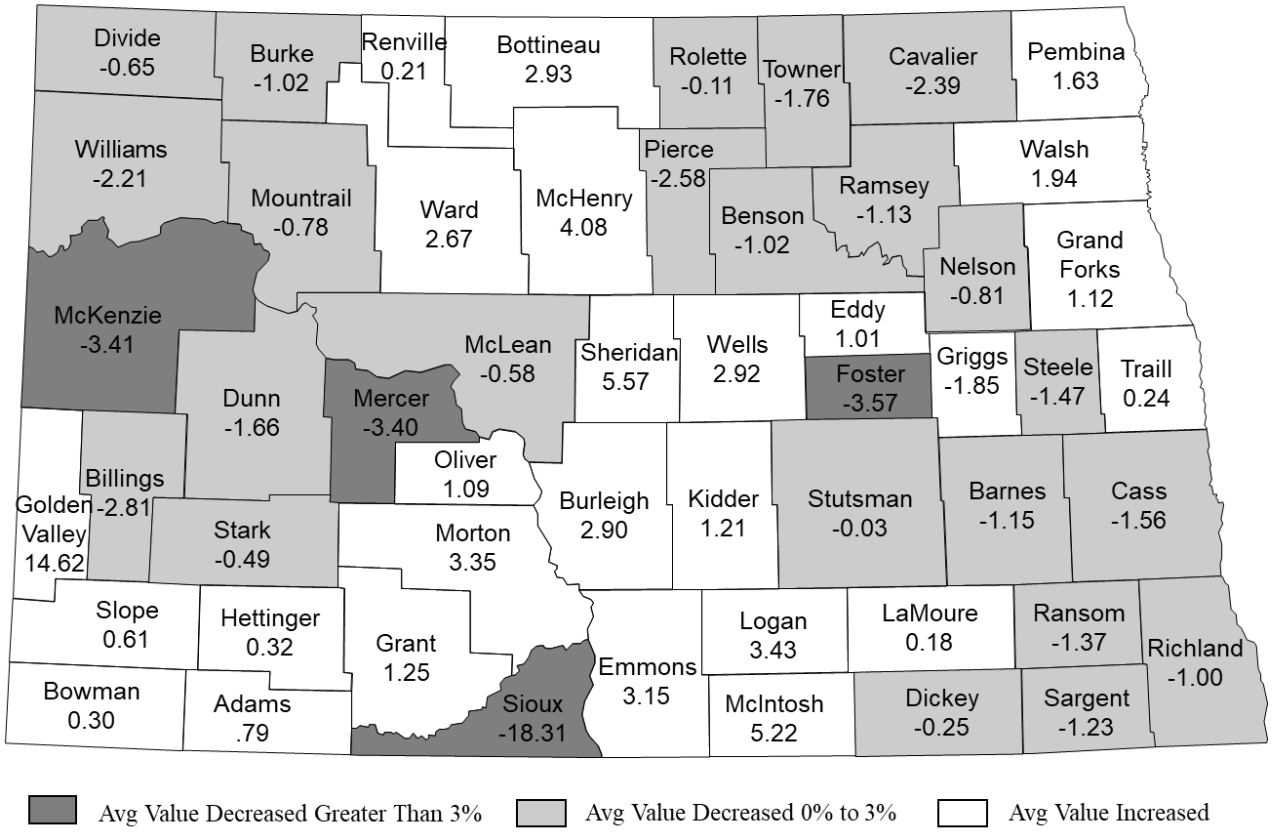
The value for all agricultural land is a weighted average of cropland and non-cropland in each county. Calculated values for cropland generally are three to five times the value of non-cropland in each county. Therefore, a shift in acres between these two categories will alter the “all land” value even if all other factors remain unchanged. County Directors of Tax Equalization are surveyed each year to determine total taxable acres of cropland and non-cropland as well as

inundated land for each category. Changes in reported acres tend to be minimal most years. Shifting acres from cropland to non-cropland results in a lower value for all agricultural land independent of what happens to gross revenue, the capitalization rate and the cost of production index.

**Comparison to Previous Year: All Agricultural Land Value**

Valuation of all agricultural land in North Dakota, for the 2025 assessment compared to the 2024 assessment increased by 0.36 percent or $2.42 per acre compared to the previous year. The largest percentage increase occurred in Golden Valley County at 14.62 percent. The largest decrease was in Sioux County with a 18.31 percent decrease. Values decreased greater the 3 percent in four counties. Values decreased from 0 to 3 percent in twenty-three counties. Values increased in twenty-six counties. Results are shown in Figure 1.

