Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at Minnesota Farmers Union!

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Minnesota Farmers Union  Standing for Agriculture, Working for Farmers
www.mfu.org
Bylaw changes

At the 78th Annual MFU Convention, the MFU Rules & Bylaws Committee heard proposals from members on bylaws change suggestions. The committee has met several times since then to discuss these changes. They propose the following for delegates’ consideration at the 79th Annual MFU Convention on Nov. 21, 2020. Please read them carefully. They will be published three times prior to the convention in Minnesota Agriculture.

The MFU Rules & Bylaws Committee consists of Chair Tim Velde of Yellow Medicine County, Markell Vogt of Aitkin County, Carol Anderson of Benton County, Roland Cleveland of Chisago County, Nancy Dahlin-Teich of Chisago County and MFU Legal Counsel David Velde. Thanks to each of them for their service.

Underlined text denotes the new language and strikethrough text denotes previous language.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1
To be admitted to regular membership, a person must be over the age of sixteen, a citizen of the United States (or have declared an intention to become a citizen). A regular member must be a farmer (a farmer is defined as one who operates a family farm, derives an appreciable income from family farming, is actively involved in providing labor and management and is at risk for the obligations of the farm operation or retired from farming), a farm employee, a manager or employee of a farmer’s cooperative enterprise, an employee of a Farmers Union cooperative enterprise or an instructor in agriculture education.

Article VI. STATE UNION AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 2
The President shall:
Receive such compensation, if any, as may be fixed by the Board of Directors.

Section 9
The first Vice President shall:
Receive such compensation, if any, as may be fixed by the Board of Directors.

Section 10
The Secretary shall:
Be selected by the majority of the Board of Directors, which shall fix compensation.

Section 12
Members of the Executive Committee shall be reimbursed for necessary travel and subsistence cost for their attendance upon regular or special meetings of the Committee as shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

Each member of the Executive Committee shall receive for his services while in charge of official duties, a per diem as shall be determined by the Board of Directors, plus the travel and subsistence costs above provided.

Article VII. STATE CONVENTION

Section 2
However, so that the number of convention delegates will be sufficient to constitute a state convention, no one delegate may carry more votes than the maximum number carried by the three duly elected delegates or sixty (60) thirty (30) votes.

Section 2, number 2.
If a county president is that county’s only registered convention delegate, that president may carry the maximum weighted vote of a county as noted in this section (60) (30).

Section 4, letter d
In the event of three or more candidates for the office of either President or Vice President, election shall be by preferential ballot as provided in Robert’s Rules of Order. If no candidate for either office receives a majority vote after the first ballot, the candidate with the least votes shall be eliminated, with this process continuing until the candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.

Article VII STATE CONVENTION

DUTIES OF CONVENTION COMMITTEES

Section 10
The Bylaws Committee shall meet before the annual meeting to consider necessary changes in the bylaws and receive and consider all amendments suggested by local unions and county unions that received a majority vote to recommend such changes, or members of Minnesota Farmers Union. The committee shall formulate recommendations and make reports to the annual meeting. The committee shall meet in accordance with time and publication requirements of Minnesota law as described in Article XIII AMENDMENTS.

Article XII. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 6
Any meeting conducted on behalf of the organization such as Board Meetings, Executive Committee meetings, committee meetings and the state convention may be conducted by electronic means provided participants may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting, and have a recognized means to communicate with each other.

Section 7
Any person seeking to hold any office or serve as a delegate must be a member of the Minnesota Farmers Union.
State Legislature passes bonding and tax bills

We have been pushing for a strong bonding bill since the beginning of the Minnesota legislative session, as well as a tax bill that would bring our state tax code into conformity with the federal on Section 179. In the fifth special session since COVID-19 hit, the House and Senate passed a $1.9 billion package with wide bipartisan support and signature from Gov. Walz. The bill funds several MFU priorities, including meat processing facilities, an MDA lab, rural roads and bridges and much more. The supplemental tax bill fixes the Section 179 conformity issue, which deals with equipment expensing. MFU and a variety of agriculture organizations have been advocating for this since the federal tax code was changed.

For more on these, see an update from Stu on page 6. We are pleased and relieved that these bills have passed and thank the Legislature and Gov. Walz for getting it done.

Uncertainty still surrounds COVID relief bills

Last month the U.S. House passed a revised version of the HEROES Act, the latest iteration of COVID-19 relief proposals. There was much about that act that Farmers Union supported. Shortly after this, President Trump tweeted that he was cutting off negotiations on a deal until after the election, though he later reversed his stance on this on Twitter and TV interviews. In a recent interview, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said she wasn’t confident all parties could reach a deal before the election.

While I understand the fiscal concerns, I want to reiterate that this pandemic has put millions of Americans out of work, unable to pay for the costs of housing, health care or food. The House Democrats’ proposal contains provisions to boost contact tracing across the country, which would help slow the spread of the virus and ultimately help our economy, while also providing another round of stimulus checks up to $1,200 and increase unemployment payments. Not to mention it contains some important agricultural and rural provisions, including the RAMP-UP Act to boost small- and mid-sized local meat processors. It also helps fund the Postal Service and provides protections for workers in meat plants who may face a higher risk of contracting COVID-19.

