# **CROPLAND INSURANCE TO OPEN OFFICE IN LISBON**



Stacy Erdmann and Megan Huether have joined forces for Cropland Insurance.

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Stacy Erdmann and Megan Huether have joined forces to open Cropland Insurance in Lisbon. They each bring a lot of knowledge to the service.

Erdmann has worked for the company for three years while Huether is new to Cropland. One of the things they want to do is have a presence in town and the surrounding area.

"We love our community and look forward to seeing it continue to grow," said Erdmann.

Both Erdmann and Huether are licensed to cover North Dakota, Minnesota, and South Dakota for multi-peril crop insurance (MPCI), hail as well as livestock (revenue) insurance.

Erdmann has an AgBusiness, Animal Range Science Ranch Studies, and Equine degree from NDSU while Huether has a Business Management degree from NDSCS.

Erdmann and her husband Jeremy own and operate Erdmann Angus Ranch along with their daughters, Rylee, 16, and Kaylee, 14.

Huether and her husband Reed operate a cow-calf operation and crop farm, along with Reed's family. They have a daughter, Aubree, 10, and a son Easton, 7.

Cropland Insurance is currently housed in an office at A-C Goerger Seed on Hwy 27 East of Lisbon, but they are actively looking for office space on Main Street in town.

"We both love reviewing policies," said Erdmann. "We start now and end March 15, which is the deadline for signing up for multi-peril insurance. The rest of the time we like to review policies to find new and better benefits to programs.

"We are always looking to help more operations," added Huether. "We invite producers to contact us today to review their policy."

Both Erdmann and Huether are very community minded. They live in Lisbon, their children go to school in Lisbon, they attend church, and 4-H in town.

"We want to bring a sense of community through our business," said Huether "to make Lisbon even better."

Erdmann and Huether have spent December and January educating themselves and hosting producer meetings. They recently spoke at the SE Beef Update with NDSU Extension on Tuesday, February 11.



Both take pride in assuring customers have factual information regarding the industry. Farming and ranching have greatly evolved from grandpa's simple ranching.

As farmers and ranchers themselves, they bring practical understanding to the modern operation and needs of producers in the area.

# **Public notice issues are** subject of bills in legislature

#### Submitted by NDNA

A number of bills before the North Dakota Legislature this session could impact how North Dakotans access public notices.

With the deadline for filing of bills now passed, the North Dakota Newspaper Association is tracking a half dozen bills, three of which involve posting information on government websites and a couple that would also remove notices from newspapers.

'We've already had a couple of key victories," said NDNA Executive Director Cecile Wehrman.

The association successfully lobbied North Dakota House members to kill HB 1380, which would have given counties the option of publishing minutes on their website instead of in newspapers.

'This bill moved very quickly," said Wehrman, from a committee hearing on Thursday, to a DO NOT PASS recommendation on Friday and an overwhelming floor vote on Monday, Jan. 27, 13-80 to dispose of the bill.

NDNA research, showing citizen distrust of public notices appearing only on government websites was cited from the floor, along with the lack of oversight to make sure minutes are posted as required by law.

Two bills, HB 1398 restoring the historic distribution practice of insurance abstracts, and HCR 3006, aimed at sending a message to the U.S. Postmaster General about poor postal service in North Dakota, both passed the house on Feb. 3.

"While the postal resolution is likely an easy pass in the Senate, the abstract bill will require a great deal of awareness building," said Wehrman. Until this year, the publication of annual statements of insurance companies were always distributed across all newspapers in the state. This year, the insurance commissioner exercised his authority to restrict those publications to just eight newspapers. The publication costs are borne by insurance companies and cost the state nothing. 'Our bill aims to write into the law the actual practice newspapers have followed for more than 100 years," said Wehrman. HB 1398 passed 86-6 in the House. Two Senate bills are concerning to NDNA. SB 2062 has already passed the Senate and if successful in the House, would likely remove all highway bids from newspapers. NDNA argued citizens have a right to know highway bids

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are being sought, the scope of projects, and what the timeline is, regardless of whether they are bidders themselves. The Senate passed the bill 36-11 and it is waiting to be taken up by the House.

SB 2069 was set to be heard in an appropriations committee Tuesday morning, Feb. 11. It says all units of government "may" place notices on a state website as a back stop in case a newspaper fails to publish. However, staff from the Secretary of State's office gave an estimate of \$150,000 to beef up its website to be able to handle those postings.

NDNA member newspapers already are required by law to publish all notices on a website the association maintains, ndpublicnotices.com.

"The issue is how to get those notices on a web platform if a newspaper fails to publish," said Wehrman.

Wehrman said NDNA has proposed a solution to cover those rare instances of missed publication for Public Service Commission (PSC) hearings, but the offer was rebuffed. The PSC is the agency that brought the bill. It originally would only have impacted that agency. Newspapers have not missed a publication since September 2023.

Based on discussion in the Senate State and Local Government committee chaired by Dist. 27 Sen. Kristin Roers, R-Fargo, senators are looking to change "may" to "shall" during the 2027 session, requiring all government entities, including counties, cities, school boards, and townships to post notices on the state website, and potentially, removing public notices entirely from

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newspapers.

Wehrman said she hopes voters will contact their legislators to let them know their preference is for a third party like newspapers to oversee web placements of public notices.

"Our ndpublicnotices.com website has already been in existence for a dozen years, is searchable by county, and costs the state nothing," said Wehrman.

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