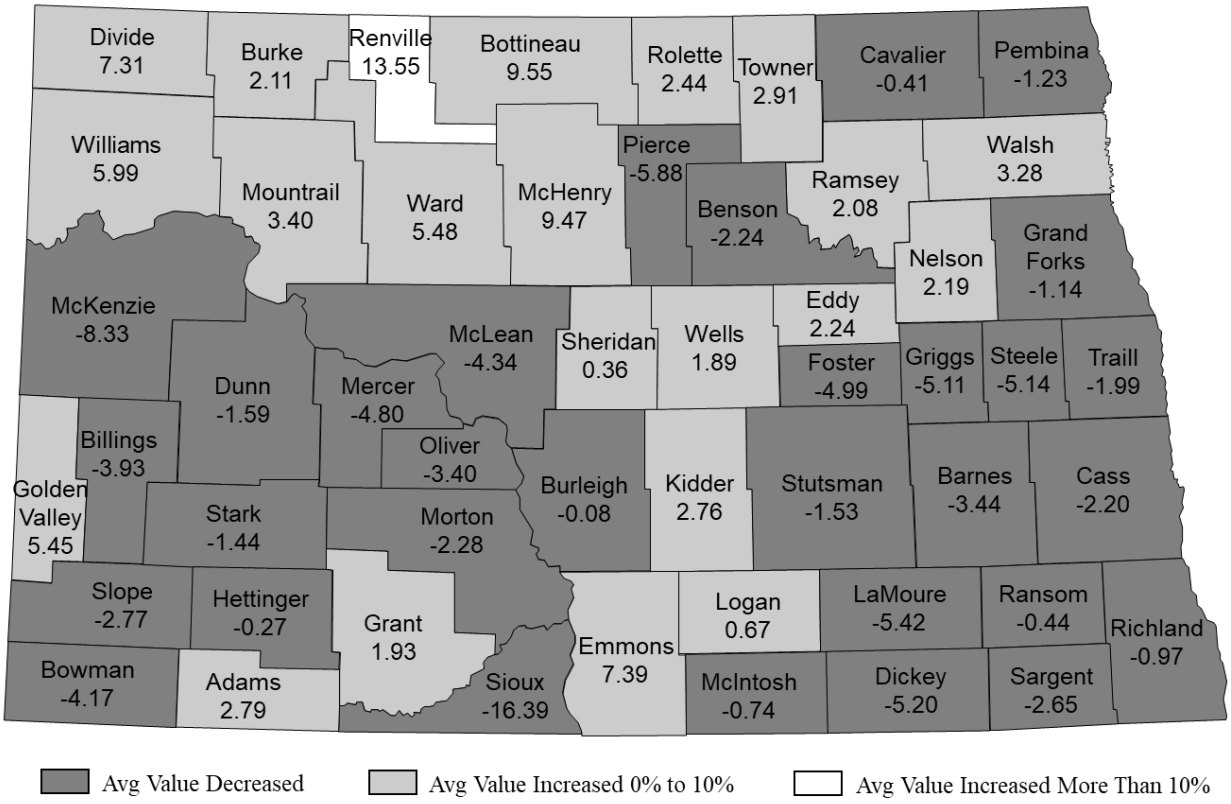
**Figure 1. Percent Change in Average Productivity Value of All Agricultural Land, 2024-2025**



**Five-Year Trend: All Agricultural Land Value**

Estimated values for 2025 were compared with values estimated for 2020 to see how they have changed over time. The average value for all agricultural land in North Dakota increased 0.04 percent from 2020 to 2025, with a dollar value increase of $0.26 per acre. The highest value increase was 13.55 percent in Renville County. Sioux County had the largest decrease of 16.39 percent over this 5-year period. Thirty-one counties had decreases. Twenty-one counties increased between 0 and 10 percent. One county increased more than 10 percent. The five-year percentage change in value per acre by county is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Percent Change in Average Productivity Value of All Agricultural Land, 2020-2025**




## RESULTS: CROPLAND PRODUCTIVITY VALUE

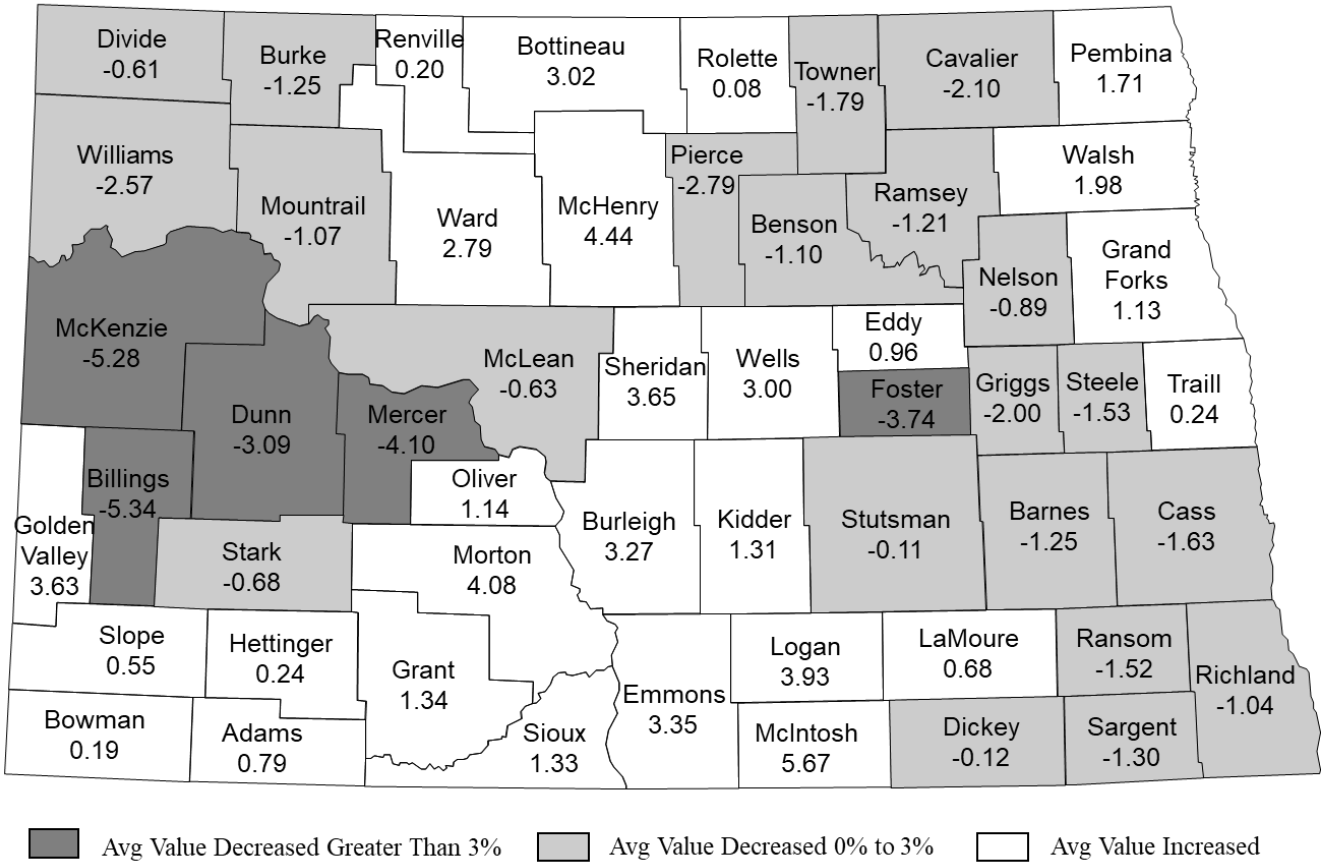
The value for cropland only applies to county acreages that are cropped for cash or feed crops, it does not include non-cropland acreages (pasture and rangeland). Changes in the capitalization rate and cost of production index impact all counties equally. The capitalization rate used for the 2025 analysis was 4.47 percent and the cost of production index used was 234.80 percent. The

