

88th Legislature: Priority Request

Rebuilding the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Vernon after tornado damage



Objective

Texas A&M AgriLife Research requests support from the 88th Legislature to rebuild critical research facilities damaged by a tornado at Texas A&M AgriLife Foundation Seed and the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Vernon.

Background

On May 4, 2022, an F3 tornado, a third of a mile wide, directly hit the Vernon campus, spreading debris over a 5- to 10-mile area. Most buildings, along with research and extension equipment, were damaged or destroyed. The direct hit severely impacted operations of Foundation Seed along with ongoing research and extension programming for the Rolling Plains region.

In total, clean-up, replacement of lost equipment, and repair and renovation of infrastructure will result in a cost of \$15 million. Damages included:

- Administration buildings
- Laboratory buildings
- Warehouses
- Greenhouses
- Metal buildings
- Farm equipment
- Laboratory equipment
- Vehicles



The tornado left structural damages to beams and heating and cooling systems. Obsolete heating and cooling systems will have to be replaced and re-engineered, replacing duct work throughout the buildings. Damaged beams will require the replacement of building sections and entire roofs. Greenhouses were destroyed along with the research projects inside. Seed bins, silos, dryers and other equipment were also damaged or blown away.

\$15 million one time

For repairs caused by extensive tornado damage to research facilities and equipment



Benefits to Texans

Benefits to Texans and Texas agriculture from replacing tornado-damaged AgriLife Research facilities in Vernon include:

> Replacing damaged facilities to keep AgriLife Research active in advancing agricultural research for Texas.

> Restoring operations of Foundation Seed to allow it to continue serving producers with top quality, certified seed.

> Restoring affected research and extension programming to directly support producers and consumers across the Texas Rolling Plains.