The partisanship that has governed so much of the United States’ response to COVID-19 is troubling in many ways, including this stimulus deal. Negotiations have been ongoing for months and yet roadblocks are still occurring. We all want the economy to recover, and to make that happen, people need to have their basic needs met, and the virus must be suppressed. I would hope that Speaker Pelosi, Secretary Mnuchin and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) can agree on the importance of the provisions included. We urge them to put the needs of the American people first and come to a deal quickly.
Feeling overwhelmed this time of year can happen very easily. Harvest in Minnesota is downright stressful, because every hour counts, and we need a lot of them. A seemingly ideal harvest season can turn into extremely long hours trying to beat mother nature. That's what has happened in our area for certain. A small amount of stress can be good for people as it makes us more alert and gives us a boost of adrenaline. Just enough stress can motivate us to accomplish the things we need to. This good stress is referred to as eustress. Experiencing eustress on the farm can provide us with the positive feelings needed to motivate us to make it through the busy seeding or harvest season.

On the other hand, there's the bad kind of stress. A build-up of tension without the opportunity to recover can lead to harmful stress. Bad stress happens when events make us feel uncomfortable and not in control, leading to poor concentration, poor decision-making and deteriorating relationships. Stress caused by being overwhelmed by too many demands causes a loss of confidence in a person's ability to cope.

I found this list of on-farm stressors: workload (too much to do in too little time), weather, financial pressures, uncertain incomes, large debt loads, livestock well-being, erratic markets, complicated paperwork, long waking hours, family conflict, uncertain crop yield and forage production, machinery breakdown, handling dangerous goods, lack of rest, technology challenges, and, finally, unreasonable personal pressure or goals.

As I read this list, and even though it’s not funny, I laughed and thought to myself, “Well that’s every day!” I enjoy being the good guy in the neighborhood – or at least I think I am! If I see a friend that could use a hand, I love to help. It’s funny – when you see the effects of stress on others, you try to help, but when it’s ourselves feeling stress, we tend to just put our head down and plow forward. The other day my friend jumped into my truck and immediately I knew that he was maxed out. But when I’m maxed out, I don’t recognize the signs. I’m sure many of you can say the same.

We talked about the pace of harvest and how it was progressing so fast and that the yields were good. I looked at my buddy, and said, “It’s a gorgeous day, you have a nice crop, you’re working with your family, you have two weeks of harvest left – you’re not going to do two weeks of work in one day.” I encouraged him to enjoy the morning and focus on how he wants to get the work done. He’ll get the same amount of work done, but in a calmer way, enjoying every moment. In farming, hours do count and many times it comes down to the final hour to finish planting, harvesting or countless other projects. It will always be that way.

As our family heads into the next season it won’t just be the weather that has changed, it’ll be our lives. As our family expands with a new baby, we’ll find ourselves facing new challenges. Getting back into diapers and late-night bottles will certainly be an adjustment, but we plan to focus on enjoying every moment.

I hope this finds all of you in good spirits, and if you need anything at all, please feel free to reach out anytime.

BRYAN KLABUNDE
VICE PRESIDENT
bryan@mfu.org

Please join us for our first ever Minnesota Cooks Virtual Happy Hour from 5-6 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 3.

What is a virtual happy hour?
It’s an opportunity to have some fun from the comfort of your home – to gather and connect with other locavores, savor cocktails and snacks (if you desire), and meet a few All Stars from Minnesota’s farm, food and beverage scene.

Join us for a relaxing and entertaining hour with:
• Simeon Rossi and Mark Schiller, owners of Loon Liquor Co. in Northfield, a farm-to-bottle distillery
• Aaron Wills from Little Hill Berry Farm in Northfield, dedicated organic berry farmer
• Jodi Ohlsen Read of Shepherd’s Way Farms in Nerstrand, farmer and artisan sheep’s milk cheesemaker

Let’s kick off the holiday season together – virtually!

In addition to stimulating conversation with all, Simeon will walk us through the art of making a cocktail and Jodi will share her cheese pairing tips and ideas. This event is free to both MFU members and non-members. Registration required. Register here: http://bit.ly/MNCooksHH. Stay tuned for details about pre-ordering Loon Liquor Co. cocktail kits and sourcing Shepherd’s Way cheese.
Minnesota farmers may be eligible for natural disaster assistance

Minnesota agricultural producers who lost property due to recent natural disasters may be eligible for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) physical loss loans. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers these low-interest loans to agricultural producers who incurred losses due to recent natural disasters. Approval is limited to applicants who suffered severe physical losses only, including the loss of buildings and livestock. Applications are due by June 8, 2021.

Physical loss loans are available to eligible agricultural producers in Chippewa County who suffered losses due to high winds and hail that occurred on Aug. 24, 2020. Producers in the contiguous Minnesota counties of Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Renville, Swift and Yellow Medicine are also eligible to apply for emergency loans.

Physical loss loans can help producers repair or replace damaged or destroyed physical property essential to the success of the agricultural operation, including livestock losses. Examples of property commonly affected include essential farm buildings, fixtures to real estate, equipment, livestock, perennial crops, fruit and nut bearing trees and harvested or stored crops and hay.

These loans help producers who suffer qualifying farm related losses directly caused by the disaster in a county with an Administrators Physical Loss Notice. All FSA direct loan applications require the same basic forms. Emergency loan requests have two additional forms, the certification of disaster losses and lender verification that commercial banking assistance was denied.

Farmers can apply for these loans through their local FSA offices. For more information on FSA disaster assistance programs or to find your local USDA Service Center, visit farmers.gov/recover.

Dairy Margin Coverage enrollment open through Dec. 11

USDA is now accepting applications for the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program for 2021 enrollment.

Signup runs through Dec. 11, 2020. DMC is a voluntary risk management program that offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed price (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. DMC payments triggered for seven months in 2019 and three months so far in 2020. More than 23,000 operations enrolled in DMC in 2019, and more than 13,000 in 2020.

Updated dairy decision tool

To determine the appropriate level of coverage for a specific dairy operation, producers can utilize the recently updated online dairy decision tool. The decision tool is designed to assist producers with calculating total premium costs and administrative fees associated with participation in DMC. An informational video is available, too. These can be found at dairymarkets.org/dmc.

Improvements to the decision tool, made in cooperation with representatives from the University of Minnesota and University of Wisconsin, include historical analysis that illustrates what DMC indemnity payments might have been had the program been available over the previous two decades. The analysis indicates that over the course of time, DMC payments made to producers exceed premiums paid. These decision tool enhancements provide a more comprehensive decision support experience for producers considering DMC.

Additional support for dairy producers

In addition to DMC, USDA offers a variety of programs that have helped dairy producers, including insurance, disaster assistance and conservation programs. Most recently, the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 1 provided $1.75 billion in direct relief to dairy producers who faced price declines and additional marketing costs due to COVID-19 in early 2020. Now, signup is ongoing for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2, which provides another round of assistance for dairy producers and many others.

More information

For more information, visit the DMC webpage on fsa.usda.gov, or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local USDA Service Center, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in office, by phone and using online tools. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.
Long-awaited bonding and tax deals pass Legislature

After a record five special sessions this summer and fall, the Minnesota Legislature approved a long-awaited $1.9 billion borrowing package and supplemental tax bill. The package is aimed at kickstarting the economy by investing in job-creating infrastructure projects across the state and providing tax relief to some farmers and business owners.

Despite months of negotiations and many hours of debate during the Oct. 12 special session, the package was passed with large bipartisan majorities in both chambers and is set to receive the Governor’s signature. The package is the result of sustained work on the part of bonding Chairs, Rep. Mary Murphy (DFL-Hermantown) and Sen. Dave Senjem (R-Rochester), and legislative leaders in both bodies. Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman (DFL-Brooklyn Park) has been steadfast in her commitment to completing a bonding bill this session, despite the pandemic, civil unrest and increased partisanship leading up to the general election.

“You don’t have to be a legislator from Greater Minnesota to be a great legislator for Greater Minnesota,” Speaker Hortman shared with MFU members who joined for this year’s Lobby Day in February. Her tenacity for getting a deal done this year reflects that commitment.

In addition to investing in rural roads and bridges, stormwater mitigation and other construction projects, this year’s bonding bill authorizes investments that will be important for many MFU members. These projects include:

- $3.25 million for the meat processing facility at the Northeast Regional Corrections Center (NERCC), which a number of MFU members rely on to process their livestock and will provide training opportunities that could help address workforce for small processors;
- $20 million to make needed upgrades to MDA’s laboratory, which will strengthen Minnesota’s emergency-preparedness and response capabilities as they related to the food and ag sector, making our states producers more resilient to plant pathogens and other threats;
- $2 million for the Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA) to purchase their farm in Dakota County.
- $250K for a poultry processing facility at the Northeast Regional Corrections Center (NERCC) that will anchor a regenerative agriculture industrial park aimed at creating new, value-added economic opportunities for local farmers in southeastern, MN.

The bill also requires the Rural Finance Authority (RFA) to submit quarterly reports to the legislature regarding when funding is projected to be exhausted. As a reminder, early in March and with strong support from MFU, the legislature approved $50 million in user-financed bonds for the RFA, a provision that has historically moved with the larger bonding bill. The former two bonding projects reflect priorities approved as special orders during MFU’s State Convention in 2019.

Tax changes will also be meaningful to many farmers as the final package included full conformity with Section 179 for equipment expensing, a long-held priority for MFU and other agriculture organizations. The bill also includes a fix that will ensure that farmers and others who were hit with retroactive tax bills related to trading in equipment in tax years 2018 and 2019 are held harmless. At the start of regular session, House Tax Chair Paul Marquart (DFL-Dilworth) named this the number-one priority for his committee. Led by Senate Tax Chair Roger Chamberlain (R-Lino Lakes) and others, the Senate majority also pushed for this update.

Going forward, conformity with Section 179 will simplify the tax code by aligning state and federal rules for expensing equipment, allowing farmers and others to expense the full value of equipment in the first year instead of stretching it out over five as was previously required.

