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17 Years of Celebrating Local Food, Farmers and Restaurants

by Bruce Miller, Minnesota Cooks Director

Mark your calendars for the 17th annual Minnesota Cooks™ Day at the Minnesota State Fair, scheduled for Sunday, Aug. 25, at Dan Patch Park. This is the premier event of MFU’s local foods education and outreach program.

MFU is organizing another edition of the Minnesota Cooks calendar, featuring Minnesota family farmers working in partnership with chefs and restaurants. The calendar will debut at the Farmers Union Coffee Shop at the State Fair.

These featured farmers and chefs in the calendar are also featured on Minnesota Cooks Day. This program demonstrates the economic value-added agriculture that benefits some farmers who produce locally grown food. It also brings celebrity tasters on stage to interact with the farmers and chefs, as they discuss the importance of food and agriculture to all Minnesotans. There are delicious samples available for the audience of each dish made.

We will have local musical group The Home Fires return to entertain the audience between the six program segments.

MINNESOTA COOKS STATE FAIR SCHEDULE – Sunday, Aug. 25

10 a.m.
Chef Ryan Nitschke of Sol Avenue Kitchen & Noreen Thomas of Doubting Thomas Farms: Mushroom Bacon Panzanella with Farm Fresh Egg Gribiche & Seasonal Vegetables
Judy and Steve Harder of Jubilee Market & Peacemeals: Superberry Smoothie & Take 10 Cookie

11 a.m.
Harry Brand of Harry’s Scratch Kitchen & John Peterson of Ferndale Market: Harry’s Turkey Quinoa Burger
Troy and Diane Domine of Pizzeria 201 & Dean and Jean Braatz of My Minnesota Farmer: Pizza al Pastor

Noon
Chef Chris Homyak of Lutsen Resort, Kim Corliss of North Shore Winery, & John Jacobson of Pine Tree Apple Orchard: Cider Braised Pulled Pork Sandwich
Chef Butch O’Brien of Wise Acre Eatery & Dean Engelman of Tangletown Gardens’ Farm: Cauliflower Three Ways with Everything Bagel Seasoning

1 p.m.
Chef Erik Kleven of Bleu Duck Kitchen & David Berryhill of The Berryhill Farm: Braised Lamb with Chickpeas, Tomatoes, Kalamata Olives & Peashoots
Chef Mateo Mackbee and Erin Lucas of Model Citizen & Nick and Joan Olson of Prairie Drifter Farm: Charred Broccoli with Herbed Yogurt & Hummus

2 p.m.
Tom Hanson of Duluth Grill & Janaki Fisher-Merritt of Food Farm: Red Flannel Hash
Chef Erik Harcey of Willards & Carla Mertz of Iron Shoe Farm: Dirty Bird Chicken with BBQ Spiced Carrots

3 p.m.
Chef Yia Vang of Union Kitchen & Hmong American Farmers Association: Tiger Bite Sauce
Anna Christoforides of Gardens of Salonica & Pam Benike of Prairie Hollow Farm: Dolmades

For additional information, please contact me at bruce@mfu.org.
The end of July and whole month of August are event-packed. Renewable Energy Working Sessions, Rural Voices Discussions, Farmfest, National Farmers Market Week, the August Full Board of Directors meeting, State Fair and National Farmers Union Legislative Fly-In bring me and the Minnesota Farmers Union staff out to engage with members, policy makers, media and agriculture leaders. That’s not to mention your county conventions, which have already begun.

Staff changes
As you may know, our Operations Director of more than four years, Laura Sherar, left MFU in July for a position at the University of Minnesota. Laura was an incredible asset. Her organization skills made things much easier for all our members and staff. She took responsibility for so many tasks, including membership communications, tracking RSVPs for the state convention, tracking county convention scheduling, assisting the Credentials Committee, managing the office and many more. We are grateful for the time she spent working with us and wish her nothing but the best.

In the meantime, we are hiring for a new Operations Assistant to get started as soon as possible. We will let you know when they begin and how to contact them.

County conventions
The annual MFU county conventions are well underway. This is your time to make your voices heard about what needs to be in our state policy. County-level resolutions are what we use to determine our policy priorities in a given year. If your resolution is approved by members in your county, it moves on for consideration by the state Policy Committee in early November. Then at the state convention, we debate those resolutions, and if they’re approved by delegates, they become officially part of our state policy.

If many people submit resolutions about a particular issue, we’ll know we need to give it significant attention when talking with policy makers. They’re the building blocks of our state policy and may be considered for national policy, too. Some resolution ideas from Government Relations Director Stu Lourey are listed on page 6.

I plan to attend several county conventions this fall and look forward to hearing your resolutions, as well as catching up with members. A full list of scheduled county conventions is on page 15. Make plans to attend yours.

Farmfest
By the time you receive this issue, we’ll have just returned from the annual Minnesota Farmfest, held near Redwood Falls. The event is not just an expo for agribusiness, but a time to catch up with MFU members, policy makers and media. The Minnesota Agriculture deadline passed before Farmfest started. It had some great programming on the schedule.

U.S. House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson of Minnesota led a listening panel on agriculture with U.S. Senator Tina Smith, Congressman Jim Hagedorn, Congresswoman Angie Craig, Congressman Dean Phillips and Congressman Pete Stauber, joined as well by Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue. Gov. Tim Walz provided a brief keynote address, joined by several commissioners from his cabinet. And the new UMN President, Joan Gabel, announced the 2019 Minnesota Farm Families of the Year.

We’ll say more about Farmfest in the September issue.

State Fair
I hope to see you once again at the Farmers Union Coffee Shop at the Minnesota State Fair, coming up Aug. 22-Sept. 2. Last issue we highlighted the new items on our menu, the Blueberry Key Lime Pie and Lavender Lemonade, as well as the new add-an-egg option on the Heirloom Tomato & Sweet Corn BLT, foods made in partnership with local-foods Birchwood Cafe. These are in addition to Farmers Union Farmers Choice Coffee from JS Bean Factory, ice cream bars from Grand Ole Creamery in St. Paul and mocha frappes. The popular Maple Cream Nitro Cold Press Coffee will be back, as well as your favorite espresso drinks. We made a few more upgrades to the building over the past year, following 2018’s remodel.

