



# Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Program

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<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/grants/agri>

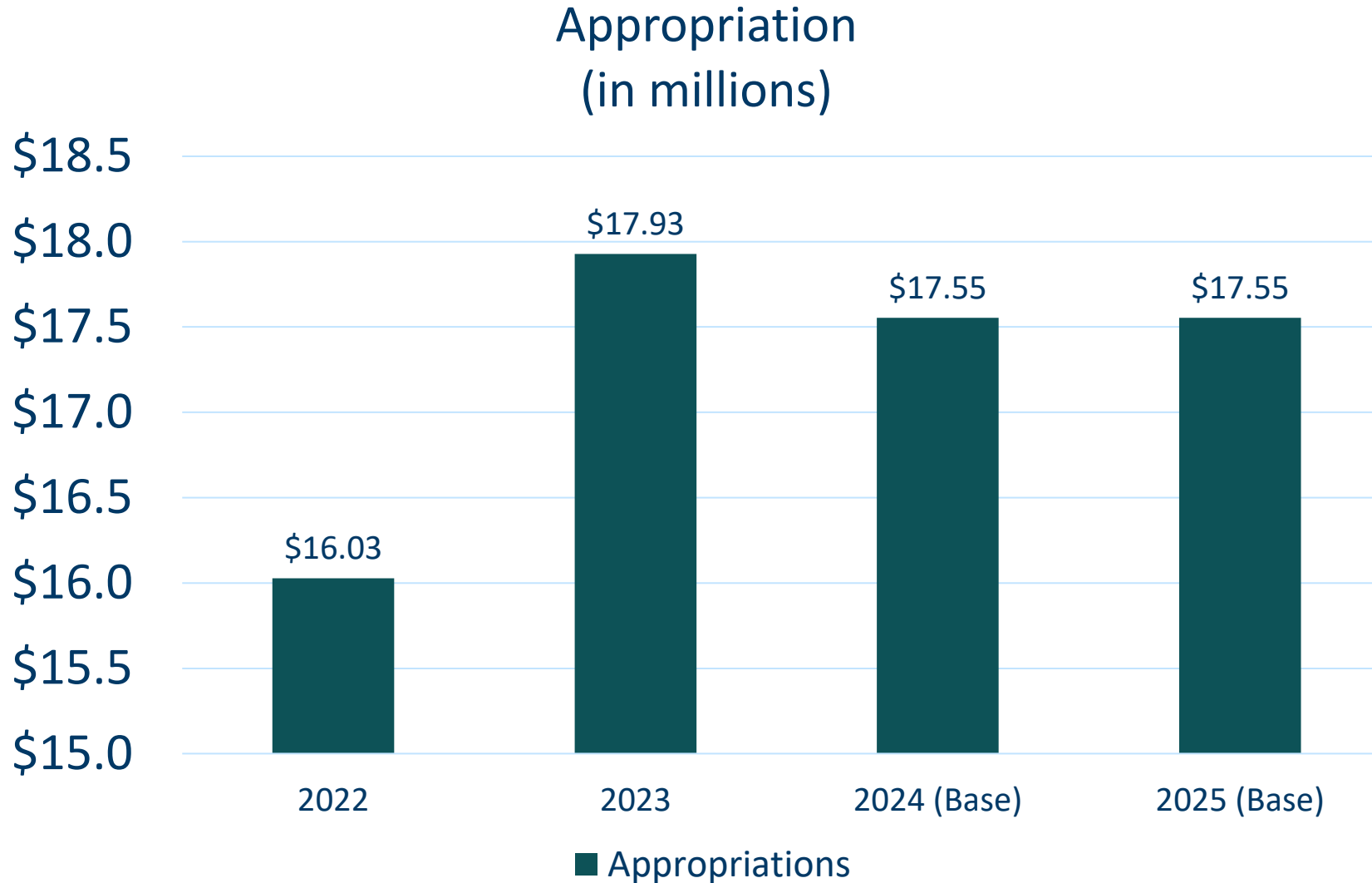


# AGRI Purpose and History



- Established in 2009 to promote the advancement of the state's agricultural and renewable energy industries, but first funded in FY2013
- Funds for this program were made available after the state fulfilled its 10-year commitment to support the ethanol industry

# AGRI Appropriations



# AGRI Programs

- Livestock Investment Grants
- Meat, Poultry, Egg, and Milk Grants
- Value-Added Grants
- Crop Research Grants
- New Market Development
- Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grants
- Farm to School Grants
- Bioincentive Payments
- GAP/GHP Cost-Share
- Farm Business Management Scholarships
- Urban Agriculture Grants
- Biofuels Infrastructure Grants
- Good Food Access Program Grants
- County Fair Grants

# FY 2023 Earmarked Allocations

<b>Program</b>	<b>FY 2023</b>
Livestock Processing	\$1,400,000
Livestock Investment	\$1,400,000
Bioincentive	\$5,750,000
County Fairs	\$1,000,000
Biofuels Infrastructure	\$3,000,000
Farm to School*	\$800,000
Good Food Access Program*	\$450,000
Urban Agriculture/Youth Education*	\$600,000
Administration	Up to 6.5%

\* Budget rider allows “up to” these amounts

# FY 2023 Non-earmarked Programs

**\$17.928 million**

**-- \$14.4 million in earmarks**

**\$3.528 million for other programs**

- Crop Research Grants
- FBM Scholarships
- GAP/GHP Cost-Share
- New Markets Programs
- Sustainable Ag Demonstration Grants
- Value-Added Grants

- Fund the highest priority, best projects
- Respond to emerging needs
  - Dairy Farm Improvement Grants
  - COVID Rapid Response
- Access federal funding opportunities
  - Minnesota Biofuels Infrastructure Program
  - Local Foods for Schools Cooperative Agreement

# FY 2023 Progress

- **Awarded:** Biofuels Infrastructure; FBM Scholarships; Meat, Poultry, Egg, and Milk
- **Under Review:** Farm to School; Crop Research; Livestock Investment; SustAg
- **Accepting Applications:** Urban Agriculture (1/12); Incentive Payments (1/31) County Fairs (3/2); GAP Cost-Share (5/31), New Markets Cost-Share (7/9)
- **RFPs Coming Soon:** Value-Added (3/15); GFAP Equipment/Physical Improvement (3/16); GFAP Technical Assistance (3/16)

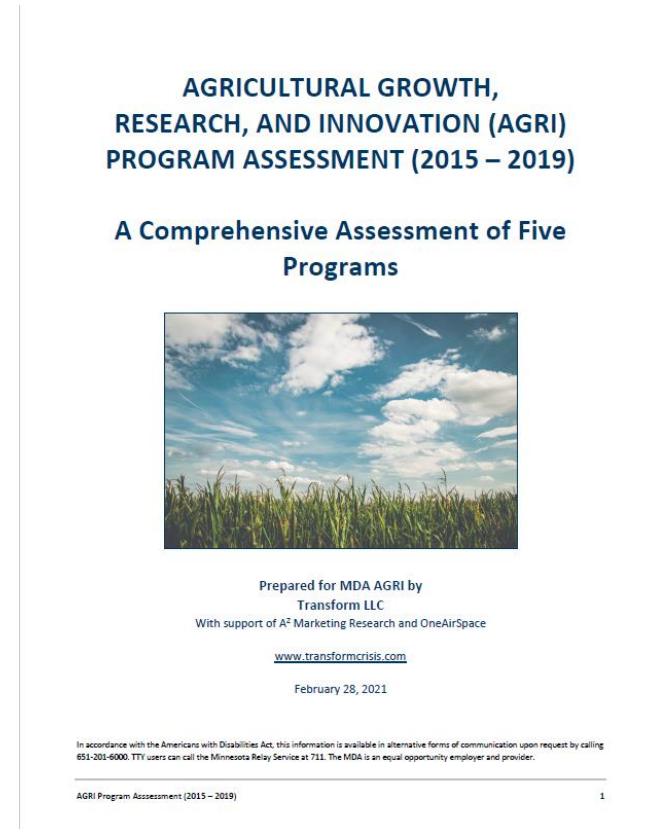


# Application Review, Evaluation & Monitoring

- External grant reviewers
- Office of Grants Management guidelines
  - Site visits
  - Reimbursement basis
  - Prioritization of underserved communities
- Third-party program evaluation

# Third-party Evaluation

- 99% reported that the grant or cost-share positively impacted their organization
- 95% said the program met or exceeded their expectations
- 90% reported that the application process was “very easy” or “fairly easy”
- 89% increased their gross revenue



*“It was so easy I almost forgot I was dealing with a clumsy government bureaucracy. I was pleasantly surprised. Almost giddy.” Andrew Cartwright, Cartwright Farm*

# AGRI Value-Added Grant

- Assists with equipment purchases and related physical improvements to improve the capacity of the businesses to process Minnesota grown/raised products
- FY 2022: Received from 137 applications requesting \$5.2 million. Awarded \$1 million to 22 grantees.
- FY 2023: Opening by late-January and closing in March

# Belén Rodríguez, Quebracho, St. Paul

*“In the year that we've been operating as a CPG brand, we've learned that for non-mainstream products, especially one like ours that is also a cultural food, meeting consumers at the store, telling them about our story and having them sample the product makes a world's difference.”*



Photos courtesy of Belén Rodríguez

# AGRI Meat, Poultry, Egg, and Milk Processing Grant

- Facilitates the start-up, modernization, or expansion of meat, poultry, egg, and milk processing businesses through investments in equipment and physical infrastructure
- Builds off the standard Value-Added Grant
- FY 2023: Applications received from 54 applications requesting \$3.1 million. Awarding \$1.404 million to 26 grantees



# Brandon Nelson, Midwest Meat LLC, New York Mills

- Custom-exempt processor of beef and pork, providing service to more than 30 farmers and 265 customers
- Grant helped add a kill floor and several pieces of equipment. The project more than doubled their capacity for beef and hogs compared to just operating their mobile slaughter truck. They also added cooler and freezer capacity
- Amount awarded: \$71,271; total project: \$235,000

# AGRI Farm to School Grants

- Helps schools purchase and serve more Minnesota grown and raised products
  - First Bite
  - Full Tray
  - Equipment
- FY 2023: 122 applications requesting \$4+ million in Food funds and \$1.3 million in Equipment funds



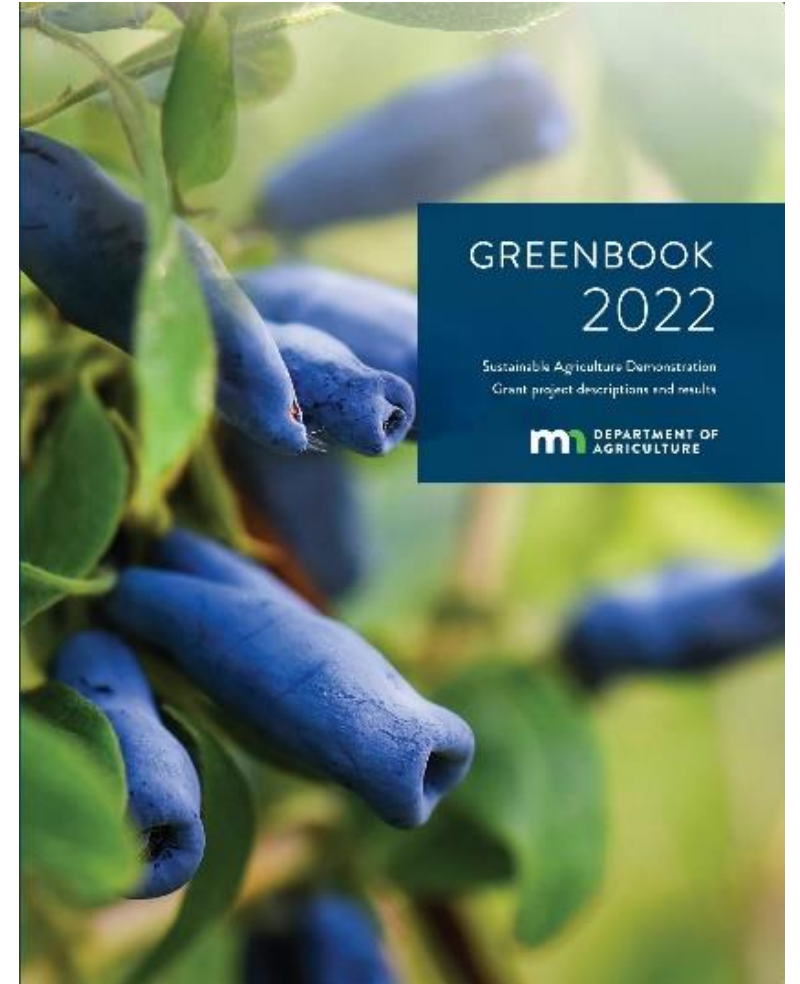
Photo courtesy of Cheryl Pick and Foley Public Schools

# New Millennium Academy, Brooklyn Center

- FY 2022: First Bite Grant
- Goal: Increase diversity in meals by adding locally grown produce unique to Southeast Asian cuisines
- Farmer Partners: Hmong American Farmers Association, The Good Acre, and The Food Group

# AGRI SustAg Demonstration Grants

- Funds research and demonstrations of farm-based agricultural techniques or systems that address energy efficiency, environmental benefit, and/or profitability
- Findings are featured in our annual *Greenbook* and through field days and on-farm demonstrations
- FY 2023: \$250,000 available; requests totaled \$1.2 million from 25 applicants





# Arlo Cristofaro-Hark and Josie Trople Cannon Valley Graziers, Northfield

- Developing and testing a ground cover seed mix for use in solar grazing systems
- Sharing results through field days, statewide conferences, and with the International Society for Range Management's Targeted Grazing Committee
- Total Grant: \$24,397

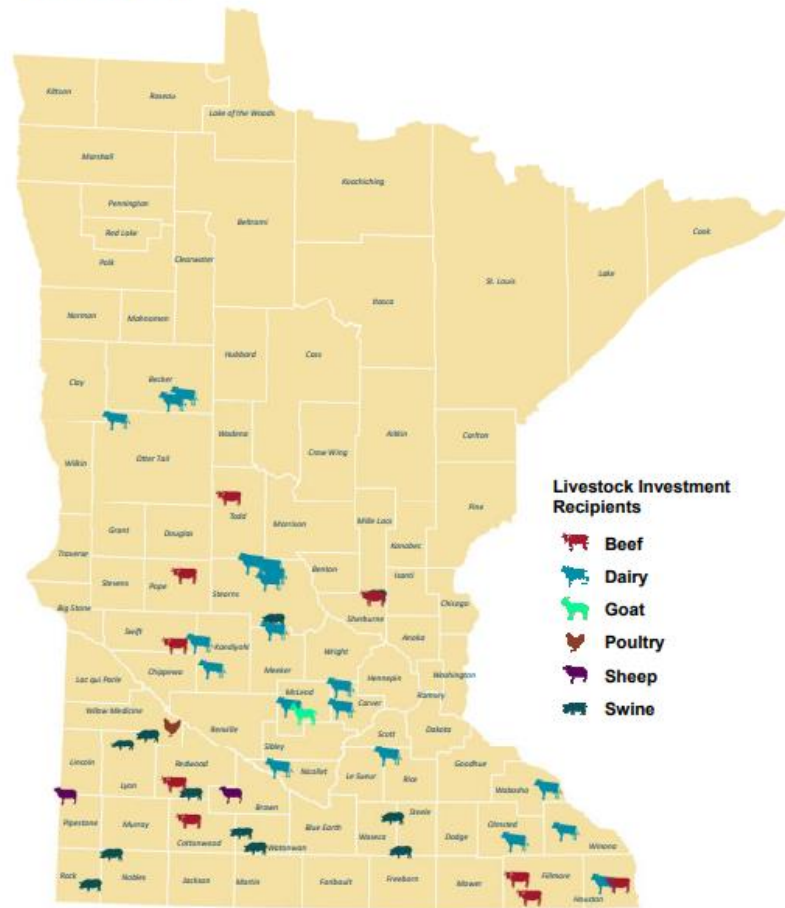


Photo courtesy of Cannon Valley Graziers and Liam James Doyle



# Report Overview: Coming February 1

## Livestock Investment Grants by County Fiscal Year 2021



## Value-Added Grant Recipients

Legislative District	County	Business Name	City
01B	Polk	Vertical Malt	Invest in ten-ton malting system.
02B	Mahnomen	Benson + Turner Foods, Inc.	Construct USDA-inspected meat processing plant and purchase equipment.
03A	Saint Louis	Zup's Market-Babbitt	Buy sausage stuffer and linker to expand product line.
03B	Lake	Love Creamery	Remodel production facility and support ice cream production.
07B	Saint Louis	Duluth Cider	Expand cider production with new equipment.
08B	Otter Tail	Midwest Meat, LLC	Open custom exempt meat processing facility.
09B	Morrison	Foothills Orchard	Complete fruit product lineup with equipment purchases.
12B	Stearns	Harry's Frozen Foods	Automate cheese application for frozen pizza.
12B	Stearns	MN Meats and Markets (Schaefer's Market)	Build meat processing and sausage production facility.
13A	Stearns	Milk and Honey Ciders	Enhance shelf stabilization with beverage equipment purchase.
13A	Stearns	Stickney Hill Dairy	Increase milk processing with reverse osmosis/ultra filtration equipment.
15A	Mille Lacs	Backroad Meats	Increase productivity of bacon with processing and packaging equipment.
15A	Mille Lacs	ForageScape Farm, LLC	Increase egg production with purchase of automated egg washing/candling equipment.
15B	Benton	Foley Locker, Inc.	Purchase grinder, tumbler, and sanitizing equipment.
15B	Sherburne	Thousand Hills Lifetime Grazed	Build out meat processing room and purchase equipment to grind, portion, and package fresh grass-fed beef.
16B	Renville	Lower Sioux Indian Community	Buy hemp processing equipment to process hemp hurd and make hempcrete.
18B	McLeod	Schwarzrock Meat Market, Inc.	Convert building for slaughter and hog processing, and purchase walk-in carcass cooler, refrigerated delivery truck, and other equipment.
21A	Goodhue	Lorentz Etc., Inc. (Lorentz Meats)	Build hide processing building and dry good packaging storage building, and purchase equipment.
21B	Winona	Big River Beverage Company, LLC	Increase production with purchase of brew kettle, keg washer, sanke kegs, and additional cold storage.
22B	Nobles	Austin Williams	Acquire equipment for new meat processing center.
23B	Waseca	Morgan's Meat Market	Upgrade production equipment, purchase new smokehouse, and replace production room floor.
24B	Renville	Prairie Meats, Inc.	Start second production line and resurface floor in processing, slaughter, and retail area.

# Thank you!

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