change in the capitalization rate decreased values in all counties by 3.47 percent. The increase in the cost of production index resulted in a downward shift in land values in all counties of 1.43 percent from 2024. The net effect of these two components is that cropland values in all counties decreased by 4.90 percent before any changes in productivity were included. Therefore, increases and decreases in gross revenue were primarily due to crop yields, crop prices and crop mix.

**Comparison to Previous Year: Cropland Productivity Value**

The value of cropland increased an average of $2.18 per acre across the state for 2025 compared to 2024. This was an average increase of 0.24 percent over 2024. McIntosh County had the largest increase at 5.67 percent. Billings County had the largest decrease of 5.34 percent. Values decreased more than 3 percent in five counties. Values decreased from 0 to 3 percent in twenty-one counties. Twenty-seven counties had increases. The values are shown in Figure 3.

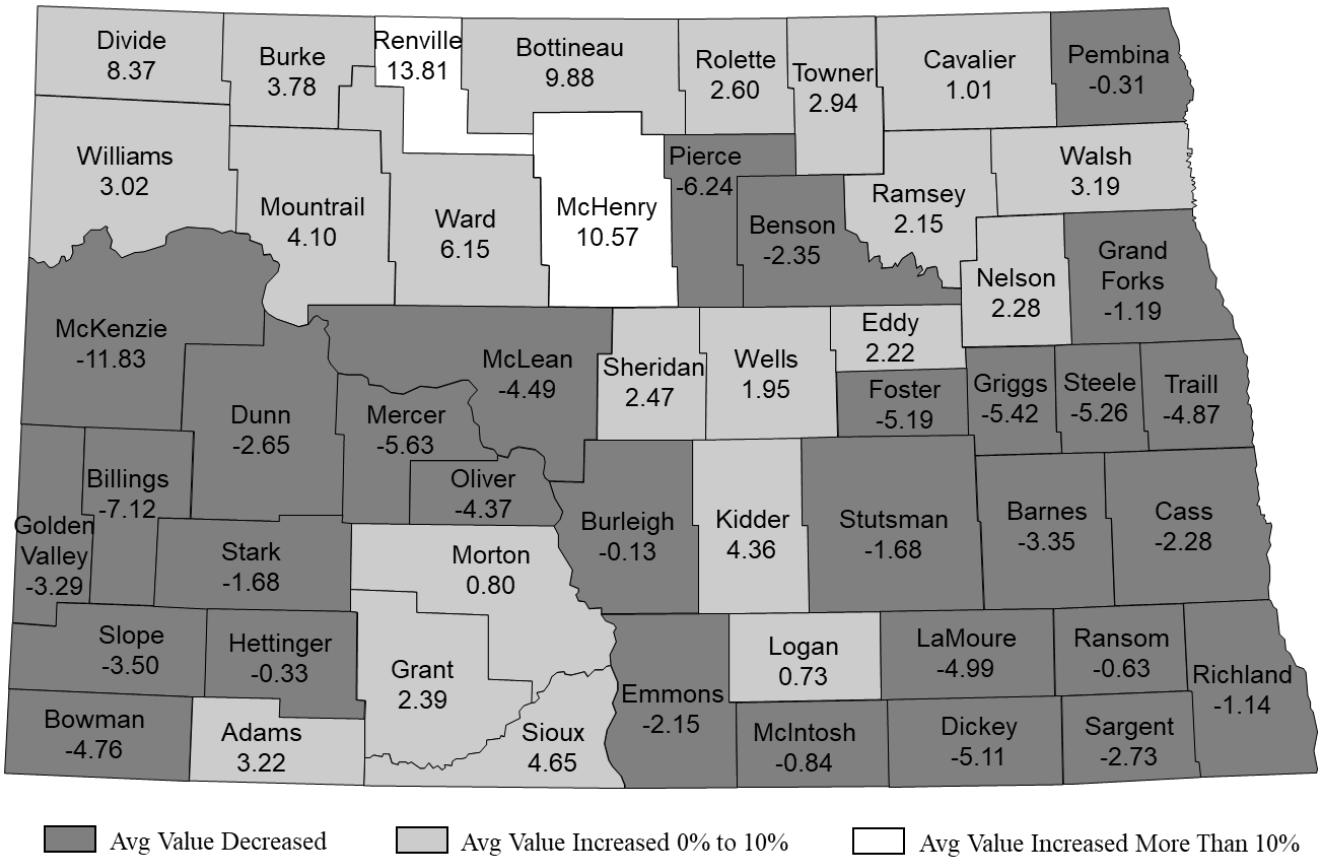
## Figure 3. Percent Change in Average Productivity Value of Cropland, 2024-2025



**Five-year Trend: Cropland Productivity Value**

Cropland value based on the value of production shows an average increased from 2020 to 2025. The cost of production index and the capitalization rate are other factors that influence the overall percentage changes. The average value of North Dakota cropland was 0.13 percent lower in 2025 than in 2020 with a decrease of $1.19 per acre. McKenzie County had the largest decrease of 11.83 percent. The largest increase in cropland value over this period was in Renville County at 13.81 percent. Thirty counties had decreases. Twenty-one counties had increases from 0 to10 percent. Two counties had increases above 10 percent. The five-year trend percentages can be seen in Figure 4.