MFU stays busy in other ways at the fair. First, we put on Minnesota Cooks’ Day on the first Sunday of the fair, Aug. 25, when Minnesota farmers and chefs take the stage at Dan Patch Park. These are the farmer-restaurant partnerships featured in the 2020 Minnesota Cooks calendar. While the chefs demonstrate recipes, the farmers tell their stories about what they do. It’s another way MFU connects farmers and consumers at the fair, just like at the coffee shop. This will also be the first day to check out the 2020 calendar. It’ll arrive in members’ mailboxes by the end of 2019.
Energy discussions
A big focus for MFU in July was renewable energy. Once again, Programming Director Michelle Medina led five Renewable Energy Working Sessions, this year in Moorhead, Lancaster, Aitkin, Marshall and St. Peter. We brought together farmers, rural residents and energy experts to share ideas on how farming and clean energy intersect and thoughts on energy policy. Attendees also learned about the Farmers’ Guide to Solar and Wind Energy in Minnesota we published with Farmers’ Legal Action Group and the study of on-farm energy efficiency practices GDS Associates prepared for us earlier this year. Both documents are available on our website.

Meanwhile, for the second year in a row, I was invited to travel to Germany for the Minnesota Berlin Energy Seminar. The participants were led by Minnesota Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan and included a bipartisan group of state legislators and variety of leaders in agriculture, academia and policy. The seminar is a product of connections between the University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment and the German government. The partnership has paired Minnesota cities with German cities. These pairs collaborate on energy solutions for their cities that combat some of the root causes of today’s climate crisis.

Similarly, this trip brought about conversations between German and Minnesotan leaders on what we’re doing well and how we can continue to make clean energy a big part of our future. It was important to me to attend to make sure family farmers had a voice in this conversation, especially with the lieutenant governor along. Rural areas have a big role to play in the transition to renewable energy in Germany, Minnesota and everywhere. We’ve heard many of you express interest in it, which is why we took on the on-farm energy study and the Farmers’ Guide. We’ll continue extending this education and outreach.

ERS/NIFA move, USMCA top of mind in D.C.
Just six days after the State Fair ends, a group of MFU members and staff will head to the nation’s capital for the annual NFU Fly-In. We always have a great deal to discuss with our members of Congress. Here are a couple of major federal issues that are sure to be on members’ minds in D.C.

First of all, we’re disappointed with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s hasty move of its Economic Research Service (ERS) and National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) to Kansas City, despite employees’ warnings that moving out of Washington will harm their ability to share important research with policy makers. NFU has been a vocal opponent of the move ever since its proposal.

Secondly, our elected officials are likely to get an earful about trade agreements. Right now, many in agriculture are pushing for the immediate passage of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Farmers Union has taken the position that much needs to be improved in the agreement before it’s put up for a vote. For one, the agreement doesn’t change the framework within which many rural jobs were outsourced overseas because they were cheaper there. This is a problem for many family farmers who need off-farm employment to make ends meet, and for the economic opportunities in rural communities.

There’s also a threat to health care costs. As written, USMCA would grant pharmaceutical companies marketing exclusivity for biologic drugs for a minimum of 10 years. If approved, this rule would prevent Congress from acting to hasten the entrance of lower-cost generic drugs to the market. Allowing this provision to remain part of USMCA means health care costs would likely rise some more. This is the exact opposite of what we need and goes against what MFU has been fighting for. This is just one aspect of the agreement that needs more work before it’s voted on, and it needs to be fixed as soon as possible so it can be ratified. Fair trade agreements are an important part of family farm income.

Germany Renewable Energy Group with Minister Andreas Pinkwart

OFFICIAL CONVENTION CALL
78th Annual Convention of the Minnesota Farmers Union
Notice is hereby given that the 77th annual convention of the Minnesota Farmers Union will begin with registration at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 22, 2019 at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Minneapolis Northeast and continue through Sunday, Nov. 24, or until all business has been concluded. Business to be conducted at the state convention will include election of delegates to the national convention and discussion and passage of resolutions into MFU policy.

The basis of representation at the Minnesota Farmers Union state convention, as provided by the constitution and bylaws, shall be one delegate from each local union who will represent as many as ten regular dues-paying members and one additional delegate who will represent each additional ten dues-paying members or a major fraction thereof.

Credentials blanks will be mailed to county presidents and should be returned prior to the convention to: Minnesota Farmers Union, 305 Roselawn Ave. E, Ste. 200, St. Paul, MN 55117. If county or local units are unable to submit credentials in advance, they must be brought to the convention by the delegate and submitted at the time of registration.

Members of unchartered, at-large membership within a county are eligible to become delegates to the state convention provided they are elected at a special meeting conducted for the specific purpose of delegate election. At-large delegates will represent their counties by the same manner and terms as regular local delegates. To qualify, the delegate must be in good standing with Farmers Union.

Gary Wertish Anne Schwagerl  
President Secretary
the state convention in November, and possibly even the National Farmers Union convention in March. These meetings give members a chance to communicate their thoughts about what’s working and what isn’t in their rural communities, which means each county has an opportunity for local power.

County conventions are also the time to elect delegates to represent your county at the Annual Minnesota Farmers Union Convention, this year being held Nov. 22-24 in Minneapolis. Even if you’re not a delegate or an alternate, I hope you’ll plan to attend. The convention brings Minnesota Farmers Union members together in the best way, as we debate state policy. We want our policy to truly represent you, our family farmers and rural Minnesotans. I’m always impressed with the way you all debate policy passionately yet respectfully.

These county conventions form the core of our grassroots organization. I encourage you to attend and invite neighbors, friends and family. Kids are welcome! Sometimes we forget the importance of community in rural areas, which makes these conventions a perfect time for our farmers and friends of farmers to gather for a common purpose.

Along with county conventions, we are all very excited for the annual Minnesota State Fair, happening Aug. 22-Sept. 2, and we encourage everyone to stop into the Farmers Union Coffee Shop to try some of our locally-grown foods and beverages. On one of our days during the State Fair, I will be speaking on a panel regarding mental health. This is an important subject to me personally and to so many other farm families. If you can make the trip, please come out and visit us in our newly remodeled building at the State Fairgrounds. I’d be happy to chat with you over a cup of coffee and an Heirloom Tomato & Sweet Corn BLT.

Looking forward to seeing all of you at your county conventions and the State Fair. For more information about our events, please visit www.mfu.org/events.
• Local foods – What are the barriers to farmers selling local foods direct to the consumer? What about to large purchasers (i.e. schools)? Do you have ideas about how to create new markets?

• Farm succession and new farmers – Do members see barriers to farmers passing their farm business to the next generation? How should policymakers help new farmers get on the land?

• Climate change – Farmers are being looked to for answers on climate change. What policies could help farmers lead on addressing climate change? What should policy-makers do to protect farmers and our food system from the effects of climate change (i.e. excess rainfall)?

