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To: Honorable Members of the Minnesota Legislature  
Re: Working Lands Drinking Water Protection Program (SF 1637 and HF 1569)

I am writing on behalf of General Mills to express our strong support for the bipartisan Working Lands Drinking Water Protection Program (SF 1637 and HF 1569).

#### **Growing Profitable Perennial & Winter Annuals**

New perennial and winter annual crops, being developed by the University of Minnesota's Forever Green Initiative, offer exciting new agricultural opportunities for Minnesota while improving water quality, habitat, soil health and protecting our climate.

General Mills has made significant investments in research on these new regenerative crops and looks forward to leveraging these crops in pursuit of a more sustainable and resilient supply chain.

However, at present, there are limited supplies of these emerging crops, which makes it difficult for us to integrate them into our product lines. The development of predictable supply is essential to commercialization and supply chain development, which in turn will enable us to shift our work with these crops into high gear.

#### **The Working Lands Approach**

A recent state report<sup>1</sup> found that such perennial and winter annuals can be more fully integrated into Minnesota crop rotations, with limited initial support from the state in three core areas:

- **Market development:** establishing trusted markets for perennial and winter annuals;
- **Technical assistance:** production expertise from crop researchers and experts;
- **Cost share:** modest financial support to reduce risk of new crops by ensuring profits for early adopters.

The goal of the Working Lands Drinking Water Protection Program (SF 1637 and HF 1569) is to spur orderly development of viable supply-chains, build market demand and foster a transition to more diverse and resilient crop portfolios through the production of perennial and winter annual crops.

General Mills supports this legislation, as it offers key public support for development and implementation of new regenerative crops while also expanding Minnesota's agricultural economy. We urge you to support this important legislation when it comes before your committee.

Sincerely,

Lee Anderson

<sup>1</sup> [Working Lands Watershed Restoration Feasibility Study and Program Plan](#), a study and report to the Legislature completed in February 2018.