

MN Food Systems Caucus Resolution

MAIN RESOLUTION

Let it be resolved that Minnesota's elected officials must commit to doing all they can to improve the economic viability of food production and distribution in the region and to increase access to and affordability of healthy food in all our communities.

SUPPORTING POINTS

Whereas:

1. Farmers are critical for a healthy food supply and economy, but face many challenges. Mean farm incomes are currently negative. [1] With an average age of 60, there are also huge obstacles facing new farmers including access to capital and land. [2]
2. When farmers struggle, food access challenges worsen for all Minnesotans. Over 340,000 Minnesotans already face income, distance and transportation barriers to healthy, affordable foods. [3]
3. In 2015, over a half a million people in Minnesota were food insecure, meaning they didn't know where they would get their next meal. [4]
4. A lack of access to affordable, healthy foods is a contributing factor to the fact that Minnesota has some of the worst health disparities in the country. [5]
5. Solutions exist, but the current share of MN's state operating budget for agriculture and environment is woefully inadequate at only 1%. [6]

ADDITIONAL RESOLUTIONS

- Our congressional delegation must oppose cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and work to address barriers facing new farmers in the upcoming Farm Bill. We must keep farming and nutrition policies linked together. (use points 1&3)
- Our governor and state legislature must prioritize investments in food and agriculture. Solutions for food access and new farmers are currently underfunded, including the Good Food Access Program, Farm to School and Early Care initiatives and technical assistance for Minnesota's farmers who want to increase local selling and purchasing. (points 2&5)
- Our local elected officials must consider the impacts to the local food system when making decisions regarding city and county operations, growth management, transportation, energy, water and air quality, and economic development. (point 4)

CITATIONS

[1] <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/farm-economy/farm-sector-income-finances/highlights-from-the-farm-income-forecast/>

[2] https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/Highlights/Farm_Demo_graphics/

[3] <http://www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Publications/Studies/Healthy%20Food%20Access/Healthy%20Food%20Access%20-%20Landscape%20in%20Minnesota%20and%20Lessons%20Learned%20From%20Healthy%20Food%20Financing%20Initiatives,%20Full%20Report.pdf>

[4] www.map.feedingamerica.org/county/2015/overall/Minnesota

[5] http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/healthequity/ahe_leg_report_020414.pdf

[6] https://mn.gov/mmb/assets/fba-nov17fcst-pie-charts_tcm1059-319765.pdf

CAUCUS BASICS

Precinct caucuses are meetings run by Minnesota's political parties. They are the first in a series of meetings where parties may endorse candidates, select delegates, and set goals and values (called party platforms).

WHEN & WHERE

The 2018 precinct caucuses will be held on Tuesday, February 6 at 7:00 p.m. at locations set by the parties. Look up your caucus location using the Caucus Finder. <http://caucusfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>

WHAT HAPPENS AT A CAUCUS

Each political party runs their caucus meetings a little differently. Check with your political party if you have specific questions.

Generally, there are four main activities at a caucus:

1. **Choose volunteers who will organize political activities in the precinct.** This could include maintaining contact lists, holding political meetings, and helping with campaign efforts.
2. **Vote for the person you want the party to support for Governor.** This is called the preference ballot. The results help gauge support for candidates.
3. **Discuss issues and ideas for the party to support.** You can present an issue or idea for the party to support, called a resolution. If you convince other attendees to support your resolution, it will be taken to the next political convention. Eventually, your resolution could become part of the official party platform.
4. **Choose delegates who will endorse candidates at future conventions.** At future conventions, party delegates will endorse state and federal candidates, including for Governor. Political parties have different ways of choosing delegates at the precinct level caucus—contact your party for more information.

TIMELINE

FEB 6

PRECINCT CAUCUS

- Governor straw poll
- Elect delegates for Senate District Convention - [maybe you!](#)
- Elect precinct leadership - [maybe you!](#)
- Choose district convention committee members
- **Consider and vote on party platform resolutions**

FEB-MAY

SENATE DISTRICT CONVENTION

- Endorse MN candidates
- Elect delegates for Congressional District & State Conventions - [maybe you!](#)
- **Consider and vote on party platform resolutions**
- Elect Senate District party leadership - [maybe you!](#)

APRIL-MAY

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT CONVENTION

- Endorse Congressional candidate
- Elect party's State commission & committee members - [maybe you!](#)

JUNE 1-3

STATE CONVENTION

- Endorse candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, State Auditor, and US Senate
- **Final consideration and vote on party platform and resolutions**
- Elect state party's Director
- Present, deliberate, and vote on amendments to the state party's constitution and bi-laws.

AUG 14

PRIMARY ELECTION

- The two people to receive the most votes at the primary election for all open seats will make it on to the general election ballot.

NOV 6

GENERAL ELECTION

- This is your opportunity to cast a ballot for your choice across all open seats

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