

MinneAg Network

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MINNEAG NETWORK APPLAUDS ELEMENTS OF GOVERNOR WALZ'S PROPOSED 2023 AGRICULTURE BUDGET

Network of farm and food systems groups calls for increased funding for food system resilience in Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS—Ahead of the release of the revised Minnesota budget targets early next month, the [MinneAg Network](#) commends Governor Walz's administration on including in the Minnesota 2023 Agriculture Budget several elements key to building a more resilient, just farm and food system in Minnesota.

Positive elements of the 2023 proposed Minnesota Department of Agriculture budget include: the creation of a state climate coordinator position and meat processing liaison position; expansion of the Emerging Farmers Office with support for important new positions, and \$250,000 for community-based groups to provide culturally relevant support to emerging farmers; \$100,000 per year ongoing for the Good Acre LEAFF program to provide underserved farmers with new market channels and donating purchases from them to hunger relief programs; \$4 million for the Healthy Soil Program; \$800,000 for a new Farmers Market Food Hub grant; and the inclusion of early care providers as eligible applicants for Farm to School grants for the first time.

The 2023 budget includes support for vital food and farm programs and initiatives and is a great starting point to work from to increase the amount of funding needed to support our state's communities, farmers and climate. MinneAg is calling for the Governor and Legislative Leadership to increase the overall agriculture budget, which currently is the smallest piece of the pie in the overall state budget, despite Minnesota's agricultural production, processing and forestry industries accounting for nearly \$106 billion annually in total economic impacts and supporting 388,134 jobs.

In particular, the network calls for increased support for the following initiatives and investments:

- Increased planning, financial, and capacity investments in infrastructure, small and midsize processing and market development state-wide;
- Enable land access and farm viability for emerging farmers;
- Leverage Minnesota agriculture to create positive climate and ecosystem impacts;
- Link nutrition and food access needs to Minnesota agricultural production capabilities.

"MinneAg Network members are pleased that the Governor listened to our members and included many of our priorities in the 2023 agriculture budget and are excited to work with legislators to increase support for many key programs that contribute to building more resilient and equitable food systems across the state," says MinneAg member Laura Schreiber from the Land Stewardship Project. "We know there is more that our state can do in 2023 to invest in our food and farm systems."

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About MinneAg Network:

A network of community-rooted food systems leaders and organizations, MinneAg prioritize agricultural practices that nourish people and the planet. To learn more, visit: www.minneag.org.