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**Minnesota Farmers Union debates ag policy, elects delegates at 73<sup>rd</sup> annual state convention, Nov. 22-23, 2014.**

ST. PAUL (November 24, 2014) – The Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU) held its 73rd annual state convention on Saturday, November 22 and Sunday, November 23. Policy and special orders were debated and passed; and delegates were elected for the National Convention in Wichita, Kansas, March 14-17, 2015.

“Minnesota Farmers Union is about bringing common-sense solutions to the table when ag policy is being discussed, and that is why our convention is so important, because this is where our policy is debated and decided by our county-elected delegates,” said Doug Peterson, Minnesota Farmers Union President. “Our grassroots way of doing things ensures everyone has a voice and that our policy is sound because it comes from the head and hearts of our members.”

The MFU delegates debated and passed special orders of business in support of Country of Origin Labeling (COOL), adult farm business management, improved rail service, and opposed fast-track trade authority for the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). Delegates went page-by-page in our policy and debated issues from renewable energy to local foods.

During the convention, a team from MNSURE and Farmers Union Agency were on-hand to offer free consultations and speak about Minnesota’s health insurance exchange. Speakers included: Senator Amy Klobuchar; Senator Al Franken; Dave Frederickson, Department of Agriculture Commissioner; Chandler Goule, National Farmers Union Vice President of Government Relations; and Bruce Abbe, Executive Director MidWest Shippers Association.

Delegates were chosen to represent Minnesota Farmers Union at the National Farmers Union convention which will be held March 14-17, 2015 in Wichita, Kansas. National delegates elected are:

**District 1:**

Delegate: Bryan Klabunde, Mahnommen County  
Alternate: Alton Walker, Clearwater County

**District 2:**

Delegate: Steve Sunderland, Chippewa County  
Alternate: Larry Anderson, Big Stone County

**District 3:**

Delegate: Ted Suss, Redwood County  
Alternate: Ted Winter, Nobles County

**District 4:**

Delegate: Carol Anderson, Benton County

Alternate: Al Perish, Todd County

**District 5:**

Delegate: Katherine Wiste, Houston County

Alternate: Gary Joachim, Steele County

Several awards were given out at the banquet Saturday night, including the Lifetime Achievement Award to Jim & Mary Stone; Excellence in Youth Education Award, Ed Terry; Julie Bleyhl, Distinguished Service with Excellence in Membership & Policy Award; Mary Lahammer, 2014 Outstanding Media Communications Award; Darryl Larson, 2014 Dedicated Service Award; and Grant Herfindahl, 2014 Dedicated Service Award.

**About Minnesota Farmers Union**

Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU) works to protect and enhance the economic interests and quality of life of family farmers and ranchers and rural communities. MFU is a nonprofit membership-based organization. Membership is open to farmers and non-farmers.

*Minnesota Farmers Union ([www.mfu.org](http://www.mfu.org)), Standing for Agriculture, Fighting for Farmers.*

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