• Renewable energy – Do you have thoughts about biofuel production or wind and solar development? RFS waivers? How should farmers be involved in a transition to renewable energy?

• Solar siting – In Minnesota law, there is a provision that prevents large-scale solar (above 50 mw ~ 500 acres) and other large power-generating facilities from being placed on prime farmland if other suitable land is available. Do you have thoughts about this law? What should policy makers and regulators think about when siting large-scale solar projects? And what about smaller 8-10 acre projects (i.e. community solar gardens)?

• Agribusiness mergers – This year, national focus has been given to blocking mergers of big agri-business companies. Do you have thoughts on how to best ensure market competition?

• Grain elevator losses – Earlier this year, due to operator mismanagement, the 200-some members of the Ashby Farmers Cooperative elevator lost over $5 million. Other states have producer-funded indemnity funds to protect farmers from these losses. Should Minnesota consider this? How else can we protect farmers?

• Right to Repair – This session, a digital fair repair bill was introduced that would compel manufacturers—including those of farm equipment—to provide the needed tools, parts, diagnostic equipment and manuals to repair digital equipment at cost. Do you have thoughts on Right to Repair? What should be included in this legislation as it relates to farm equipment?

• Transportation funding – Do you have thoughts on how to fund repairs to roads and bridges?

• Buffers – Do you have thoughts on how to compensate landowners for implementing buffer strips?

• Overtime rule – At the Legislature, a bill was introduced to move the overtime rule from 48 down to 40 hours, which would affect all farms, including small farms. Should this apply to seasonal workers who are hired for planting or harvest, for example? What about H2A workers?

Again, these are just a few issues to think about at county conventions. MFU is grateful for the hundreds of resolutions received from members every year that form our policy.
New Market Facilitation Program payments announced

Two months after announcing its intentions to provide a new package to assist family farmers and ranchers coping with trade damages, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released finalized details about the timing and calculation of direct payments to producers through the Market Facilitation Program (MFP). The agency has earmarked up to $14.5 billion for the program to be distributed in three separate tranches. Eligible producers can submit applications for the first tranche through Dec. 6, 2019, and payments will be sent out starting in mid- to late August.

Most commodity grain producers will be compensated based on a single county rate ranging from $15 to $150 per planted acre. For the first round of payments, they will receive a minimum of $15 per acre and up to 50 percent of the county rate. Prevented plant acres will receive a $15 per acre payment but must have been planted with a cover crop by Aug. 1. You can find your county rate payment at www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/market-facilitation-program/index.

On the livestock side, dairy producers will receive 20 cents per hundredweight based on historical production, if the dairy was active as of June 1, 2019. Hog producers will receive $11 per hog payment, but only on owned hogs. Contract growers are not eligible. Choose an inventory number from between April 1-May 15, 2019.

Additional relief for specialty crop producers will be available as well.

Farmers will need to visit their county Farm Service Agency offices to apply. Unlike last year’s MFP, farmers do not need to submit production information or provide the office additional information. Payments will be based on 2019 acreage reporting. The first payment will be 50 percent of the total payment and could be delivered as early as mid-to-late August. Subsequent payments will be delivered in November and January depending on market conditions.

Farmers Union is grateful for the assistance, but we are concerned about the potential payment disparities between counties, as well as a lack of incentive to reduce production due to excess supply. We need sustainable long-term solutions on trade if family farmers are going to get the fair prices they need to make a living, rather than ad-hoc payment programs.

New African Swine Fever resources available from the Board of Animal Health

Preparation is the best way to prevent African Swine Fever from entering the United States. The Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH) has created some outreach materials to inform the public, producers, veterinarians and markets about how they can prevent this and other swine diseases. The new market-specific flyers are available in multiple languages and provide a background on ASF, how to prevent it with biosecurity and how it relates to the BAH’s oversight of swine programs.

The ASF flyer is available at www.bah.state.mn.us/swine. Another new flyer from the Board is being distributed at select feed stores across the state. The “Know the Signs of Foreign Animal Diseases” flyer is designed for hobby or backyard swine owners. It not only depicts examples of ASF clinical signs they should look for in their animals, it also outlines foot and mouth disease and classical swine fever. All of those diseases are reportable to the Board and the intent of the flyer is to raise awareness and encourage swine owners to contact a veterinarian if they suspect anything is amiss with their animals.

The flyer is available at www.bah.state.mn.us/media/FAD_Flyer.pdf.

A Message from Laura Sherar

At the first Minnesota Farmers Union convention I attended in 2015, I was impressed to hear compassionate and productive debate by delegates on the convention floor about how to craft policies that would best help our rural communities and family farms. The opportunity for honest debate and respectful disagreement is important, and I have seen MFU bring people together around that idea over the four years that I worked with the organization.

This community is what has made MFU the progressive grassroots organization that it is today and has been for more than 100 years.

I have moved on from MFU for a position with the University of Minnesota. My last day was July 19. As Operations Director, I have been fortunate to talk with many of you at events or over the phone, and I have been inspired by the leaders at all levels of our organization that continue to show up and drive change.

It has been a pleasure getting to know you, and I look forward to continuing to be active in Minnesota Farmers Union as a member and to watch our organization grow in the coming years.
I want to start by thanking producers for their cooperation and patience during this year’s acreage reporting season. This is a busy year implementing the provisions of the 2018 Farm Bill, and at Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff are hard at work at implementing the changes.

We have two deadlines coming up to be mindful of. First, the deadline to sign up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is Friday, Aug. 23. The other is Friday, Sept. 20 to apply for the new Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program.

Please read the following about these two programs. Contact your local FSA office with your questions. Go to farmers.gov/service-locator to find the service center nearest you.

USDA offers producers options to re-enroll or extend expiring CRP contracts

Farmers and ranchers with expiring CRP contracts may now re-enroll in certain CRP continuous signup practices or, if eligible, select a one-year contract extension. FSA is accepting offers from those who want to enroll for the first time in one of the country’s largest conservation programs.

Signup for CRP runs through Aug. 23.

This year’s CRP continuous signup includes such practices as grass waterways, filter strips, riparian buffers, wetland restoration and others. Continuous signup enrollment contracts last for 10 to 15 years. Soil rental rates are set at 90 percent of 2018 rates. Incentive payments are not offered for these practices.

Letters were sent to all contract holders with CRP contracts expiring Sept. 30, describing possible options. A one-year extension is being offered to existing CRP participants with expiring contracts of 14 years or less that have practices not eligible for re-enrollment under this signup.

Alternatively, producers with expiring contracts may have the option to enroll in the Transition Incentives Program, which provides two additional annual rental payments on the condition the land is sold or rented to a beginning farmer or rancher or a member of a socially disadvantaged group.

