

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

Dear Chair Westrom, Chair Sundin and members of the conference committee:

We are the members of the Central Minnesota Young Farmers Coalition and Duluth Young Farmers Coalition, which are both chapters of the National Young Farmers Coalition, a national advocacy network of young farmers fighting for the future of agriculture. To learn about our other legislative priorities in this session, see [our priorities document here](#).

We know that to continue our strong agricultural tradition, we need new and emerging farmers to be successful. The average age of an American farmer is 58 years old and farmers over the age of 65 now outnumber farmers under 35 by a margin of six to one. The provisions in the House agriculture omnibus bill support the next generation of Minnesota farmers by supporting emerging farmers, who include veterans, women, Indigenous farmers, farmers of color, young and urban farmers, and immigrant farmers.

House 7.20 funds the members of the Emerging Farmers Working Group, a committee established in the 2020 legislative session which is currently unfunded, and **House 7.24** supports a new and needed staff position to coordinate across the MDA for Emerging Farmers. Your inclusion of these provisions in the final budget will allow for new farmers to be successful in Minnesota. This will support many of our own members who are young farmers just starting out in agriculture. As young farmers, we have a passion for agriculture, and we know that by stewarding the land, we can serve Minnesotans across the state.

Our vision is that Minnesota is the best state for new and emerging farmers to be successful. These provisions - **House 7.20** and **House 7.24** - will help us achieve that vision. We thank you for your support and efforts on this committee.

We thank all of you for your support of Minnesota farmers and your service on this committee. We believe that Minnesota's agriculture is made stronger by its diversity. We look forward to working together to support that goal.

Sincerely,

Central Minnesota Young Farmers Coalition

Duluth Young Farmers Coalition