## Figure 4. Percent Change in Average Productivity Value of Cropland, 2020-2025



## RESULTS: NON-CROPLAND PRODUCTIVITY VALUE

The value of non-cropland (grazing land) based on the value of production increased by 0.94 percent or $1.52 per acre from the 2024 to the 2025 assessment. The value of non-cropland is derived by calculating the value of the beef cattle produced from grazing. The carrying capacity and the production per cow are held constant in the model. As a result, all change in non-cropland value is due to changes in the price of calves and cull cows, and changes in the capitalization rate and the cost of production index. All of these factors apply equally across all counties, provided no acre changes were reported by the county. Therefore, all counties experienced the same percentage increase in non-cropland values relative to 2024.

### Comparison to Previous Year: Non-Cropland Productivity Value

The price of calves and cull cows are used to determine the value of an animal unit month (AUM) of grazing. AUM is used as the measure of productivity of grazing land. Based on the price of calves and cull cows, an AUM had a value of $166.65 for the 2023 marketing year, the most recent year added to the data set. The AUM value is up from $124.70 from the previous year (2022). The AUM value used to determine productivity, is based on the average of the last ten years after dropping the high and low years. Therefore, the average gross return is influenced by the comparative values for the latest year added to the data set relative to the year just removed from the data set. The average value per AUM for 2012, the year rolled out of the data set for this analysis, was $115.14 As a result, the decrease in value for non-cropland is due to a combination of an increase in the value of production, an increase in the cost of production index (which causes a decrease in value) and an increase in the capitalization rate (which causes a decrease in value).

### Five-year Trend: Non-Cropland Value

Non-cropland values increased $0.48 per acre from 2020 to the 2025 assessments. This is a 0.30 percent average increase for the state over this five-year period. All counties experienced the same change. Note that the 2023 data year (2025 assessments) is the second highest year in the data set. The 2014 data year (2016 assessments) remains as the high non-cropland year in all counties and was not used in the Olympic average the calculations.

## CAPITALIZED AVERAGE ANNUAL VALUES PER ACRE BY COUNTY

Two tables are provided to display county values for 2024 and 2025. North Dakota Capitalized Average Annual Values per Acre by County for 2024 are shown in Table 1. North Dakota Capitalized Average Annual Values per Acre by County for 2025 are shown in Table 2.

**Table 1. North Dakota Capitalized Average Annual Values Per Acres by County for 2024 Assessments**

| County | Cropland | Non-cropland | All Agricultural Land |
|---|---|---|---|
| Adams | 576.85 | 150.93 | 415.23 |
| Barnes | 1,106.02 | 209.49 | 975.04 |
| Benson | 903.47 | 185.65 | 744.77 |
| Billings | 485.65 | 141.20 | 244.62 |
| Bottineau | 831.25 | 179.63 | 721.46 |
| Bowman | 517.13 | 124.54 | 372.09 |
| Burke | 689.35 | 165.05 | 520.55 |
| Burleigh | 743.06 | 165.74 | 481.00 |
| Cass | 1,345.14 | 213.19 | 1,282.45 |
| Cavalier | 1,090.05 | 182.18 | 993.11 |
| Dickey | 1,100.00 | 209.03 | 871.09 |
| Divide | 643.98 | 164.12 | 525.02 |
| Dunn | 602.08 | 150.46 | 291.50 |
| Eddy | 793.52 | 186.34 | 598.24 |
| Emmons | 894.44 | 164.12 | 655.25 |
| Foster | 985.19 | 179.40 | 840.82 |
| Golden Valley | 557.18 | 123.61 | 278.81 |
| Grand Forks | 1,182.41 | 209.26 | 1,012.00 |
| Grant | 600.46 | 151.16 | 371.63 |
| Griggs | 926.85 | 182.87 | 753.67 |
| Hettinger | 740.28 | 150.00 | 512.28 |
| Kidder | 671.99 | 167.36 | 374.67 |
| LaMoure | 1,203.24 | 216.20 | 1,071.85 |
| Logan | 761.81 | 165.05 | 473.68 |
| McHenry | 703.24 | 178.47 | 541.46 |
| McIntosh | 775.69 | 164.12 | 575.61 |
| McKenzie | 522.45 | 151.16 | 300.01 |
| McLean | 846.53 | 164.58 | 742.10 |
| Mercer | 687.27 | 150.46 | 454.81 |
| Morton | 725.00 | 150.69 | 382.32 |
| Mountrail | 771.76 | 163.89 | 501.61 |
| Nelson | 797.69 | 181.71 | 687.20 |
| Oliver | 751.62 | 151.16 | 405.24 |
| Pembina | 1,386.11 | 217.82 | 1,266.18 |
| Pierce | 787.04 | 178.47 | 651.57 |
| Ramsey | 897.45 | 187.04 | 728.37 |
| Ransom | 1,233.80 | 206.02 | 930.12 |
| Renville | 887.04 | 178.94 | 832.36 |
| Richland | 1,452.08 | 211.57 | 1,258.92 |
| Rolette | 807.18 | 181.48 | 706.51 |
| Sargent | 1,206.94 | 211.11 | 1,056.19 |
| Sheridan | 753.70 | 164.12 | 506.61 |
| Sioux | 620.83 | 150.93 | 360.65 |
| Slope | 618.29 | 137.50 | 364.43 |
| Stark | 675.93 | 151.62 | 480.17 |
| Steele | 1,228.47 | 185.65 | 1,079.17 |
| Stutsman | 1,012.27 | 206.48 | 787.15 |
| Towner | 911.81 | 186.34 | 877.25 |
| Traill | 1,407.87 | 211.11 | 1,400.85 |
| Walsh | 1,221.06 | 194.91 | 1,027.60 |
| Ward | 807.87 | 163.89 | 613.44 |
| Wells | 999.31 | 180.09 | 850.19 |
| Williams | 716.20 | 164.35 | 533.03 |
| State | 908.33 | 161.57 | 674.04 |