This signup also enables producers to sign up under existing Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) agreements. CREP is part of CRP and targets high-priority conservation concerns identified by a state, and federal funds are supplemented with non-federal funds to address those concerns.

FSA is planning a CRP general signup in December 2019, with a CRP Grasslands signup to follow. Those who extend their contracts may be eligible for one of these signups or another continuous signup in the future.

Producers interested in applying for CRP continuous practices, including those under existing CREP agreements, or who want to extend their contracts, should contact their USDA service center by Aug. 23. More information on CRP can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/crp.

DMC signup through Sept. 20

Dairy producers are reminded that signup for DMC continues at local FSA offices until Sept. 20.

DMC is the cornerstone program of the dairy safety net that helps dairy producers manage the volatility of milk and feed prices. All dairy operations in the United States are eligible for the DMC program. An operation can be run either by a single producer or multiple producers who commercially produce and market cows’ milk.

The 2018 Farm Bill allowed USDA to construct the new DMC, which replaces the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy). This new program offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer.

The program provides coverage retroactive to Jan. 1, 2019, with applicable payments following soon after enrollment. At the time of signup, producers can choose between $4 to $9.50 coverage levels.

The Farm Bill also allows producers who participated in MPP-Dairy from 2014-2017 to receive a repayment or credit for part of the premiums paid into the program. FSA has been providing premium reimbursements to producers since last month. Those that elect the 75 percent credit option will have that credit applied toward 2019 DMC premiums.

USDA has built in a 50 percent blend of premium and supreme alfalfa hay prices with the alfalfa hay price used under the prior dairy program to provide a total feed cost that more closely aligns with hay rations used by many producers. At a milk margin minus feed cost of $9.50 or less, payments are possible. With the 50 percent hay blend, FSA’s revised April 2019 income over feed cost margin is $8.82 per hundredweight (cwt). The revised margins for January, February and March are, respectively, $7.71, $7.91 and $8.66 – triggering DMC payments for each month.

DMC payments will be reduced by 6.2 percent in 2019 because of a sequester order required by Congress and issued in accordance with the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DMC offers catastrophic coverage at no cost to the producer other than an annual $100 administrative fee. Producers can opt for greater coverage levels for a premium in addition to the administrative fee. Operations owned by limited resource, beginning, socially disadvantaged or veteran farmers and ranchers may be eligible for a waiver on administrative fees. Producers have the choice to lock in coverage levels until 2023 and receive a 25 percent discount on their DMC premiums.

To assist producers in making coverage elections, USDA partnered with the University of Wisconsin to develop a DMC decision support tool, which can be used to evaluate scenarios using different coverage levels through DMC.

Eligible dairy operations must have a production history determined by FSA. For most operations, production history is based on the highest milk production in 2011, 2012 and 2013. Newer dairy operations have other options for determining production history. Producers may contact their local FSA office to get their verified production history.

Dairy producers also are reminded that there are no restrictions on participating in DMC in conjunction with any Risk Management Agency insurance products.

For more information, visit farmers.gov DMC webpage or contact your local USDA service center.
Farmers Union evolves, connects at the Minnesota State Fair

By Brita Moore, Public Relations & Communications Director

The Farmers Union Coffee Shop of today is both old and new. It’s the same location that MFU has had at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds since 1956; yet, the coffee shop itself has only been in place since 2003. No matter what the building looks like, our mission at the fair is the same: to connect fairgoers to their food and the farmers who raise it.

Originally, MFU’s fair building was an exposition with the purpose of showcasing the value and importance of our organization to the public. Displays provided information about our family farm system, geared toward visitors who were removed from farming. Former MFU State Secretary Clint Hess built an electronic “Professor Parity and his Magic Brain,” who answered questions about farm problems.

When we converted it into the coffee shop, we added a full array of Farmers Union Farmers Choice Coffee and espresso drinks, so fairgoers could stop and grab a cup while perusing the vintage farm equipment in the building. Members continued to frequent the shop and talk about agriculture issues with other visitors, while listening to entertainment from local musicians.

We also began to offer food from local farmers and businesses and have become regulars on the official State Fair New Foods list, thanks to our partnerships with Birchwood Cafe, JS Bean Factory and Grand Ole Creamery. Politicians and media are frequent visitors.

The Farmers Union Coffee Shop looks just a bit different than the 1956 expo building. But we still provide stories about our family farmers with photos and videos, as well as a huge map of Minnesota pointing out the farms that make our delicious food possible. It ties in nicely with our Minnesota Cooks™ program, which also began in 2003, celebrating the partnerships between family farmers and restaurants, chefs and cooks.

In addition to the food, we’ve also long been involved with youth agricultural activities at the fair. We’re proud supporters of the 4-H Purple Ribbon Auction, 4-H and FFA livestock winners signs and back numbers, the 4-H Dairy Showcase Scholarship, the Celebrity Cow Milking Contest and the Milk Run.

Our investment in the fair runs deep. Know that no matter what it looks like on the outside, the goal has always been the same: to connect consumers and farmers through stories, conversations and, of course, locally grown food.

Why is working with Farmers Union Insurance Agency and MFU important to you? Farmers Union Insurance Agency and MFU invest a great deal of commitment, energy and time to supporting our local communities which is an integral part of who I am as a person, what I do and what I believe in. We all will benefit from the continual development, support and personal investment in our local communities and state.

What community organizations are you passionate about? We all will benefit from the continual development, support and personal investment in our local communities and state.

What is your #1 concern when reviewing and selling farm insurance? My number one concern is the assumption of coverage! When I am reviewing a prospective client’s policies, I am instantly concerned in conversations when the client assumes they are covered for everything. Then I dive into their policies and uncover the gaps in coverage. This is what I love about my job! A large part of being an insurance advisor is being a detective, and every case is different. I love sitting with my current farm clients and prospective clients and learning about them and their lives. That is where we can customize their policies to include coverage for everything they need and exclude the items that don’t pertain to them.

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A monthly update from National Farmers Union

Summer is often a sleepy time in Washington, D.C. But this year, Congress and the administration have been working on several policies that have significant implications for family farmers and ranchers, both negative and positive.

**USMCA provisions could help reduce health care costs and protect rural jobs**

All eyes are on the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), a trilateral trade deal introduced last September to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Though the agreement has been signed by all three countries, it has only been ratified by Mexico’s legislative body so far. President Trump’s “Statement of Administrative Action” in late May triggered the United States’ ratification process, beginning a 30-day waiting period before the administration can kick USMCA to Congress for approval. The window has elapsed, but Democrats in the House of Representatives are pushing for additional improvements before they officially receive the deal and prepare for a vote.

