

2026

Make America Healthy Again and Consumer Trends

605.01 — “We recommend placing more local foods on school menus.”

605.02 — “We support the inclusion of traditionally raised meat and dairy products in state run meal programs.”

605.03 — “We oppose the use of meat and/or dairy substitutes within government-funded programs.”

The Make America Healthy Again movement, advanced by the Trump Administration and HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., focuses on chronic disease, nutrition reform, reduced consumption of ultra-processed foods, and healthier food systems. This policy direction intersects with the rapid adoption of GLP-1 medications, which are changing consumer eating patterns by reducing calorie intake and increasing interest in high-protein, whole-food diets.

Social media has accelerated the conversation, spreading public discussion around ultra-processed foods, seed oils, sugar, “real food,” and weight-loss medications. These shifts may influence consumer demand in ways that affect North Dakota agriculture, including crops, livestock, food processing, and local food procurement.

MAHA POLICY FRAMEWORK

- **Core Objectives:** MAHA links chronic disease concerns to diet quality, ultra-processed foods, seed oils, added sugars, and access to healthier food options.
- **USDA Actions:** Policy discussions have included soil health and regenerative agriculture incentives, precision agriculture, regional meat processing, nutrition program reform, school meals, SNAP, and commodity purchases supporting domestic producers.
- **Tone Toward Agriculture:** MAHA-related messaging often emphasizes voluntary participation, regulatory relief for small and regional processors, and reduced costs through technology and soil health. However, some consumer messaging tied to MAHA has raised concerns and caused market fluctuations in major North Dakota commodities, especially crops linked to sugar, corn sweeteners, seed oils, and processed food markets.

CONSUMER SHIFTS

- **GLP-1 Behavioral Changes:** GLP-1 users often report lower overall calorie intake, reduced consumption of sugary and processed foods, and increased interest in high-protein foods. These changes may affect grocery spending and demand for snacks, sweets, baked goods, sugar-sweetened beverages, and processed food categories.
- **Social Media Amplification:** Social media platforms have rapidly spread MAHA-related content and GLP-1 user experiences. Viral posts, influencers, and online communities can accelerate consumer behavior changes faster than policy or clinical adoption alone.
- **Market Signals:** Increased public attention to ultra-processed foods, seed oils, sugar, and “real food” diets may create market pressure for some commodities while opening opportunities for others.

COMMODITY IMPLICATIONS FOR NORTH DAKOTA

Oilseeds: Canola, sunflower, and soybean oil may face some of the strongest market pressure due to anti-seed-oil sentiment and potential reductions in demand for fried, processed, and snack foods. North Dakota is a national leader in both canola and sunflower production. Factors that could help offset these pressures include high-oleic varieties, export and industrial markets, and cost savings from precision agriculture. Soybeans may be supported by biofuel and soybean meal demand as it remains a key high-protein feed ingredient, which may also benefit from stronger animal protein demand.

Corn and Sugar Beets: Reduced consumption of sugary beverages and processed foods may create pressure on sugar beets, high-fructose corn syrup and other corn-based ingredients. Corn may be supported by ethanol and its feed value. Feed demand will depend partly on trends in livestock and protein consumption.

Spring Wheat and Pulses: Whole grains and plant-protein foods may align more closely with MAHA and consumer trends, creating potential opportunities for wheat, pulses, and minimally processed food products.

Livestock, Meat, and Dairy: Increased interest in high-protein diets may support meat and dairy demand. Policy support for regional meat processing could also create opportunities for local value capture and protein access.

OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS FOR NORTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURE

- **Opportunities:** Potential opportunities include greater demand for high-protein foods, whole grains, pulses, local meat, dairy, and school meal procurement. Regional meat processing, soil health incentives, precision agriculture, and local food programs may also create openings for North Dakota producers.
- **Risks:** Risks include reduced demand for snack foods, sugary beverages, processed foods, and seed-oil-related products. These shifts could place pressure on crops tied to sugar, corn sweeteners, oilseeds, and processed food supply chains.
- **Policy Balance:** North Dakota agriculture may need to evaluate how health-focused policy and consumer trends affect commodity markets, local food systems, livestock demand, and producer profitability.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

NDFB policy supports all sectors of North Dakota agriculture, including opportunities for value-added production and marketing. As consumer demand and conversations around food and health continue to change, NDFB may need to consider what role, if any, it should play in those discussions.

- ▶ How should NDFB participate in broader conversations around food and health, if at all?
- ▶ What opportunities could shifting consumer demand create for North Dakota producers?
- ▶ What policy should NDFB consider as changing food and health trends affect markets and opportunities for North Dakota agriculture?