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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

H. F. No. **1524**

02/26/2025 Authored by Harder; Anderson, P. H., and Burkel
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Agriculture Finance and Policy

- 1.1 A bill for an act
- 1.2 relating to agriculture; establishing a grant program to promote certain nutrient
- 1.3 management practices; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law in
- 1.4 Minnesota Statutes, chapter 17.
- 1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:
- 1.6 Section 1. [17.995] MINNESOTA 4R AGRICULTURAL GRANTS.
- 1.7 Subdivision 1. **Program.** The commissioner must award grants to eligible agricultural
- 1.8 retailers to promote the use of nutrient management practices by farmers in Minnesota.
- 1.9 Subd. 2. **Eligibility.** (a) To be eligible under this section, an agricultural retailer must
- 1.10 be:
- 1.11 (1) licensed under section 18C.415; and
- 1.12 (2) certified or making demonstrable progress toward certification under the 4R nutrient
- 1.13 stewardship certification program administered by the Minnesota Crop Production Retailers
- 1.14 Association.
- 1.15 (b) An eligible agricultural retailer seeking funding under this section must apply in the
- 1.16 form and manner established by the commissioner and provide all information required by
- 1.17 the commissioner to confirm the retailer's eligibility.
- 1.18 (c) Eligible nutrient management practices are practices that:
- 1.19 (1) uses the four R's: the right source of nutrients, at the right rate and right time, in the
- 1.20 right place; and
- 1.21 (2) are approved by the commissioner under subdivision 3.

2.1 Subd. 3. **Approved practices.** For purposes of this section, the commissioner, in
2.2 consultation with agricultural stakeholders, must develop a list of approved 4R nutrient
2.3 management practices. Approved practices must be suitable to the location where the practice
2.4 is implemented and may include but are not limited to:

2.5 (1) soil testing every four years with analysis by a Department of Agriculture certified
2.6 lab to determine crop-specific nutrient needs and application rates;

2.7 (2) use of enhanced-efficiency fertilizers, including nitrification inhibitors and urease
2.8 inhibitors, to reduce nutrient losses;

2.9 (3) variable rate nutrient application based on site-specific crop and soil needs;

2.10 (4) nutrient or manure management plans accounting for all sources of nutrients, including
2.11 but not limited to commercial fertilizers, starter fertilizers, manure, litter, biosolids, cover
2.12 crops, and the previous crops;

2.13 (5) in-season nutrient management using real-time crop monitoring and decision-support
2.14 tools;

2.15 (6) recommendations on the timing of fertilizer application to mitigate periods of high
2.16 runoff and leaching risk;

2.17 (7) use of cover crops to improve nutrient cycling and reduce nutrient losses;

2.18 (8) irrigation water management using local real-time climate data and soil and crop
2.19 growth characteristics;

2.20 (9) implementation of site appropriate edge-of-field practices to minimize nutrient runoff
2.21 and reduce soil erosion;

2.22 (10) erosion management practices such as no-till and reduced tillage;

2.23 (11) adoption of precision agriculture technologies for ideal nutrient placement and
2.24 timing to reduce nitrate movement; and

2.25 (12) conservation crop rotation with a perennial grown two out of every five years.

2.26 Subd. 4. **Payments.** (a) The commissioner must award grants to agricultural retailers
2.27 that are making demonstrable progress toward certification under the 4R nutrient stewardship
2.28 certification program. The commissioner must award an agricultural retailer \$5,000 once
2.29 the retailer's application for certification is accepted by the Minnesota Crop Production
2.30 Retailers Association and the retailer has completed the certification audit required by the
2.31 Minnesota Crop Production Retailers Association.

(b) The commissioner must award grants of up to 50 cents per acre to certified agricultural retailers that work with farmers to implement approved practices. In addition, the commissioner must award grants of up to 25 cents per acre to certified agricultural retailers for nutrient planning developed by a certified crop adviser in good standing with International Certified Crop Advisers, or a certified professional agronomist in good standing with the American Society of Agronomy. Before receiving payment under this paragraph, a certified agricultural retailer must demonstrate to the commissioner's satisfaction that the retailer implemented approved nutrient management practices or developed approved nutrient planning.

(c) The commissioner may award grants to certified agricultural retailers to deliver 4R training to farmers and other stakeholders in the agriculture sector.

Subd. 5. **Data privacy.** Information related to field-specific and grower-identifiable data, such as field maps, fertilizer recommendations, pesticide application records, soil analysis, yield data, grower names, and contact information used to document acres submitted for payment in subdivision 4 are classified as nonpublic data, as defined in section 13.02, subdivision 9, at all stages of the grant-making process. The commissioner may prepare and make public statistical records and reports derived from data classified as nonpublic under this subdivision except that the identity of a particular grantee must not be revealed or made ascertainable from the prepared records and reports.

Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION.**

\$..... in fiscal year 2026 and \$..... in fiscal year 2027 are appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of agriculture to award grants under Minnesota Statutes, section 17.995. The commissioner may use up to ten percent of the appropriation each year to administer Minnesota Statutes, section 17.995.