NFU supports many of the proposed changes. In a letter sent to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, NFU President Roger Johnson emphasized the importance of export markets to agricultural communities and urged Congress to adopt provisions that could help reduce health care costs and protect rural jobs.

“Farmers are increasingly dependent on off-farm employment to make ends meet,” said Johnson, “but many rural manufacturing and other jobs are moving to foreign markets with cheaper labor and lower environmental standards.” This has happened in large part due to the framework that has dominated U.S. trade deals for the past 25 years. He recommended that Congressional leadership strengthen USMCA’s “labor, environment and enforcement standards… to help keep jobs in rural communities.”

Additionally, Johnson expressed concern about a provision in the deal that would grant pharmaceutical companies marketing exclusivity for prescription biologic drugs for a minimum of 10 years. If approved, it would “limit the actions Congress can take to reduce prescription drug prices,” he noted, and as such, it “must be rectified to allow for future reductions in health care costs.”

**EPA releases disappointing renewable fuel volumes**

On July 5, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released its proposed renewable volume obligations (RVOs) under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) for the year 2020. The proposal would not increase the target for corn ethanol at all and would increase overall biofuel use only marginally, from 19.92 billion gallons to 20.04 billion gallons.

NFU was disappointed with the news, considering the ongoing misappropriation of RFS small refinery waivers to multinational corporations, which has eliminated demand for biofuels by 2.6 billion gallons.

“This is yet another setback in a long string of setbacks for homegrown biofuels and the American family farmers who grow them,” said President Johnson. He urged EPA to reverse course and “support the biofuels industry and increase demand for American farm products” by “halting the misallocation of exemptions and accounting for the lost gallons in the finalized RVOs.”

**House passes Ag Appropriations Bill**

The House passed an appropriations bill that allocates $24.3 billion in discretionary funding for agricultural programs, rural development and the Food and Drug Administration in fiscal year (FY) 2020.

The bill provides funding for several programs that are important to NFU. It fully funds the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) at $10 million, as NFU had urged Congress to do in March. The program provides grants for governmental, educational and nonprofit entities to provide stress assistance programs to farmers, ranchers and farmworkers. Additionally, the bill provides another $5 million to help farmers resolve legal disputes through the Agricultural Mediation Program.

In April, NFU joined more than 100 farm and conservation groups to call for the protection of funding for Farm Bill conservation programs in the appropriations process. The organization was pleased that the House bill complies with this request.

Furthermore, NFU was similarly encouraged by the inclusion of a provision that would block the USDA’s plans to relocate two of its research agencies to the Kansas City region. Due to its current and potential implications for the quality, quantity and objectivity of agricultural research, NFU opposes USDA’s proposal and has continuously urged Congress to halt the relocation process.

The Senate has not yet started writing its version of the appropriations bill. It’s expected to begin the process in the coming weeks.

**Farm groups call on presidential candidates to increase fairness for family farmers**

As fewer corporations seize greater control over the food and farm sectors, NFU joined 34 other organizations in calling on elected officials and presidential candidates to address corporate consolidation in the livestock and poultry markets. The coalition outlined their priorities, which include strengthening antitrust laws, restoring mandatory Country-of-Origin Labeling, instating a moratorium on agribusiness mega-mergers and leveling the playing field for independent processing facilities.

“Our food system is clearly rigged,” said President Johnson. “While just a handful of multi-national corporations have been allowed to exert more and more control over every step of the agricultural supply chain, farmers and ranchers have been left to cope with higher production costs and fewer marketing choices, as well as unfair and abusive business practices.”

Corporate consolidation has plagued family farmers and ranchers for many decades, and lax antitrust enforcement in the past several administrations has allow the problem to get out of hand.

“It is critical that we act now to restore fair competition to agriculture,” added Johnson. “As the field of 2020 candidates vie for the presidency, we urge them to take the issue of corporate consolidation and anti-trust enforcement seriously by incorporating these recommendations into their platforms.”

The Washington Corner can be found at www.nfu.org/corner.
MEMBERS IN FOCUS: KLEIN FAMILY

Hidden Stream Farm
Two thousand five hundred pounds of bacon. That’s how much is required to meet the demand for the Heirloom Tomato & Sweet Corn BLT at the Farmers Union Coffee Shop during the Minnesota State Fair.

The Klein family of Hidden Stream Farm, just outside Elgin, knew it would be challenging. And they were there for it, largely thanks to the fact that they have their own processing plant in nearby Dover.

“In 1999 we started at our first farmers market, and it’s grown from there.” They’ve expanded to about 450 acres now, rented and certified organic on two locations. Other landowners reached out to them and asked them if they would run their land. It’s been useful with children interested in staying on the farm.

“We need to make sure there’s enough for everyone,” Lisa said.

The kids – Andy, Ben, Katy, Sarah, Isaac and April – all keep busy on the farm and participate in 4-H. Andy studies at South Central College in North Mankato as well. Katy runs her own egg business, with about 200 layers in total. Andy and Ben keep an eye on the predator camera to watch for owls and foxes that could threaten the chickens.

These are the farmers who put the B in our BLT – and that’s far from all they do. MFU members since 2008, Lisa, her husband Eric and their six children raise about 60 head of pastured beef, 3,500 broiler chickens and 800 pigs each year (plus a “boatload of cats”).

Hidden Stream Farm’s influence in Minnesota’s local foods arena extends well beyond just the Farmers Union Coffee Shop. They sell direct to consumers online, at three Southeast Minnesota farmers markets, in food cooperatives, restaurants, food service and a little bit of farm-to-school. They’ve had multiple features in our Minnesota Cooks™ program and calendar, as well as our Farm Fresh Road Trip show on Twin Cities Public Television. And their meat processing plant has met the needs of producers throughout the region.

Farm beginnings
Lisa’s grandmother staked out the land in the 1950s after her husband died and her son, Lisa’s father, was a teenager. He soon became the primary farm operator, running a dairy until 1990 and transitioning to beef and pork after that. He also became a leader in local sustainable farming programs.

His lasting legacy to Lisa and Eric was his introduction of rotational grazing. That led to direct marketing.

“When we got married, we came back and tried to figure out how we were going to make 80 acres work,” Lisa said. “Somebody stopped alongside the road, saw the pigs in the field and said they wanted one. That’s how we started direct marketing.”

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Market relationships
The farmers markets, food co-ops, schools and online direct-to-consumer have been solid markets for Hidden Stream Farm. Lisa and Eric rave about the growing local foods restaurant movement, too, as it’s expanding quickly in Greater Minnesota.