**Table 2. North Dakota Capitalized Average Annual Values Per Acres by County for 2025 Assessments**

| County | Cropland | Non-cropland | All Agricultural Land |
|---|---|---|---|
| Adams | 581.43 | 152.13 | 418.53 |
| Barnes | 1,092.17 | 211.41 | 963.83 |
| Benson | 893.51 | 187.25 | 737.16 |
| Billings | 459.73 | 142.51 | 237.75 |
| Bottineau | 856.38 | 181.21 | 742.63 |
| Bowman | 518.12 | 125.73 | 373.20 |
| Burke | 680.76 | 166.67 | 515.24 |
| Burleigh | 767.34 | 167.11 | 494.94 |
| Cass | 1,323.27 | 214.99 | 1,262.47 |
| Cavalier | 1,067.11 | 183.67 | 969.42 |
| Dickey | 1,098.66 | 210.96 | 868.91 |
| Divide | 640.04 | 165.77 | 521.61 |
| Dunn | 583.45 | 151.90 | 286.66 |
| Eddy | 801.12 | 188.14 | 604.30 |
| Emmons | 924.38 | 165.55 | 675.89 |
| Foster | 948.32 | 180.98 | 810.82 |
| Golden Valley | 577.40 | 124.83 | 319.58 |
| Grand Forks | 1,195.75 | 210.96 | 1,023.31 |
| Grant | 608.50 | 152.57 | 376.29 |
| Griggs | 908.28 | 184.34 | 739.76 |
| Hettinger | 742.06 | 151.45 | 513.93 |
| Kidder | 680.76 | 168.90 | 379.22 |
| LaMoure | 1,211.41 | 218.12 | 1,073.77 |
| Logan | 791.72 | 166.67 | 489.94 |
| McHenry | 734.45 | 180.09 | 563.55 |
| McIntosh | 819.69 | 165.55 | 605.68 |
| McKenzie | 494.85 | 152.57 | 289.79 |
| McLean | 841.16 | 166.00 | 737.77 |
| Mercer | 659.06 | 151.68 | 439.34 |
| Morton | 754.59 | 152.13 | 395.11 |
| Mountrail | 763.53 | 165.55 | 497.69 |
| Nelson | 790.60 | 183.45 | 681.65 |
| Oliver | 760.18 | 152.57 | 409.67 |
| Pembina | 1,409.84 | 219.69 | 1,286.87 |
| Pierce | 765.10 | 180.09 | 634.78 |
| Ramsey | 886.58 | 188.59 | 720.13 |
| Ransom | 1,214.99 | 207.83 | 917.40 |
| Renville | 888.81 | 180.54 | 834.13 |
| Richland | 1,436.91 | 213.42 | 1,246.31 |
| Rolette | 807.83 | 183.22 | 707.32 |
| Sargent | 1,191.28 | 213.20 | 1,043.21 |
| Sheridan | 781.21 | 165.55 | 534.83 |
| Sioux | 629.08 | 152.35 | 294.60 |
| Slope | 621.70 | 138.70 | 366.67 |
| Stark | 671.36 | 153.02 | 477.81 |
| Steele | 1,209.62 | 187.47 | 1,063.27 |
| Stutsman | 1,011.19 | 208.50 | 786.93 |
| Towner | 895.53 | 188.14 | 861.82 |
| Traill | 1,411.19 | 213.20 | 1,404.16 |
| Walsh | 1,245.19 | 196.64 | 1,047.51 |
| Ward | 830.43 | 165.32 | 629.81 |
| Wells | 1,029.31 | 181.66 | 875.05 |
| Williams | 697.76 | 166.00 | 521.26 |
| State | 910.51 | 163.09 | 676.46 |

