EXHIBIT 1
DATE 2/4/09
SB SJR 13

# HOUSE COMMITTEE
# ON
# STATE ADMINISTRATION

## Senate Bill SJ 14

## Informational Testimony of Greg Ames
## Administrator, Montana Department of Agriculture

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Good morning, my name is Greg Ames, Administrator of the Agricultural Sciences Division for the Montana Department of Agriculture. I am here to testify as an informational witness.

The Department of Agriculture operates two laboratories: the State Grain laboratory in Great Falls and the Analytical laboratory in Bozeman. The department contracts with a third laboratory, the Seed lab operated by Montana State University in Bozeman, for our regulatory seed analysis.

The Analytical Lab in Bozeman provides quality testing services in support of Montana agriculture including the department's feed, fertilizer, pesticide enforcement and agricultural chemical ground water programs, the Montana State University Agriculture Experiment Station and the USDA Pesticide Data Program. We do this best by maintaining a unique relationship with Montana State University in the joint operation of the Analytical lab. This cooperative effort is an economic benefit to each agency and the public through cooperative management of personnel, equipment, supplies, facilities, and laboratory programs and expertise. Costs and duplication of personnel is minimized.

The department is currently satisfied with the working relationship we have with MSU, and the building and location of the Analytical lab in Bozeman.

The State Grain Laboratory in Great Falls provides timely, official, objective and accurate test results of buyers and sellers of Montana grain under standards set by the USDA Federal Grain Inspection Service and the state Agricultural Warehouse, Commodity Dealer, and Grain Standards Act (MCA 80-4-704). Sample analysis includes official grade, protein and other quality tests on any grain delivered to a warehouse.

The department contracts with the MSU Seed laboratory to conduct regulatory analysis of agricultural seed samples collected by the department. The primary objective is to protect consumers of commercial seed by ensuring that the seed is truthfully labeled and that it meets germination and purity standards to prevent the spread of restricted and noxious weed seeds.

There has been a small amount of speculation on the combining the State Grain lab and the MSU Seed lab into a new facility in the future, possibly in Great Falls. The two labs functions are quite different, yet related to Montana grains and seeds. The Montana Wheat and Barley Committee could also lease space in the facility as well as two other department field staff currently renting office space in Great Falls. The facility could be utilized to promote industries like wheat, barley, peas, lentils and other Montana crops and could be used host and educate the several foreign trade groups that frequent our state in pursuit of quality agricultural commodities.

A fourth lab that is Agricultural related is the MSU Cereal Quality lab. This lab is predominately a wheat research lab that conducts the wheat plant-breeding program and is 100% funded by the Montana Agriculture Experiment Station.