“Some chefs are moving out of the Twin Cities,” Lisa said, “into places like La Crosse (Wis.), Winona, Rochester, Cannon Falls. We’re glad to finally get into the Rochester restaurants. Winona’s food co-op is changing.”

One of MFU’s goals with the Minnesota Cooks program is to highlight those local foods restaurants outside of the Twin Cities metro. It’s a market that’s highly beneficial for some family farmers, and it certainly has been for the Kleins. They’ve developed relationships with chefs committed to local foods, and they keep those relationships no matter where the chefs move around to.

But we can’t forget about the State Fair market. Hidden Stream has had a relationship with Birchwood Cafe for several years, so it made sense that Chef Paulsen would reach out to them for the BLT. Since the Kleins had built the processing plant in 2016, fulfilling a dream of Eric’s, they were able to follow through, and still keep up with the rest of their customers.

“We just had to plan ahead, smoke and slice all of the bacon,” Eric said. “This year we started it at the end of June. Now it’s all bagged up and in the freezer.”

All of these market and consumer relationships have made Hidden Stream able to withstand fluctuations.

“We had a downturn for two years in meat sales once, but we were diverse enough in our markets that I wasn’t having to commit to buying other people’s eggs,” Lisa said. In other words, their advice for navigating tough times is to have options for yourself – in their case, it’s market relationships.

Why MFU?
Minnesota Cooks was what introduced the Kleins to MFU initially. They’ve been paired with Mendoberri of Mendota Heights and Lucia’s of St. Paul in the program. They’ve come to admire MFU’s advocacy to keep farmers on the land and make it easier for beginning farmers to get land.

“There are so many people who want to get started, and big farms power over them sometimes,” Eric said.

“And the other thing is, even if you do find older farmers who are willing to work with new farmers, how do you match them up and facilitate that?” Lisa added. “Sometimes farmers get stubborn and set in their ways, and they want to see their land farmed the way they’ve always done it.”

It’s a hard question. There are programs out there to bring retiring and beginning farmers together, but much more work needs to be done there. Lisa and Eric have children who want to be farmers, so it makes sense they’d care deeply about this issue. We haven’t found the perfect policy to help more people be able to farm, but we have fought for provisions such as the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit that incentivizes selling land to beginning farmers for retiring farmers.

And, just like the Kleins have sustained themselves by building relationships with chefs, farmers markets and others, MFU works by building relationships in rural policy networks.

“We like what Farmers Union does,” Eric said. “It represents all sides of what agriculture is.”

Minneapolis Farmers Union
Standing for Agriculture, Working for Farmers
NEW LEADER ACADEMY

Applications being accepted for the New Leader Academy

The New Leader Academy will continue this fall with Class Two. This program seeks to identify leaders within MFU and give them the resources and training needed to become active leaders in their communities and in MFU. We want to ensure that rural and urban communities, farmers and consumers have leaders who understand the agricultural landscape. NLA Class One has had an excellent year getting to know each other and growing as leaders, and we are excited for the next round to join us.

The New Leader Academy Class Two will kick off at the 78th Annual MFU Convention in November and end in September 2020 with a trip to Washington, D.C. for the National Farmers Union Legislative Fly-in. Between those two events, the program will include three other sessions over the course of the year. Most sessions will take place over a weekend and cover the three sides of the Farmers Union triangle: Education, Cooperation and Legislation. These sessions will be held in different locations, urban and rural, so that participants can experience of the diversity of our state.

MFU covers participants’ costs for lodging, materials, most meals and airfare to Washington. We believe the investment we make in our emerging leaders will pay back tenfold in the future, with participants engaging in food issues, leading their communities and helping sustain our local economies.

This program was created to help individuals develop and polish the skills they need to effectively create and sustain vibrant communities. It offers opportunities to compare and address local urban and rural issues, as well as lessons in advocacy that will help participants understand how the various levels of government form a community.

The class will include approximately a dozen selected individuals from Minnesota. MFU is looking for participants that come from various backgrounds and ages. Participants can be farmers, Farmers Union Insurance Agents, cooperative leaders, local food and urban food advocates, entrepreneurs and anyone looking to get more involved in MFU and rural leadership.

The program does emphasize the history and role of Farmers Union in the topics addressed, and participants must become MFU members before the start of the kickoff session in November, if they aren’t already members at the time of application. In addition, participants must be 21 years of age or older by the start of the November kickoff session. There is no maximum age limit.

For more information, to recommend a participant for the program or to apply, please contact MFU Education Director Glen Schmidt at glen@mfu.org, (651) 288-4066 or visit www.mfu.org/new-leader-academy. The application is also online.

minnesota cooks™

Sommer Pasta

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients:
For pasta:
- 1 cup flour
- 1 egg
- 1-2 Tbsp. cream

For vegetables:
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 small onion, small dice
- 3 ears of corn, cut off cob
- 1 zucchini, small dice
- 1 summer squash, small dice
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 tomato, seeded and small dice
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh tarragon

Preparation:
Mix all the ingredients for the pasta in a bowl. Turn out onto a lightly floured counter and knead until dough is smooth, approximately 20 minutes. Cover dough and let rest until water comes to a boil. Bring a pot of water to a boil. Roll out dough to about 1/8 inch thick; cut into desired shape. In a couple of batches blanch pasta just until it rises to the top of the water. Remove and let cool. Repeat the process until all the pasta is done.

In a sauté pan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add onions and cook until translucent. Add corn and cook about 1 minute. Add zucchini, summer squash, and garlic and cook until you can smell the garlic, about 30 seconds. Add white wine and simmer until the wine is almost gone. Add cream and bring to a simmer. Add the cooked pasta and simmer until cream is thick. Toss the pasta with the tomatoes and tarragon. Plate and enjoy!
MFU CAMPERS LEAD ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

while volunteering at Sprout City Farms, an urban operation in Denver. The young people from Minnesota who attended were Lisette Amacher of St. Paul; Isabella Brockhouse of Middle River; Maria Fatz of Waubun; Nicholas Foss of St. Bonifacius; Abigail Heacock of Grove City; Anna Hren of Cottage Grove; Jesse Kilen of Warren; Mercedes Lesmeister of McIntire; Sebastian Mott of Thief River Falls; Jade Person of Oklee; Elizabeth Petersen of Wadena; Brittany and Kaitlyn Rasmusen of Chaska; Jaedin Ringler of Belgrade; Sydney Sanders of St. Paul; Kylie Sieben of Eagan; and Josiah Zapf of St. Bonifacius.