Changes made to loan guarantee fee grant program

The Legislature approved needed changes to the Loan Guarantee Fee Grant Program at MDA in order to ensure that more farmers who need assistance are able to receive funds. With the leadership of House and Senate authors Todd Lippert (DFL-Northfield) and Mike Goggin (R-Red Wing), and the support of Ag Committee Chairs Jeanne Poppe (DFL-Austin) and Torrey Westrom (R-Elbow Lake), the changes to the program will allow farmers to receive 50% of the loan guarantee fee needed to close an eligible Farm Service Agency (FSA) restructure loan, regardless of whether or not they’ve been formally served a mediation notice by their lender. The Legislature also gave MDA additional authority to broaden grant criteria starting in mid-November to ensure that the full $175,000 allocated to the program can be spent to help farmers ahead of the program end date on Dec. 30.

To learn more or apply for funds, contact Matthew McDevitt at the RFA at (651) 201-6311 or Matthew.McDevitt@state.mn.us.

(continued on page 7)
County conventions bring forward policy resolutions

Meanwhile, MFU members spent the last few months in the annual policy development process, which will help set our agenda for the 2021 legislative session. At county conventions across the state, held virtually via videoconference or socially distant in-person, MFU members passed resolutions that will be considered by delegates at the 79th Annual MFU Convention on Nov. 21. While much of the process looks different this year due to pandemic, MFU members still had good discussions that resulted in more than 100 resolutions.

On Oct. 30-31, the MFU Policy Committee met to develop recommendations for how to incorporate these resolutions into MFU’s policy. Members of this year’s Policy Committee are:

- Jim Kanten, Chippewa
- Theresa Keaveny, Brown
- Eunie Biel, Fillmore
- Hannah Bernhardt, Pine
- Brian Romsdahl, Watonwan
- Theresa Bentz, Dakota

Here are a few examples of resolutions considered:

* Echoing a long-held MFU priority, Yellow Medicine County submitted a resolution in support of a “public option buy-in plan for a public health care coverage … like MinnesotaCare … and using the state’s purchasing power to lower [the cost of] prescription drugs.” Similarly, Morrison County called for support for “state and national single-payer bills” and Lac Qui Parle called for a plan with “lower costs, deductibles [and protections for people with] pre-existing conditions.”

* There were also several resolutions related to local meat processing, which has been a top priority for MFU in past legislative sessions. Chippewa County, for instance, submitted a resolution calling on the state to “use its bonding authority to start facilities.” And Benton County called for “funding for the development of meat cutting courses and equipment at our regional colleges.”

* On the topic of conservation, Rice County proposed a “three-year set aside program for working acreage for conservation, water quality and carbon sequestration.” And Cottonwood supported “exploring the expansion of regenerative farming practices, such as agroforestry, that can help improve soil health.”

* Several counties sent resolutions related to the pandemic and associated relief programs. For example, Aitkin County put forward that “all Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funding be required to be under the approval of Congress.” And Fillmore County suggested that MDA should pay a greater portion of Farm Business Management (FBM) scholarships.

* Finally, the newly formed Hennepin-Ramsey chapter of MFU submitted several resolutions, including calling on MDA to “adopt and employ an equity framework for all existing and proposed grants.” Mille Lacs echoed this focus on equity, calling on MFU to “continue to take an actively anti-racist stance.”

* Of course, this is only a snapshot of the many resolutions passed at county conventions this year—and on a host of topics, from solar incentives to crop insurance.

If you have questions or thoughts about MFU policy, do not hesitate to reach out to me at stu@mfu.org or (320) 232-3047.
CONVENTION DETAILS

79th Annual Minnesota Farmers Union Convention

Delegates and County Presidents: Plan to attend the 79th Annual MFU Convention on Saturday, Nov. 21, at the River’s Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud.

Our annual state convention offers an opportunity for members to set our policy and network with other members and participate in lively discussions.

Minnesota Grown Meals:
MFU works with members and local farmers to showcase local foods in all of our convention meals. No cost for meals this year.

Out of respect for the safety and health of our members during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have made a number of changes to our convention programming this year. The River’s Edge space allows enough space for 6-foot physical distancing with the amount of people we expect to attend. Face coverings over your nose and mouth will be required indoors at all times. Lunch will be served in individually-packaged containers rather than a buffet and provided at no cost.

We are limiting attendance to delegates, county presidents, convention committee members and MFU staff.

Lastly, we have abbreviated the convention agenda to consist of essential business only – discussion of rules and bylaws change proposals, state policy discussion, debate and approval of special orders and NFU Convention delegate elections. There will be no banquet or guest speakers. While it’s unfortunate, we hope our time will be fruitful and folks will enjoy seeing each other briefly in person. That being said, if you RSVP as attending convention and become ill within two weeks of it, please do not attend! Contact our office and let us know, even if it’s the day before.

Of note, delegate registration will also be different from usual. One registration period will be open from 7-9 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 20 at the convention center. The other will be on the morning of the convention, Nov. 21, from 8-10:30 a.m. No delegate registrations will be accepted after 10:30 a.m. Please make plans to arrive for one of these times. Additionally, if you are an alternate being upgraded to a delegate, you must be upgraded by your county president by 10:30 on Saturday as well. Alternates may not attend unless they are asked to upgrade.

To register: Call (651) 288-4060, email molly@mfu.org or on Eventbrite at mfu79.eventbrite.com.

Accommodations at Courtyard by Marriott St. Cloud

To reserve a hotel room, go online to bit.ly/MFU79Hotel. Mention that you’re calling for MFU. You can contact Courtyard by Marriott St. Cloud directly at (320) 654-1661.

A credit card is required to book your reservation. There is also a parking fee of $4.51 per night, which will be charged to your room.

The Courtyard by Marriott St. Cloud is located at 404 West St. Germain Street, St. Cloud, MN 56301.
**CONVENTION AGENDA**

**Friday, Nov. 20**

7-9 p.m. Registration & distribution of materials

**Saturday, Nov. 21**

8-10:30 a.m. Registration & distribution of materials (closes at 10:30 a.m.)

10 a.m. Convention convenes
- Welcome – Gary Wertish, MFU President
- Credentials committee report – Lisa Severson, Credentials Committee Chair
- Present and adopt convention rules – Tim Velde, Rules & Bylaws Committee Chair
- Present and adopt minutes of 2019 convention – Anne Schwagerl, MFU State Secretary
- Greeting – Carol Anderson, MFU Executive Committee Chair
- Present and vote on proposed bylaws amendments – Tim Velde
- Policy discussion

11:45 a.m. Credentials report (final count of registered delegates) – Lisa Severson

11:50 a.m. NFU Convention delegate election caucusing (time certain)

12 p.m. Lunch

12:30 p.m. Policy discussion

2 p.m. Introduction of NFU convention delegate nominees

2:30 p.m. Election of delegates to NFU convention (time certain)
- Policy discussion
- Special orders
- Old business
- New business
- Announcements
- Election results (if/when available)
- Adjournment

*Most agenda times are subject to change.*

For further information, contact us at (651) 639-1223

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**Farmers Union Agency Donation to One Warm Coat Following Fall Coat Drive**

During the month of September, Farmers Union Agency held a Fall Coat Drive within the State Office and across several MN Agent office locations, collecting monetary donations and clean, gently worn coats.

Thanks to a contribution from our Premier Company Partner Secura Insurance; Agent, Staff and public donations; and matched donations on October 1st (One Warm Coat Day), the Agency was able to donate a total of over $6,200 to One Warm Coat to provide coats and winter gear for folks in need, especially important this year due to the economic impact of COVID-19. Additionally, 130 coats were donated to local non-profits within our local communities!

*Thanks to everyone for your support!*
Notice is hereby given that the 79th annual convention of the Minnesota Farmers Union will begin on Saturday, Nov. 21, 2020, at the River’s Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud, Minn. until all business has been concluded. Business to be conducted will include election of delegates to the National Farmers Union 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. County and local units must submit credentials forms to the MFU State Office by Nov. 15.

Forms will no longer be accepted at the time of registration and must be processed ahead of time. 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
President
Anne Schwagerl
Secretary

Every year Minnesota Farmers Union and National Farmers Union offer numerous scholarship opportunities to its members and members children, this year is no different. All together, there was over $14,000 worth of scholarship money available. Of that, five students are awarded $1,000 each as part of the Minnesota Farmers Union Scholarship. Below are the 2020 winners and brief excerpts from their application essays.

Kirsten VanDerPol of Kerkhoven, daughter of Joshua and Cindy VanDerPol currently attending the University of Wisconsin River Falls and majoring in Agricultural Business.

Elizabeth Petersen of New York Mills, daughter of Mark Petersen and Bridie Monroe currently attending North Dakota State University and majoring in Political Science.

“Attending Minnesota Farmers Union Camps has opened my eyes to see how important agriculture is. Camp has taught me that supporting family farms and small businesses in more beneficial to small communities. Without small businesses and family farms, the country would be run by huge corporations that care about nothing but making money.”

Noah Koller of Le Sueur, son of Chris and Andrea Koller.

“Agriculture and rural America is essential to the health and well-being of our country as this is where we get our plant and animal food. Farming is essential for everyday living and we need to take the time to make sure we are producing the best quality products.”

Samantha Lieser of Belgrade, daughter of Megan and Jason Lieser, attending the University of Minnesota Morris for Management/Economics.

“I understand that it is my turn to give back to the agricultural community. It is my hope that as I further my education and figure out what I want to do with my life, that I can use my skills to help farmers in the business and finance aspect of their operations.”

Amy Kyllo of Byron, daughter of Paul and Susan Kyllo, currently attending Rochester Community and Technical College for a degree in Communication and Public Relations.

“I am immensely grateful for the farm that I grew up on. I have experienced many simple lessons through everyday life. Wherever I go, I know that the person our farm has shaped me to be will affect the lives of those around me.”

These young adults have distinguished themselves through their passion and commitment to Agriculture, MFU, their communities and their future careers. Congratulations to all the winners of the 2020 Minnesota Farmers Union scholarships!

GLEN SCHMIDT
EDUCATION DIRECTOR
glen@mfu.org

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SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

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GLENN SCHMIDT
EDUCATION DIRECTOR
glen@mfu.org
MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

A general update from the membership department – what I’ve been working on the last couple of months. First and foremost, I have redesigned our membership card packet to include not just the membership card, but also a directory for all state staff, contact information for your county officers, a full list of discount codes for discounts available through National Farmers Union and a sheet on ways to get involved in MFU, whether you are a new or a renewing member. I tried to imagine what it was like for me when I first got involved with MFU and what I would have wanted to know as a new member to design this new packet. If you have ideas for additional items to include, please send me ideas at diana@mfu.org as I hope to continue to improve this packet over time.

The second item on my list I have been working on is a second wave of renewal letters. Life gets busy and mail piles up, particularly during planting and harvest seasons – so we recently sent out a second wave of renewals for anyone who expired between January and August of this year and hasn’t yet renewed their membership. If you know of someone whose membership has expired recently, encourage them to renew today!

Finally, if you are a county officer, look for a virtual leadership training sometime in the next couple of months (tentatively early January). We are working to refine the content for a Zoom setting and will communicate details as soon as they are available. All county officers will be invited, regardless of if they are brand new or have held office for 20 years. If there is any subject you would like to see addressed in this training, send me an email so I can incorporate it into our agenda. I plan to record the session, so if you are unable to attend, we will publish the recording after the event. I would encourage day-of attendance however, as you will have an opportunity to learn from each other and ask questions.

DIANA RICO, MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR
diana@mfu.org

Get social with Minnesota Farmers Union!
Do you like to use Facebook, Twitter or Instagram to keep up with news you care about? You’ll find us there, too. Follow Minnesota Farmers Union on social media to find out about events, policy happenings, photos and more.

Facebook: Minnesota Farmers Union
Instagram: mnfarmersunion
Twitter: @mnfarmersunion

Tag us in posts we should see and we’ll like and share them.

Membership Education Committee Update

by Rachel Sannerud, Committee Chair

The Minnesota Farmers Union Member Education Committee has been hard at work since reconvening at the 78th Annual MFU Convention last November. The committee has been having bi-monthly meetings via Zoom of both its Executive Committee and the full committee. Thus far we have adopted a mission statement and have created a committee makeup.

Our Mission Statement was brought forth by bringing together each committee members’ ideas on the importance of the committee and how the committee should be working for the full MFU membership. We took each members’ ideas, discussed, drafted and adopted a mission statement which reflects the ideals, goals and commitments of the Member Education Committee. It is as follows:

The Member Education Committee’s purpose is to build upon the strength and potential of MFU membership through:

• Forward thinking: creating new opportunities for current and future generations of Minnesota Farmers Union members
• Education: engaging members through education and leadership building opportunities
• Inclusivity: making space for ALL family farmers, rural community members and agricultural supporters to be a part of Minnesota Farmers Union, regardless of race, gender or any other demographic background

We have also adopted a formal committee structure, which will make clear the commitments and participation of committee members. This committee structure includes a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, all elected on two-year terms, MFU staff, a Farmers Union Agency representative and three members from each membership district, as well as two at-large members from the Youth Advisory Council and the New Leader Academy. Having three members from each membership district serving on the committee, as well as the at-large members, will allow for robust participation from throughout the state and invite the next generation of membership to participate. The Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary are included in these district member counts as to keep each district equally represented on the committee.

Looking ahead, the Member Education Committee is working with MFU staff to align our work with their work and goals. We welcome MFU members who would like to join our meetings. Our next meeting will be held November 10 via Zoom. Please contact MFU Education Director Glen Schmidt at glen@mfu.org for more information.
A monthly update from National Farmers Union

After hundreds of farmers and ranchers participated in National Farmers Union’s Virtual Legislative Fly-In, the organization’s staff has built on that momentum to continue advocating for a stronger, more equitable food system. In recent weeks, they have been especially focused on ongoing pandemic relief for farmers, hungry Americans and struggling businesses. There has been some progress on the first two issues – USDA released another round of Coronavirus Food Assistance Program funding and Congress passed a stopgap funding bill that would expand support for nutrition assistance programs. However, another stimulus bill has not yet been approved, leaving many communities without crucial support.

House passes stimulus package, but lacks support from Senate

Four and half months after the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act stalled in the Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives passed an amended version of the pandemic relief bill. The updated legislation is $1.2 trillion less expensive than its predecessor, largely due to scaled back spending on state and local governments, hospitals, rental and homeowner assistance, and the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), as well as the elimination of hazard pay for front line workers. It does maintain some key provisions, however, including direct payments of up to $1,200, the extension of $600-per-week boost to unemployment benefits, the continuation of employer-sponsored health care coverage, funding for coronavirus testing and tracing and stronger protections for workers at risk of occupational exposure to COVID-19. It also incorporates many provisions MFU members requested during the Fly-In, including support for local and regional meat processing, farm stress programs and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

NFU President Rob Larew voiced support for the legislation and urged the Senate and the White House to quickly move forward with its final passage. However, it seems unlikely that will happen anytime soon; Senate Republicans balked at the bill’s price tag and are expected to introduce a pared-down, $500 billion package with “targeted relief for American workers, including new funding for the Paycheck Protection Program.”

