



# Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

6B

Agenda Item #

**Requested Meeting Date:** June 14, 2016

**Title of Item:** Aquaponics/Hydroponics Feasibility Study

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	<b>Action Requested:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft)	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing* <small>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</small>
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<b>Submitted by:</b> Ross Wagner	<b>Department:</b> Economic Development & Forest Ind
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<b>Presenter (Name and Title):</b> Ross Wagner, Economic Development & Forest Industry Coordinator	<b>Estimated Time Needed:</b> 20 minutes
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**Summary of Issue:**

Hydroponics and aquaponics consists of growing vegetables in an inside controlled environment using fish waste or other methods to fertilize the plants and provide other nutrients. There is a project in Silver Bay that is sponsored by UMD, there are also private operation in the Twin Cities and other areas. This is becoming an idea that is gaining great acceptance as a way to grow and provide the community with fresh vegetables year round.

In the recent past I have had discussion with various individuals interested in starting a hydro/aquaponics operation in Aitkin County but there is little research and financial information available as this is such a new concept. This has been a detriment and about where the conversations end.

In response I would like to submit a grant application to the Blandin Foundation for \$5,000.00 and to the North East Regional Sustainable Development Partnership (NE RSDP) for \$2,500.00 to conduct a feasibility study for starting and operating a Aquaponics/Hydroponics facility in Aitkin County. The grants would be matched by an anticipated contribution from Aitkin County Growth of \$2,500.00. Aitkin County would provide in-kind services and be the fiscal agent. I would partner with Aitkin County Growth in developing an RFP for firms to do the study if successful with the grant applications. Once completed, the study would be posted on Aitkin County's as well as other web sites and distributed to those who have expressed interest.

**Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:**

**Recommended Action/Motion:**  
Approve request to submit grant applications to Blandin Foundation and NE RSDP

**Financial Impact:**

Is there a cost associated with this request?  Yes  No

What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$

Is this budgeted?  Yes  No Please Explain:

Legally binding agreements must have County Attorney approval prior to submission.