This year’s camp, themed “Making Changes,” featured notable speakers and presenters, some of whom have been All-States guests for many years. Olympic Gold Medalist Rulon Gardner, a camp regular, spoke about overcoming the odds to become an unlikely wrestling hero. Former camper and National Youth Advisory Council (NYAC) member Brittany Jablonsky, who now serves as the Senior Director of Communications at Farm Credit, shared with campers how embracing her roots as a North Dakota farm girl has helped her succeed in an agricultural career off the farm. Former camper and NYAC member Ben Lehman discussed leadership in agriculture with the group, sharing tools to create collegiate Farmers Union chapters. NFU Government Relations Director Matt Perdue, with the help of Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Director of External Affairs Nick Levendofsky, walked the campers through NFU’s grassroots policy process and a mock policy debate.

On the Minnesota front, we wrapped up our Senior High Camp just after the Minnesota Agriculture deadline. That means we’re done with Leadership Camp for 2019! More to come about how it went in the September issue.

All States Leadership Camp

At the end of June, 18 MFU campers traveled to Bailey, Colo., for the 83rd annual National Farmers Union All-States Leadership Camp. Hosted each June, the event encourages young adults to explore their leadership potential, discuss current events and important issues, learn more about the power of cooperatives and identify ways to effect positive change in their communities.

Over the course of the week, campers ranging between 17 and 20 years old from Farmers Union organizations across the country participated in programs that emphasize leadership, teamwork and cooperative education while also enjoying traditional camp activities. In addition, campers gained hands-on experience

National Youth Advisory Council

The campers also elected six of their peers to NYAC, which represents thousands of young Farmers Union members across the country. NYAC will further hone their leadership skills at a learning session in Washington, D.C., through presentations at NFU’s 118th Anniversary Convention, as well as by planning next year’s All-States Camp.

This year’s NYAC includes three Minnesotans: Nicholas Foss, Josiah Zapf and Maria Fatz. Learn about them below.

Nicholas Foss
Hometown: St. Bonifacius, MN
Has attended MFU Leadership Camp for 6 years
What he’s looking to contribute to NYAC: “When I first went, I wasn’t expecting a lot of lessons. I think I can help the kids be ready for that, be there to help them understand what’s going on, what we’re learning about and why we’re learning it. I think also I want to bring the love from Minnesota. It’ll help kids get through the week and make them comfortable (at All-States).”

Josiah Zapf
Hometown: St. Bonifacius, MN
Has attended MFU Leadership Camp for 6 years
What he’s looking to contribute to NYAC: “My whole family is very politically involved, so it’s going to be really interesting to learn more about that side of Farmers Union and going lobbying in September (at Fly-In). With all the different political experience I have, I’ll be able to help other kids understand the lessons a little more.”

Maria Fatz
Hometown: Waubun, MN
Has attended MFU Leadership Camp for 13 years
What she’s looking to contribute to NYAC: “An upbeat atmosphere and try to make everyone feel welcome, that even though you only get to go (to All-States Camp) once, you’ll always remember it and want to go back, or at least stay part of the organization.”

GLEN SCHMIDT
EDUCATION DIRECTOR
glen@mfu.org

Minnesota Farmers Union  Standing for Agriculture, Working for Farmers
Farm Stress Radio Series

TRANSFARMATION

Prompted by the many sources of stress currently impacting farmers and ranchers, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and the Red River Farm Network (RRFN) have joined forces to create a new radio series called TransFARMation. MFU is proud to be one of its sponsors.

The series uses farm radio, podcasts and social media to increase awareness and reduce inhibitions about acknowledging farmer stress while highlighting sources of support.

“Many people are struggling and need to know they’re not alone,” said Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen. “This is a powerful series. We hear from farmers, ranchers and others in agriculture talk about some of the strategies and solutions that helped them when times got tough.”

The 60 second prime-time radio stories can be heard on all of RRFN’s 20 stations throughout Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. In addition, the in-depth podcasts can be found at www.rrfn.com/transfarmation.

MFU offers FREE agritourism sign to members

Thinking of inviting the public onto your farm this summer for a farm tour, breakfast, U-pick, etc.? MFU worked to pass the state agritourism bill in 2015. To be protected, the provider of the agritourism activity must post signs warning attendees of the inherent risks of visiting a farm. These signs should be posted at the entrance to the property and be clearly visible to all visitors.

Upon request, Minnesota Farmers Union will provide interested members one FREE sign that meets the specific guidelines in accordance to the Limited Liability Law. With the sign, you’ll also receive a two-page guide to the law that was put together by Farmers’ Legal Action Group (FLAG). Additional signs for members can be purchased for $7. Signs for non-members cost $10.

To get your sign, contact MFU Membership and Outreach Director Bruce Miller at bruce@mfu.org or (651) 288-4064.

Farm & Rural Helpline

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has extended its “Crisis Connection” telephone hotline service for another year. The program has renamed the service Farm & Rural Helpline, with the toll-free number (833) 600-2670.

You are encouraged to call this line if you need any kind of assistance. It’s available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

If you or any farmers you know would like to speak with Ted Matthews, the state rural mental health specialist based out of MnSCU, his number is (320) 266-2390. He meets with farmers one-on-one and free of charge. No insurance card, paperwork or referral is necessary.

Farm Advocates

Farm Advocates provide one-on-one assistance for Minnesota farmers who face crisis caused by either a natural disaster or financial problems. They understand the needs of agricultural families and communities. They are trained and experienced in agricultural lending practices, mediation, lender negotiation, farm programs, crisis counseling, disaster programs and recognize the need for legal and/or social services. Plus, most of the Farm Advocates are MFU members.

The Farm Advocate Program has been supported by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture since 1984. There is no charge or fee for Farm Advocate assistance.

Farm Advocates:

Jan Boll Trail (218) 268-4472
Bruce Lubitz Perham (218) 346-4866
Connie Dykes Lake City (651) 345-5149
David Ellason Isle (320) 676-3559
David Hesse Comfrey (507) 877-3012
Dean Hetland Eagle Bend (218) 639-9302
Dan Hunz Monticello (320) 743-5660
Ruth Ann Karty Clarkfield (320) 669-7135
George Bosselman Fosston (218) 200-9432
Steve Zenk Danube (320) 894-2517

www.mda.state.mn.us/about/commissionersoffice/farmadvocates
Aug. 15 • Star Tribune State Fair Preview Party • 11:30 a.m. • Star Tribune Headquarters, Minneapolis • Featuring the Farmers Union Coffee Shop's Blueberry Key Lime Pie

Aug. 16 • MFU Full Board of Directors Reception • 6:30 p.m. • Delta Hotels by Marriott Minneapolis Northeast

Aug. 17 • MFU Full Board of Directors Meeting • 9 a.m. • MFU State Office

Aug. 18 • 39th Annual Farm Picnic • Co-sponsored by Morrison County Farmers Union and Minnesota COACT • Pierz, MN • Speaker: Thom Petersen, Minnesota Commissioner of Agriculture • FFI: Don Pylkkänen at (651) 646-0900

Aug. 22–Sept. 2 • Minnesota State Fair • fairgrounds, Falcon Heights

Aug. 25 • Minnesota Cooks Day at the Minnesota State Fair • 10 a.m. • Dan Patch Park on the fairgrounds

Sept. 8–11 • National Farmers Union Legislative Fly-In • Washington, D.C.