It’s unclear where exactly President Donald Trump lies on the issue. Initially, he tweeted that he would not consider a stimulus package until after the election, but he appears to have changed his mind since then. He offered a $1.8 trillion compromise to House Democrats, later tweeting “Go big or go home!”

Because many Americans are still enduring the difficulties caused by the pandemic, the stalemate has been met with dismay. Currently, 12 million are unemployed and many more are underemployed. With many major sectors that support millions of jobs – including the airline, entertainment and restaurant industries – facing widespread closures and layoffs, substantial economic recovery in the short term seems unlikely. The effects of this have been extensive; perhaps the most concerning consequence is that nearly a quarter of households have experienced food insecurity this year. Given the immense need for relief, NFU has urged the White House and Congress to work together to find a solution.

“This is not a partisan issue – it’s not about blue states or red states, or the upcoming election,” said Larew. “Americans need help, and they need it now.”

Second round of pandemic aid available

During a campaign rally in Wisconsin, President Donald Trump announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) would provide a second tranche of pandemic aid through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP).

The following day, USDA indicated that an additional $14 billion would be available to affected farmers and ranchers and that some new commodities will be covered, including wine grapes, goats, bison, mohair, tobacco, hemp, mink and some varieties of wheat. Additionally, the agency has changed how payment rates will be calculated, which will allow more producers to qualify for assistance.

Larew conveyed appreciation for the financial support and urged the USDA to address disparities in the initial distribution of assistance.

“The first round of funding, though greatly appreciated, was not without its flaws; not only did it favor large farms over smaller ones, it also sent millions of dollars to foreign-owned operations and excluded some farmers entirely,” said Larew. “With Congressional oversight, we ask that USDA rectify these issues and ensure that payments are commensurate with demonstrated need.”

Citing economy-wide impacts and high unemployment rates, he also called on Congress to “provide the support that all Americans need to withstand the crisis.”
Sweet & Spicy Pulled Pork
From Cindy VanDerPol, Pastures A Plenty Farm

2 bone-in Pastures A Plenty pork shoulder/Boston Butt roast (about 3 lbs. each)
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 cup packed dark brown sugar
1 cup your favorite BBQ sauce
1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
1/2 cup your favorite whiskey
1/2 lb. Pastures A Plenty Ground Bacon Ends cooked

Preheat oven to 325. In a small bowl, mix together garlic powder, onion powder, sea salt, smoked paprika, black pepper, cumin and cayenne pepper. Sprinkle seasoning mixture over the roasts and massage into the roasts. Place roasts into a roasting pan. In a medium bowl, mix the brown sugar, BBQ sauce, apple cider vinegar and bacon ends. Pour over roasts.

Cook for about 4 to 6 hours at 325. You can also cook this in a crockpot on high for 8 to 12 hours.

Shred pork and mix back into the sauce left in the pan. Serve immediately on a bun. Or freeze in quart size bags for later. We always have this in our freezer for quick meals during the year.
The Farmer’s Share

Did you know that farmers and ranchers receive only 14.6% cents of every food dollar that consumers spend? According to the USDA, off farm costs including marketing, processing, wholesaling, distribution and retailing account for more than 80 cents of every food dollar spent in the United States.

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<thead>
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<th>Item</th>
<th>Weight/Size</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Soda</td>
<td>2 liters</td>
<td>$1.19</td>
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Farmer’s share derived from USDA, NASS “Agricultural Prices,” 2020. Prices based on August 2020 data. Retail prices based on Safeway (SD) brand except where noted. *Figure according to U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service.

October 6, 2020
Top 10 benefits of staying hydrated

1. Drinking water allows you to continue living! While you could likely live for a couple of weeks if you were suddenly deprived of food, you would die within days if you stopped drinking water.

2. Water helps dissolve the nutrients in food, making them accessible to your body.

3. Water carries nutrients and other material to every cell in your body, making it possible for every organ in your body to do its job. Especially important if you’re out spending long days in the field!

4. Water helps regulate body temperature, keeping you cool when needed so you don’t overheat.

5. Water allows your body to send important messages among your cells, allowing your brain to think, your eyes to see, your muscles to move, etc.

6. Water helps your kidneys stay healthy. Kidney stones are intensely painful. Help avoid them by drinking enough water.

7. Drinking enough water helps keep you calm and allows you to think more clearly. Research has proven that even mild dehydration raises stress hormones.

Top 7 tips for staying hydrated

1. We need to drink roughly half of our body weight in ounces daily – more if you are sweating a lot. For instance, if you weigh 130 lbs, consume 67.5 ounces of water daily, and more if you are sweating. It is worth noting that while the entire medical community recommends staying adequately hydrated, many now recommend NOT exceeding 100 ounces in a day, unless you are sweating profusely.

2. Sodas, coffee and black tea do not count as drinking water. In fact, they can counteract your hydrating efforts, as they are mildly dehydrating due to their caffeine content.

3. Eat more fruits and vegetables. Their high water content will add to your hydration. Approximately 20% of our fluid intake comes from food.

4. Keep a bottle of water with you at all time. Take two 32-ounce water bottles, fill them up each morning, and commit to finishing both by the day’s end. Hopefully your tractor or truck has a cup holder for them!

