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**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

1/3/2016

Public Utilities Commission
Capitol Building, 1st Floor
500 E. Capitol Ave
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

To Commissioner Chris Nelson & Consumer Affairs Manager Deb Gregg:

I have read through the articles and public documents regarding the possible discontinuation of farm taps along a natural gas pipeline being operated by Northwest Energy in southeast South Dakota. I am reaching out to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission to offer our assistance to the farm tap customers that would be impacted by this possible shut off. Let me take a brief moment to introduce you to STAR Energy.

STAR Energy is a full service propane provider in South Dakota. Our propane service territory runs from the Sioux City to Sioux Falls and from Highway 81 to the South Dakota/Iowa border. In South Dakota, we have propane plants in Centerville, Canton, Beresford, and Alcester. In northwest Iowa, we have plants in Ireton, Westfield, Brunsville, and Akron. This allows us to service this area very efficiently.

STAR Energy is a division of GROWMARK, Inc. GROWMARK owns and operates a propane terminal in Canton, SD. This Canton, SD, terminal allows STAR Energy to have a consistent and dependable supply of propane for our customers.

We have made two commitments at STAR Energy to assist if this discontinuation of the farm tap was to move forward. First, I have empowered the resources of the STAR Energy staff including; Chris Shimanski – Energy Development Specialist, Joe Mernka – Manager, Propane Marketing and Business Development, Shelly Moline-Controller, Megan Johnson- Operations Manager and myself to put forth all of our efforts to assist in supplying propane storage and install to any of the farm tap customers of Northwest Energy that are affected by this decision to disconnect service. We have also put together a program that would allow the affected customers to be converted from the current natural gas pipeline to propane for little to no cost to the customer. We plan to communicate the details of our proposal once the final ruling has been made.

If further information is requested prior to this ruling, please feel free to contact Jeff Manthei at 888-437-3835 or Chris Shimanski at 605-563-2033. Chris will be our local contact for any and all questions. Chris resides in Sioux Falls, SD, and offices out of the Centerville, SD, location.

Sincerely,

Jeff Manthei
General Manager
STAR Energy a division of GROWMARK, Inc.