Nov. 22–24 • 78th Annual Minnesota Farmers Union Convention • Delta Hotels by Marriott Minneapolis Northeast

Upcoming Events

County Conventions

Aug. 13: Blue Earth, Nicollet & Le Sueur Counties • 6:30 p.m. • Jake's Pizza, 119 Broadway Ave., St. Peter • FFI: Blue Earth County President John Thomodson at (507) 642-8039; Le Sueur County President Steve Schultz at (507) 931-4499; Nicollet County President Bruce Hulke at (507) 359-2788

Aug. 15: Scott County • 11:30 a.m. • Emma Krumpbee's Restaurant/Orchard, 351 E. Enterprise Dr., Belle Plaine • FFI: Scott County President Tim Lies at (952) 873-2808

Aug. 15: Waseca County • 5 p.m. • Pizza Ranch, 212 17th Ave. NE, Waseca • FFI: Waseca County President Roger Rucker at (507) 469-1523

Aug. 18: Mille Lacs & Kanabec Counties • 12:30 p.m. • Beck Farms LLC, 1506 140th Ave., Ogilvie • FFI: Mille Lacs County President Bob Hoefert at (320) 676-3177 or Kanabec County President Bevan Beck at (320) 272-4787

Aug. 20: Stearns County • 7:30 p.m. • Charlie's Café, 115 Main St. E, Freeport • FFI: Stearns County President Mike Orbeck at (320) 987-3421

Sept. 4: Olmsted & Dodge Counties • 6 p.m. • Frank 'N Stein's Restaurant, 15 Frontage Road, Byron • FFI: Olmsted County President John Larsen at (507) 273-1451 or Dodge County President Glenn Hahn at (507) 365-8608

Sept. 5: Hubbard & Wadena Counties • 12:30 p.m. • Hub 71, 3 Hwy. 71 S, Sebeka • FFI: Hubbard County President Charles Andress at (218) 652-3176 or Wadena County President Melvin Kinnunen at (218) 564-4334

Sept. 8: Becker County • 5 p.m. • 59er Café, 19389 Frontage Road, Detroit Lakes • FFI: Becker County President Roger Schaefer at (218) 334-4631

Sept. 15: Big Stone County • 1 p.m. • Camp for Christ, 37897 State Hwy 7, Ortonville • FFI: Big Stone County President Peter Schwager at (320) 304-0679

Sept. 15: Lac Qui Parle County • 5 p.m. • Dawson Senior Center, 735 6th St, Dawson • FFI: Lac Qui Parle County Secretary Deb Breeberg at (320) 769-2088

Sept. 16: Aitkin County • 7 p.m. • Palisade Fire Hall, 48052 Nature Ave., Palisade • FFI: Aitkin County President Markell Vogt at (218) 927-2215

Sept. 17: Polk County • 9 a.m. • Farmers Union Park at Lake Sarah, Erskine • FFI: Polk County President Judy Moen at (218) 289-2868

Sept. 18: Morrison County • 12:30 p.m. • Royal Café, 120 W Broadway, Little Falls • FFI: Morrison County President Lee Johnston at (320) 630-6111

Sept. 18: Todd County • 7 p.m. • Thunder Lodge Sports Bar and Supper Club, 22056 U.S. Hwy 71, Long Prairie • FFI: Todd County President Alan Perish at (320) 760-2516

Sept. 25: Pine County • 1 p.m. • American Legion, 525 Main St. N, Pine City • FFI: Pine County President Kay Hills at (715) 635-9521

Notice is hereby given that filings are open for the office of Minnesota Farmers Union President and Vice President.

 Anyone wishing to file for these offices must get a petition from the State Secretary via the State Office.

 Please contact Anne Schwagerl, State Secretary c/o MFU, 305 Roselawn Ave. E, Suite 200, Saint Paul, MN 55117

 Nominations procedure according to MFU Bylaws, Article VII, Section 4 state: “The President and Vice President of Minnesota Farmers Union shall be elected and installed at the biennial meeting of Minnesota Farmers Union in odd numbered years on such date as may be set by the state Executive Committee.

 a) Nominations for President and Vice President shall be made by petition and such nominations shall be in the hands of the State Secretary on or before October 1 of each odd numbered year.

 The nominating petition shall require the signature of at least one member in good standing from each of five local or at-large counties. To be valid, the nominating petition must bear the signature of the nominee, indicating that it is being filed with the nominee’s knowledge and consent.

 The State Secretary shall, on a date not more than 90 days nor less than 20 days prior to the final date for filing, publish in the official publication of Minnesota Farmers Union a notice that filings are open for the particular offices and that nomination petition forms shall be available to any member in good standing upon request to the State Secretary.

 The State Secretary shall, on a date not less than 10 days prior to the first day of the convention, publish in the official publication of Minnesota Farmers Union a list of the persons nominated by petition for the particular offices. If there are no nominations by petition, or if any of the nominees who are nominated by petition shall be unable to serve or become ineligible, convention delegates shall have the privilege of nominating from the floor the day prior to balloting.

 Petition forms must be in the hands of the State Secretary by October 1, and a list of candidates will be included in the October Minnesota Agriculture, paper deadline permitting.
Upcoming Agency Events: August

Visit MFU Staff, Farmers Union Insurance Agents and Staff, and company representatives at Farmfest August 6-8 at the Gilfillan Estate, Morgan, MN - look for us in the blue and white hoop barn and stop by for a FREE slice of Big River Pizza!

Don’t forget to stop by the Farmers Union Coffee Stop during the MN State Fair August 22 - September 2 (Labor Day)! Located at the corner of Dan Patch and Cooper, featuring new, local foods and great coffee. Minnesota Cooks Day is Sunday, August 25th.

We’ll See You There!
(800) 229-1064 toll-free or (651) 639-1064
www.mnufia.com