5. A study out of the University of Chicago found that drinking an 8-ounce glass of water before bed shut down 100% of evening hunger pangs. So, if you feel hungry before bed, try drinking water and notice the difference.

6. Plenty of water is great for many reasons but not the best when drunk during a meal. If you chug down a lot of water with a meal, you dilute your digestive enzymes and impair digestion. During a meal, sip only 4 to 8 ounces max — just enough to wet your whistle and help the meal go down.

7. Staying hydrated doesn’t mean you have to drink plain water all day. Jazz it up with lemon, lime, orange, or cucumber slices. I also love adding Tazo “Wild Sweet Orange” tea bags into my water for a delicious orange drink that tastes like a treat.

How do you know if you’re dehydrated?
If you feel thirsty, have a dry mouth, experience muscle spasms or headaches, produce small amounts of urine or very dark urine or feel dizzy or faint, you need to drink some water as soon as possible.

CLAUDINE ARNDT
MINNESOTA COOKS
claudine@mfu.org
Farmers Union Agency Donation to Second Harvest Heartland

Since the COVID-19 outbreak began, demand for emergency food assistance has hit historic highs: an additional 275,000 Minnesotans - including 112,000 kids - are now facing hunger.

In partnership with carrier SECURA Insurance, Farmers Union Agency is pleased to have been able to donate $7,500 to Second Harvest Heartland in October. And, since all donations are currently being TRIPLED by a matching donor, it turned our donation into $22,500 and 67,500 meals to help those in need!

Our donation will help to provide transportation costs for food deliveries, personal protective equipment for food shelf workers, emergency food boxes, emergency grocery pop-ups and extra meals and supplies for Twin Cities communities. We couldn’t be more proud to help our fellow Minnesotans!

Our Agents are located in offices across MN to better serve our communities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADA</th>
<th>Rodney Mathsen</th>
<th>(218) 784-4813</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALEXANDRIA</td>
<td>Daylon Faber</td>
<td>(320) 763-9455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGYLE</td>
<td>Jay Swanson</td>
<td>(218) 437-8512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEMIDJI</td>
<td>Ben Caron</td>
<td>(218) 751-7761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANBY</td>
<td>Mike Panka</td>
<td>(507) 223-5527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROOKSTON</td>
<td>Chris Swanson</td>
<td>(218) 281-6724</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAWSON</td>
<td>Deborah Breberg</td>
<td>(320) 769-2088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DETROIT LAKES</td>
<td>Joe McCollum</td>
<td>(218) 844-5970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DULUTH</td>
<td>Brad Anderson</td>
<td>(218) 481-0812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELK RIVER</td>
<td>Rob Pampusch</td>
<td>(763) 441-4250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARMINGTON</td>
<td>Jerry Theisen</td>
<td>(651) 463-7667</td>
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<td>FERGUS FALLS</td>
<td>Grand Davenport</td>
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<td>FOSTON</td>
<td>Barb Sweep</td>
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<td>FRANKLIN</td>
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<td>HALLOCK</td>
<td>Jay Swanson</td>
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<td>IVANHOE</td>
<td>Mike Panka</td>
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<td>LAKE CRYSTAL</td>
<td>Matt Peterson</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUVERNE</td>
<td>Barb Anderson</td>
<td>(507) 283-8383</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUVERNE</td>
<td>Steve Cattanach</td>
<td>(507) 283-8383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAHNONEN</td>
<td>David McCollum</td>
<td>(218) 935-2175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAPLE GROVE</td>
<td>Brandon Hummel</td>
<td>(612) 710-3074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARSHALL</td>
<td>Dennis Klocow, Jr.</td>
<td>(507) 532-0418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENAHGA</td>
<td>Kristine Hendrickson</td>
<td>(218) 564-5300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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| MOORHEAD   | Matt Bahr     | (701) 929-0877 |
| MOORHEAD   | Dennis Fjeld  | (218) 236-1966 |
| MOORHEAD   | Aaron Schenck | (701) 371-7599 |
| MOORHEAD   | Robin Swanson | (218) 512-3003 |
| MOOSE LAKE | Mark Sagvold  | (218) 485-8144 |
| MORRIS     | Debbie Anderson| (320) 589-3245 |
| NEW YORK MILLS | Lisa Preuss | (218) 385-3344 |
| NORWOOD YA | Lisa Valiant  | (952) 467-2922 |
| OLIVIA     | Paul Johannes  | (320) 523-1150 |
| OWATONNA   | Ben Flemke    | (507) 413-6116 |
| ROCHESTER  | Chris Sanders | (507) 282-4411 |
| ROSEAU     | Steve Dostal  | (218) 463-2369 |
| ST. LOUIS PARK | Cary Sundlof | (651) 288-4069 |
| THIEF RIVER FALLS | Jay Swanson | (218) 681-6443 |
| WILLMAR    | Paul Johannes  | (320) 235-2540 |
| WINDOM     | Ted Winter    | (507) 831-3541 |

(800) 229-1064 toll-free or (651) 639-1064 in the Twin Cities Metro
Check out our newly-redesigned website! www.fuainsurance.com