



**Bayfield County**

University of Wisconsin-Extension  
Courthouse, P.O. Box 218, 117 East 5th Street  
Washburn, WI 54891-9464  
(715) 373-6104 (715) 373-6120 (TTY)  
(715) 373-6304 (FAX)  
[www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/bayfield](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/bayfield)

January 25, 2017

RE: Letter of Affirmation – AASHE STARS Reporting Framework for Innovation Credit for Northland College

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to express my professional and expert opinion that Northland College's new Food Systems Facility meets the intention of the innovation credit for STARS reporting.

As an Agricultural Agent for the University of Wisconsin Extension serving Ashland and Bayfield Counties, I work extensively with agricultural producers and community partners to diversify and revitalize the agricultural economy of Ashland and Bayfield County. In this capacity I am deeply involved with many aspects of local food systems work and have been collaborating with Northland College for a number of years. Over that time I have seen Northland dramatically expand its involvement with local food systems education, significantly increase its local foods purchasing efforts, and expand its collaborations with local farmers and other community partners working in the agricultural sector. They are a true institutional leader in supporting and adopting principles of sustainability in food systems and agricultural production.

Northland's new Food Systems Facility, set to open in Spring 2017, is a culmination of this work and collaboration. This facility goes beyond local foods purchasing to encompass education, training, food production, community partnerships, and economic development. It is unique in our area for its size, scope, and purpose and meets the intention of the STARS Innovation credits in that it is uncommon and innovative for the region and among the types of facilities typically operated by small, private liberal arts colleges.

The facility provides an excellent support tool in UW-Extension's effort to cultivate and enable entrepreneurs. With a kitchen facility and support network behind it, entrepreneurs will have an easier time starting and expanding their food businesses.

Sincerely,

Jason Fischbach  
UW-Extension Agricultural Agent  
Ashland and Bayfield County  
[Jason.fischbach@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:Jason.fischbach@ces.uwex.edu)