

Chair Torrey Westrom
Agriculture and Broadband Finance Conference Committee
95 University Avenue W.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Mike Sundin
Agriculture and Broadband Finance Conference Committee
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

To the Agriculture Finance and Policy Conference Committee:

We urge you to support the proposed funding for emerging farmers in this years' budget. Our organizations represent farmers across the state of Minnesota, and we see the challenges that all farmers, and especially emerging farmers, face every day in this field.

The **House 7.20** and **7.24** proposals will support emerging farmers who are essential participants in our agricultural economy. These two provisions will support the legislatively created working group, which is currently operating with no dedicated funding (7.20), and will establish an emerging farmer coordinator position who will provide staff support for these farmers who have not been adequately served in the past (7.24).

Emerging farmers -- which includes veterans, women, Indigenous, people of color, immigrants, young, and urban farmers -- face barriers in agriculture that were well documented in the [2020 Legislative report](#). These include access to land, capital, and training resources, as well as other issues like discrimination and access to culturally appropriate resources. The funds provided by these two proposals would allow for significant progress to be made in ensuring that Minnesota agriculture is accessible to all who call Minnesota home.

We believe that agriculture is more than just a job, it is a calling. Emerging farmers in our state are an important part of the future of Minnesota agriculture. We thank you for your support of these initiatives and look forward to working with you all in the future to support Minnesota's farmers.

Sincerely,

Renewing the Countryside
Karl Hakanson, Hennepin/Ramsey County
Chapter Member, Minnesota Farmers Union
Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota
Minnesota Farmers' Market Association
Mill City Farmers Market
Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society
Sprout MN
St Paul Farmers Market
Land Stewardship Project

Hmong American Farmers Association
The Good Acre
WillowSedge Farm, Palisade, MN
Minnesota Farmers Union
Somali American Farmers Association
The Food Group/ Big River Farms
Regenerative Agriculture Alliance
Dream of Wild Health
Roots Return Farm Heritage Farm
Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture