

MN House Agriculture  
Finance and Policy  
Committee

February 2025



# AURI Vision and Mission

**Mission:** Accelerate the expansion of the agricultural economy by empowering expanded uses and markets of agriculturally derived products

**Vision:** We are relentless in our focus to generate impact for the MN agricultural economy. We collaborate globally, act regionally, and are known as an economic catalyst. This will enable us to deliver \$500 million in economic activity for MN by 2026.



# AURI Board of Directors – FY24

- 3 - Research and Promotion Council
- 2 - General Farm Orgs
- 2 - Agribusiness
- 2 - At Large
- 2 - Legislative

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Federico A. Tripodi, Chair**  
At-Large Board Member

**Ted Winter**  
Minnesota Farmers Union

**Carolyn Olson, Secretary/Treasurer**  
Minnesota Farm Bureau

**Sen. Aric Putnam**  
Minnesota Senate

**Rep. Samantha Vang**  
Minnesota House of Representatives

**Lauren McNamara**  
Agribusiness, SunOpta

**Joe Serbus**  
Minnesota Soybean Research  
& Promotion Council

**John Schafer, Vice Chair**  
Minnesota Beef Council

**Jon Veldhouse**  
Agribusiness, Qore

**Mikayla Tabert**  
Minnesota Wheat Research  
& Promotion Council

**Jeff Grev**  
At-Large Board Member, Hormel Foods

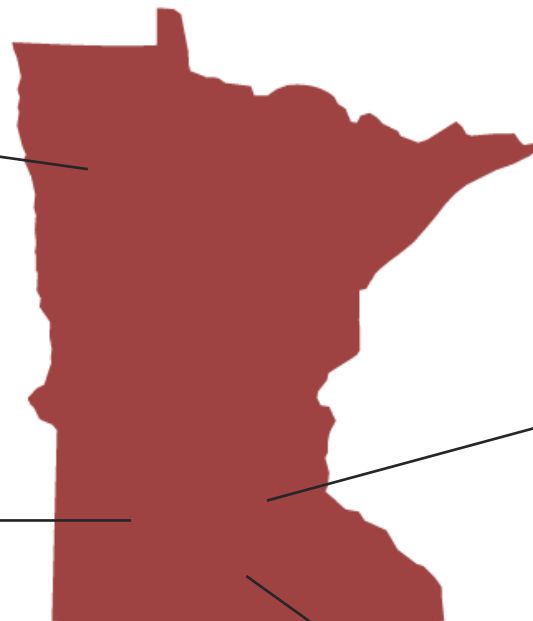


# Statewide Locations and Staffing



Photo Credit: UMN Crookston

**Crookston**  
Administrative Office



*34 full and 1 part time staff*  
*[Auri.org/about-auri/staff](http://Auri.org/about-auri/staff)*



**Metro**  
UMN St. Paul

**Marshall**  
Meat and Food lab  
Biobased and Renewable Energy  
Analytical lab  
Product Evaluation/Sensory

**Waseca – New Site**  
Pilot Lab  
Densification, Dewatering, Drying  
Food lab  
Anaerobic Digestion



# AURI Programs



COMMERCIALIZATION  
SERVICES



PUBLIC RESEARCH  
INITIATIVES



AURI CONNECTS

# FY24 Activity & Impacts



## New Projects and Initiatives Opened

53 Food  
27 Bioindustrial  
18 Multi-Area



## Projects and Initiatives Closed

57 Food  
33 Bioindustrial  
15 Multi-Area



## Total Projects and Initiatives Serviced

114 Food  
55 Bioindustrial  
41 Multi-Area



## Project Hours by Focus Area

11% Food  
25% Bioindustrial  
64% Multi-Area

## FY24 Events

10  
Number of events

1,009  
Number of participants

241  
New participants

730  
MN participants

36  
Number of states represented

4  
Number of countries represented

986  
Post-event Youtube views

## EVENTS BY FOCUS AREA

8  
Food

2  
Bioindustrial



# Food



## ▶ Business Development and Technical Assistance Services

- ▶ Shelf Life
- ▶ Nutrition Facts Labels
- ▶ Nutrition Facts Analysis
- ▶ Product Stability
- ▶ Regulatory Guidance
- ▶ Ingredient / Packaging Sourcing
- ▶ School Meal Crediting
- ▶ Product Development
- ▶ Process Development
- ▶ Scale-up Guidance
- ▶ Small scale oilseed Processing and milling
- ▶ Cost of Goods Analysis
- ▶ Value Proposition

## ▶ Small Meat Processors

- ▶ Finance
- ▶ Needs Assessment
- ▶ Resource Map
- ▶ Cold Storage
- ▶ Benchmarking Pilot

## ▶ Initiatives

- ▶ Co-manufacturing
- ▶ Food Safety Needs Assessment
- ▶ Food Business Toolbox
- ▶ AVA
- ▶ Market Summaries

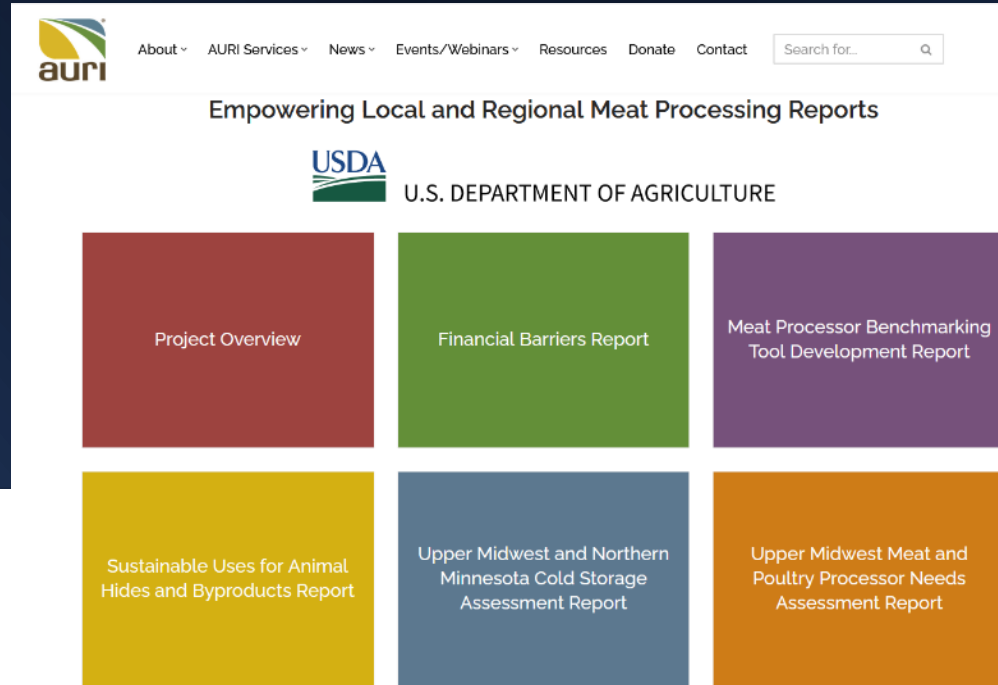
## ▶ Collaborations

- ▶ MDA
- ▶ MBOLD
- ▶ UMN
- ▶ Many others

# Food Project Examples



- CannonBelles
- Lightfield BBQ Sauce
- USDA/AMS Empowering Local and Regional Meat Processing in the Upper Midwest
- Ecosystem Support – AVA, Comanufacturing Feasibility, Food Safety Gaps, etc.



[auri.org/ava](http://auri.org/ava)





# Bioindustrials

## BIOINDUSTRIAL

27

NEW PROJECTS  
AND INITIATIVES  
OPENED

33

PROJECTS AND  
INITIATIVES  
CLOSED

55

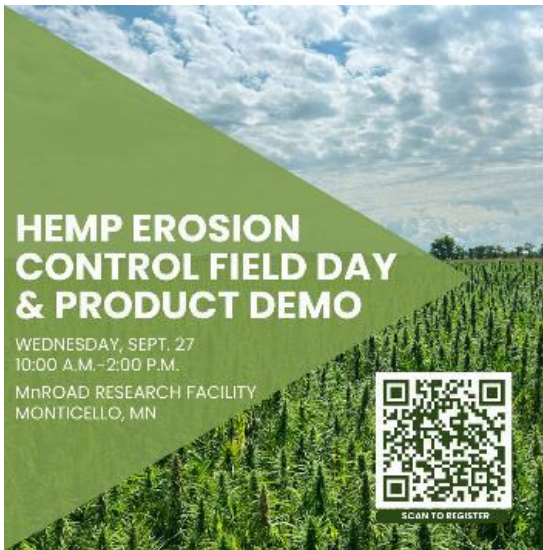
TOTAL PROJECTS  
AND INITIATIVES  
SERVICED



- ▶ Circular Approaches
  - ▶ Food, Feed, Fuel, Fertilizer
- ▶ Technical Assistance
  - ▶ Dewatering
  - ▶ Drying
  - ▶ Densification/Pelleting
  - ▶ Product Development
  - ▶ Process Development
  - ▶ Nutrient Analysis
  - ▶ Fermentation
- ▶ Hemp Decorticator
- ▶ Anaerobic Digestion
- ▶ Business Development







## Bioindustrial Project Examples

- StableFeed
- Anaerobic Digestion
- Soymeal Fertilizer
- Hemp Erosion Control Initiative





New Analytical  
Equipment –  
One Time Funding



# One Time Funds

## Waseca Bioindustrial Innovation Center

- Pilot Lab and Food Lab
- 14,500 sq ft
- Jan 1, 2024





# Testimonials

- StableFeed (Kasson)
  - “AURI’s services were critical to my success. AURI is the partner no entrepreneur in the ag sector should be without”
- Bremer Bank
  - “AURI plays a critical role in advancing MN’s agricultural sector by bringing together industry leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs to explore new opportunities and overcome challenges...”
- B&T Meats (Waubun)
  - “AURI is very knowledgeable about what it takes to get a business up and running...”
- Lightfield BBQ (Farmington)
  - “I have referred many people to AURI over the years. They are experts and they really know the kinds of challenges and questions that businesses face day to day. The team at AURI really goes the extra mile. They take a lot of pride in the businesses they work with. They are wonderful.”





# AURI Connects – Major Events – FY24

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New Uses Forum - Bioindustrials

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Fields of Innovation

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Webinar Wednesday

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Renewable Energy Roundtable

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# Looking Forward

## Priority Opportunities

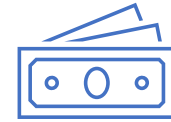
Scaling up food manufacturing

Food ingredients

Bioindustrials

Coproduct valorization

Renewable natural gas /  
Anaerobic digestion



## Specific Initiatives

Virtual tools

Benchmarking for meat  
processors

Small commercial  
production runs

Protein sustainability

Nutrient recovery

## One-time funds

Comanufacturing business  
models

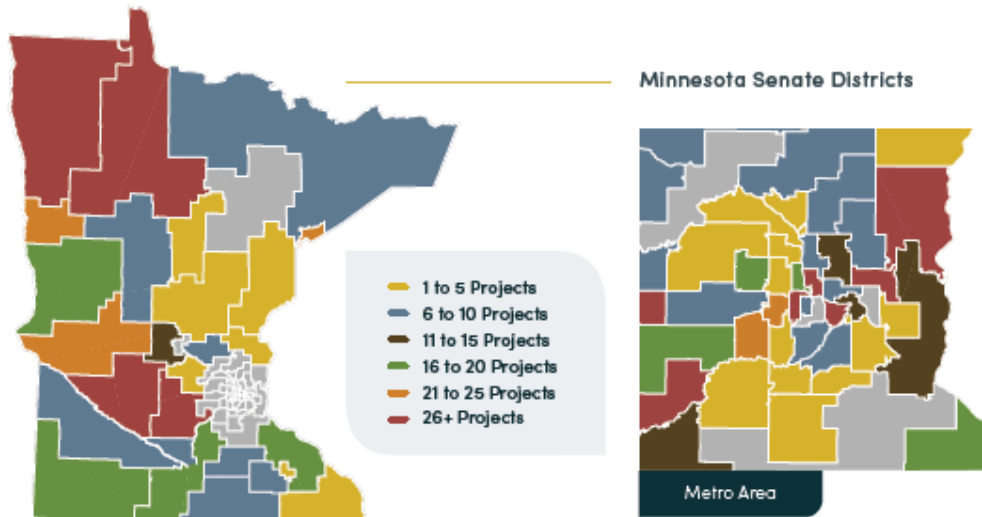
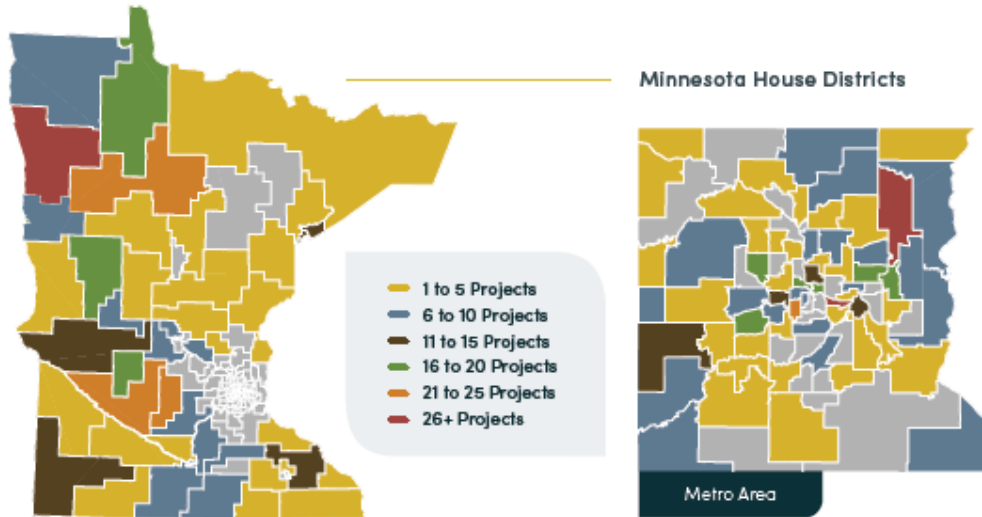
Food safety needs  
assessment

RNG/AD opportunity

Laboratory equipment

Implement programs that build upon the 45:1 return on baseline legislative dollars for AURI to meet our goal of \$500 million in economic impact

# Focused on Impact across MN Agriculture



10 yr project totals



“

AURI's services were critical to my success. AURI is the partner no entrepreneur in the ag sector should be without.”

Mary Hartman, Founder,  
StableFeed

## FOCUS AREAS

Our work across ag commodities and agricultural derived products focuses on two core areas: Food and Bioindustrial products, as well as Multi-Disciplinary.

The following pages provide an overview of the focus area resources and efforts AURI dedicates to advancing value-added opportunities in each area.





## Thank You

- Appreciate the long-term partnership with the MN legislature to benefit the economy and agriculture industry
- Many exciting opportunities on the horizon