## MARKET VALUE OF FARMLAND IN NORTH DAKOTA

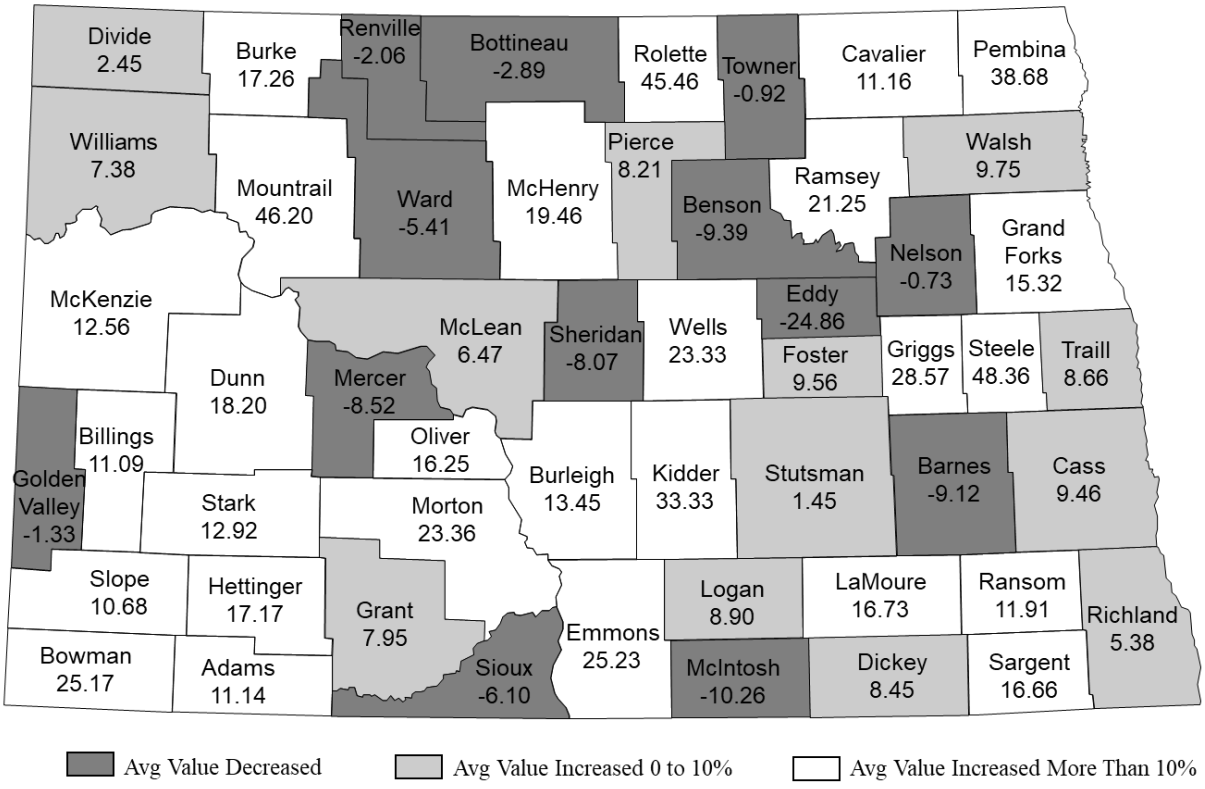
The North Dakota Land Valuation Model was designed to estimate the value of agricultural land depending solely on the revenue generated from the production of crops and beef cattle. The results of this model were not intended to reflect market value. Market value of farm land is influenced by numerous factors in addition to its productivity value. These include farm enlargement to gain economies of scale, land as an investment, recreational uses, development potential and the effect of government fiscal, monetary, and tax policies. As a result, market value and productivity value often differ by a significant amount.

The North Dakota Department of Trust Lands conducted the annual County Rents and Prices survey of farmers and ranchers to obtain rental rates and the price of rented land. The survey is done for cropland, pasture and hay land. This survey is available at: https://land.nd.gov/

**Comparison to Previous Year: Market Value of Cropland**

The data from the 2025 survey are compared with the 2024 survey for cropland. This survey showed values declined in thirteen counties. As well, thirteen counties increased 0 to 10 percent. Greater than 10 percent increases were reported in twenty-seven counties. At the opposite end of the price change spectrum were increases of 48.36 percent in Steele County (outlier), and a 24.86 percent decrease in Eddy County. Percentage changes in market value for cropland by county are shown in Figure 5.

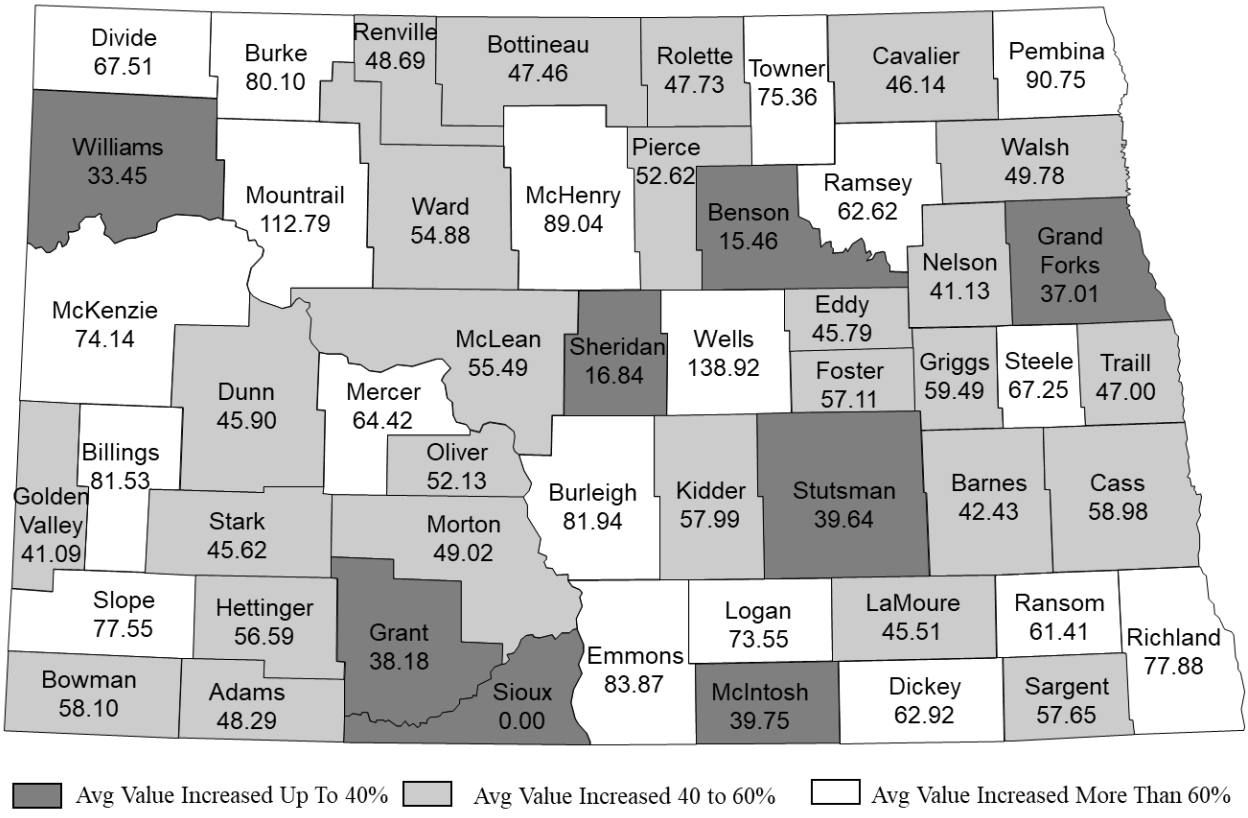
## Figure 5. Percent Change in Estimated Market Value of Cropland, 2024-2025



