

July 1998

Introduced by

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 57-02-27.2 of the North Dakota Century Code,
2 relating to the valuation and assessment of unproductive agricultural land for property tax
3 purposes; and to provide an effective date.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 57-02-27.2 of the 1997 Supplement to the North
6 Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

7 **57-02-27.2. Valuation and assessment of agricultural lands.**

8 1. "True and full value" of agricultural lands must be their agricultural value for the
9 purposes of sections 57-02-27, 57-02-27.1, 57-02-27.2, and 57-55-04. Agricultural
10 value is defined as the "capitalized average annual gross return", except for
11 unproductive agricultural land. The "annual gross return" must be determined from
12 crop share rent, cash rent, or a combination thereof reduced by estimated property
13 taxes and crop marketing expenses incurred by farmland owners renting their
14 lands on a cash or crop share basis.

15 2. For purposes of this section, "annual gross return" for cropland used for growing
16 crops other than sugar beets and potatoes means thirty percent of annual gross
17 income produced, "annual gross return" for cropland used for growing sugar beets
18 and potatoes means twenty percent of annual gross income produced, and "annual
19 gross return" for land used for grazing farm animals means twenty-five percent of
20 an amount determined by the agricultural economics department of North Dakota
21 state university to represent the annual gross income potential of the land based
22 upon the animal unit carrying capacity of the land.

23 3. The "average annual gross return" for each county must be determined as follows:

- 1 ~~4.~~ a. For taxable year 1998, total the annual gross returns for the most recent eight
2 years immediately preceding the current year for which data is available and
3 discard the highest and lowest annual gross returns of the eight. For taxable
4 year 1999, total the annual gross returns for the nine years immediately
5 preceding the current year for which data is available and discard the highest
6 and lowest annual gross returns of the nine. For taxable year 2000 and
7 thereafter, total the annual gross returns for the ten years immediately
8 preceding the current year for which data is available and discard the highest
9 and lowest annual gross returns of the ten.
- 10 ~~2.~~ b. For taxable year 1998, divide the figure arrived at in ~~subsection 4~~
11 subdivision a by six. For taxable year 1999, divide the figure arrived at in
12 ~~subsection 4~~ subdivision a by seven. For taxable year 2000 and thereafter,
13 divide the figure arrived at in ~~subsection 4~~ subdivision a by eight.
- 14 4. To find the "capitalized average annual gross return", the average annual gross
15 return must be capitalized by a rate that is a ten-year average of the gross federal
16 land bank mortgage rate of interest for North Dakota. The ten-year average must
17 be computed from the twelve years ending with the most recent year used in
18 ~~subsection 4~~ under subdivision a of subsection 3, discarding the highest and
19 lowest years, and the gross federal land bank mortgage rate of interest for each
20 year must be determined in the manner provided in section 20.2032A-4(e)(1) of the
21 United States treasury department regulations for valuing farm real property for
22 federal estate tax purposes, except that the interest rate may not be adjusted as
23 provided in paragraph (e)(2) of section 20.2032A-4.
- 24 5. The agricultural economics department of North Dakota state university shall
25 compute annually an estimate of the average agricultural value per acre [.40
26 hectare] of agricultural lands on a statewide and on a countywide basis; ~~;~~ shall
27 compute the average agricultural value per acre [.40 hectare] for cropland ~~and,~~
28 noncropland, ~~which is~~ and unproductive agricultural land; ~~for each county;~~ and
29 shall provide the tax commissioner with this information by December first of each
30 year. Fifty percent of the annual gross income from irrigated cropland must be
31 considered additional expense of production and may not be included in

1 computation of the average agricultural value per acre [.40 hectare] for cropland for
2 the county as determined by the agricultural economics department. Before
3 January first of each year, the tax commissioner shall provide to each county
4 director of tax equalization these estimates of agricultural value for each county.

5 6. For purposes of this section, "unproductive agricultural land" means property
6 classified as agricultural property which is inundated to an extent making it
7 unsuitable for growing crops or grazing farm animals for a full growing season or
8 more. Before all or part of a parcel of property may be classified as unproductive
9 agricultural land, the county board of tax equalization must approve that
10 classification for that property for the taxable year. The agricultural value of
11 unproductive agricultural lands for purposes of this section must be determined by
12 the agricultural economics department of North Dakota state university to
13 be _____ percent of the average agricultural value of noncropland for the
14 county as determined under this section. Valuation of individual parcels of
15 unproductive agricultural land may recognize the probability that the property will
16 be suitable for agricultural production as cropland or for grazing farm animals in the
17 future.

18 7. Before February first of each year, the county director of tax equalization in each
19 county shall provide to all assessors within the county an estimate of the average
20 agricultural value of agricultural lands within each assessment district. The
21 estimate must be based upon the average agricultural value for the county
22 adjusted by the relative values of lands within each assessment district compared
23 to the county average. In determining the relative value of lands for each
24 assessment district compared to the county average, the county director of tax
25 equalization, wherever possible, shall use soil type and soil classification data from
26 detailed and general soil surveys. Where such data cannot be used, the county
27 director of tax equalization shall use whatever previous assessment data is best
28 suited to the purpose.

29 8. Each local assessor shall determine the relative value of each assessment parcel
30 within the assessor's jurisdiction and shall determine the agricultural value of each
31 assessment parcel by adjusting the agricultural value estimate for the assessment

1 district by the relative value of the parcel. Each parcel must then be assessed
2 according to section 57-02-27. If either a local assessor or a township board of
3 equalization develops an agricultural value for the lands in its assessment district
4 differing substantially from the estimate provided by the county director of tax
5 equalization, written evidence to support the change must be provided to the
6 county director of tax equalization.

7 **SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.** This Act is effective for taxable years beginning after
8 December 31, 1998.

NOTE: This bill draft contains a blank that must be completed prior to introduction.