**Five-year Trend: Market Value of Cropland**

The data from the 2025 survey are compared with the 2020 survey for cropland. Estimated market values had no decreases while eight counties showed 0 to 40 percent increase. Increases from 40 to 60 percent were reported in twenty-six counties. Greater than 60 percent increases were reported in nineteen counties. At the opposite end of the price change spectrum were increases of 112.79 percent (outlier) in Mountrail County, and a zero percent change in Sioux County. Percentage changes in cropland market values by county are shown in Figure 6.

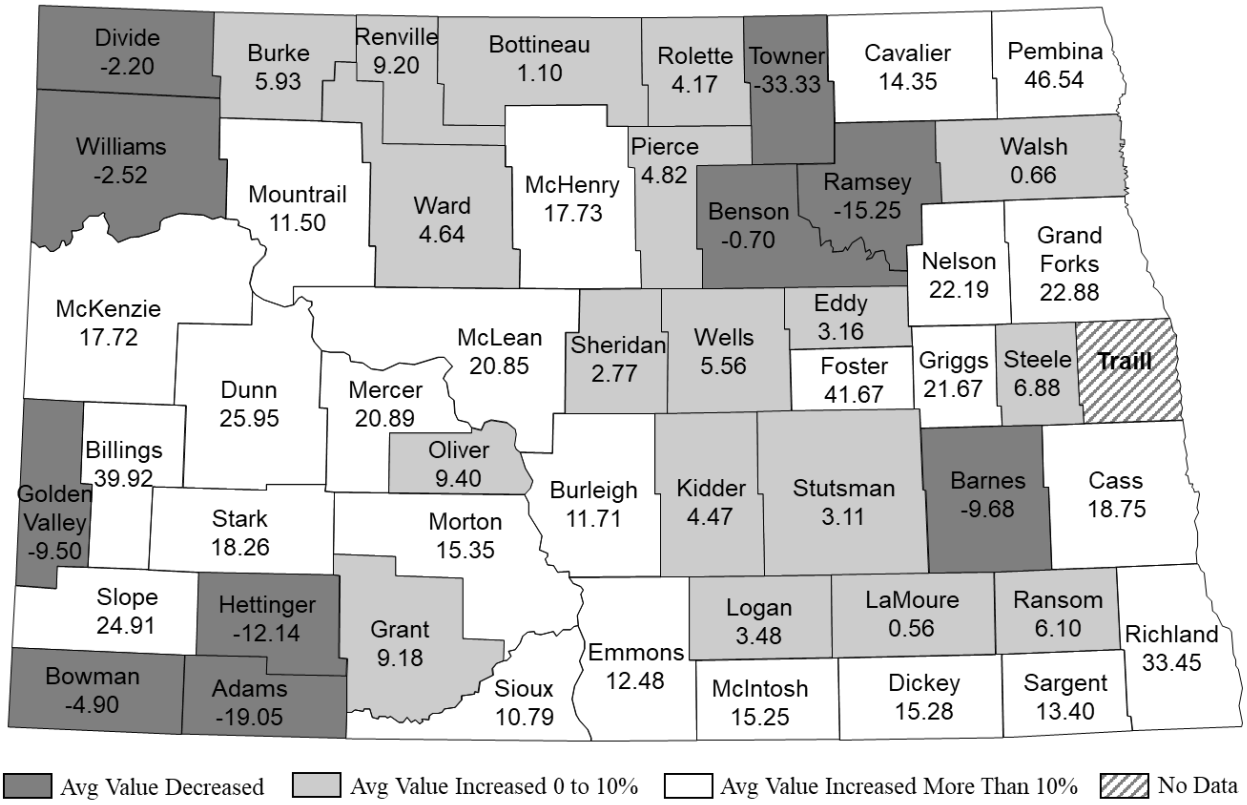
## Figure 6. Percentage Change in Estimated Market Value of Cropland, 2020-2025



**Comparison to Previous Year: Market Value of Pasture**

The data from the 2025 survey are compared with the 2024 survey for pasture. This survey showed values declines in ten counties while eighteen counties increased from 0 to 10 percent. Greater than 10 percent increases were reported in twenty-four counties. There was insufficient data in one county, so a percentage could not be calculated. At the opposite end of the price change spectrum were increases of 46.54 percent in Pembina County, and a 33.33 percent decrease in Towner County. Percentage changes in the market value of pasture are shown in Figure 7.

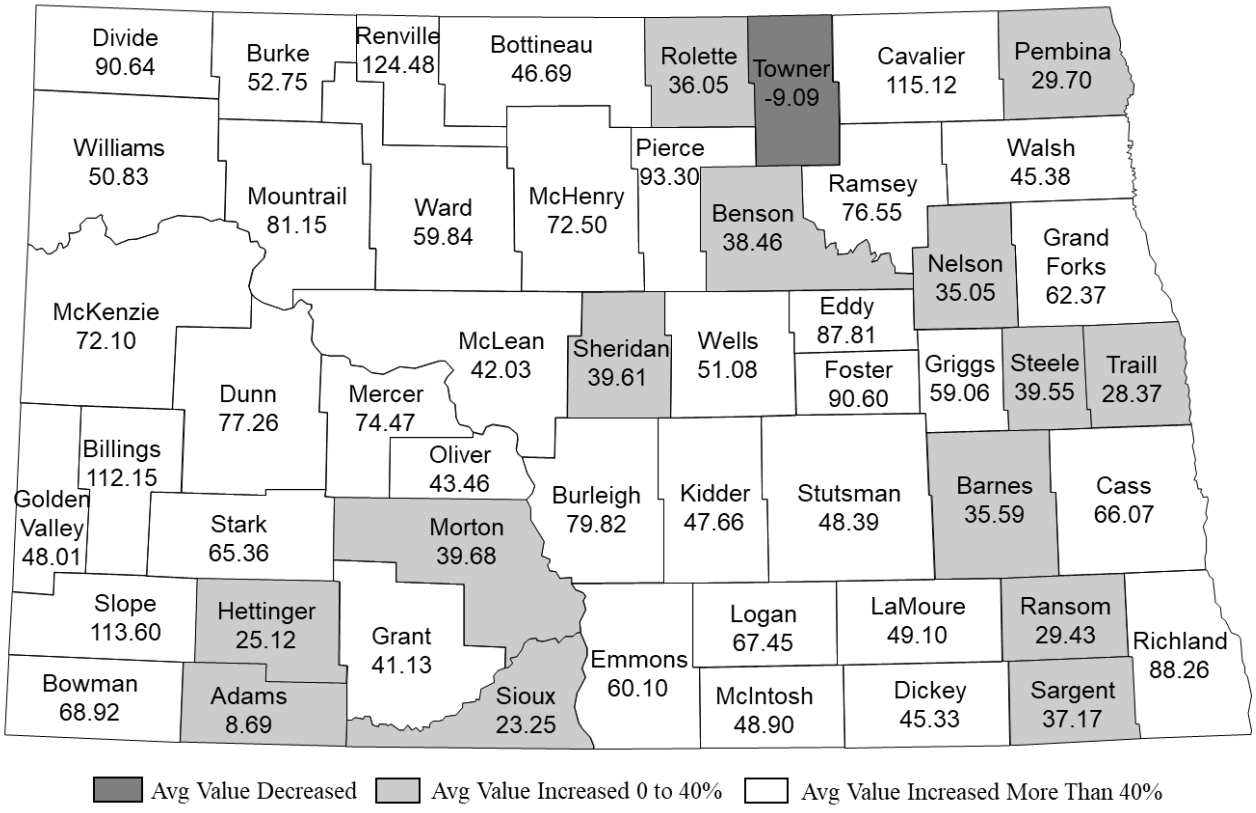
## Figure 7. Percent Change in Estimated Market Value of Pasture, 2024-2025



**Five-year Trend: Market Value of Pasture**

The data from the 2025 survey are compared with the 2020 survey for pasture. Estimated market values decreased in one county while fourteen counties increased from 0 to 40 percent. Greater than 40 percent increases were reported in thirty-eight counties. At the opposite end of the price change spectrum were increases of 124.48 percent in Renville County (outlier), and a 9.09 percent decrease in Towner County. Percentage changes in the market value of pasture are shown in Figure 8.

## Figure 8. Percentage Change in Estimated Market Value of Pasture, 2020-2025



## CONCLUSIONS

The capitalization rate used for the 2025 analysis was the legislative formula rate of 4.47 percent up from 4.32 in 2024.

The cost of production index increased 3.30 points to 234.80 over the previous year of 231.50. The cost of production index reduced the landowner share of gross returns by 57.41 percent before this value was capitalized.

The analysis for 2025 added data from 2023 and dropped data from 2013. Ten years of data are included in the analysis with the high and low years dropped to calculate an Olympic average. The rise in the capitalization rate resulted in a decrease of 3.47 percent in values. This change was augmented by the increase in the cost of production index. The cost of production index decreased values in all counties by 1.43 percent. This is a net 4.90 percent decrease from both these factors.

Valuation of all agricultural land in North Dakota, based on productivity, increased by 0.36 percent or $2.42 per acre for the 2025 assessment as compared to the previous year. The largest percentage increase occurred in Golden Valley County at 14.62 percent. The greatest decrease was Sioux County with a 18.31 percent decrease.

Valuation of cropland in North Dakota increased $2.18 per acre. This was a 0.24 percent decrease over 2024. The change in crop revenue and crop mix caused a change in cropland values from a negative 5.34 percent in Billings County to a positive 5.67 percent in McIntosh County.

Non-cropland values for all counties increased by 0.94 percent or $1.52 per acre from the previous year. The production of grazing units is held constant for non-cropland, only the values per unit change from year to year. The price of cull cows and calves, cost of production index and the capitalization rate are applied uniformly across all counties. Therefore, the percentage change in non-cropland value is the same for all counties.

Changes in market value of cropland and pasture, based on the survey of farmers and ranchers by the North Dakota Department of Trust Lands is included for comparison. Reported market values changed considerably more than productivity values from 2024 to 2025. However, market value changes were both negative and positive across the state. This is expected due to the additional factors that influence market values.

## REFERENCES

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