

Chapter 101

2020 Regular Session

Subject Agriculture
Analyst Colbey Sullivan
Date May 27, 2020

Overview

This is the 2020 omnibus supplemental agriculture finance act. Governor Tim Walz signed this act into law on May 27, 2020. It provides supplemental funding in fiscal years 2020 and 2021 to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) for specified purposes, establishes and funds a farm safety grant and outreach program, and gives MDA discretion to issue a food handler license to a person or company with a water supply or disposal system that does not satisfy relevant state standards.

Summary

Section	Description
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| 1 | <p>Farm safety grant and outreach programs.</p> <p>Reestablishes a tractor rollover prevention grant program that expired in 2019. Establishes a new grain storage facility safety grant program. Authorizes MDA to create a farm safety outreach campaign. Authorizes MDA to spend up to six percent of program dollars for promotion and administration costs.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Water, plumbing, and sewage.</p> <p>Grants MDA discretion to issue a food handler license to a person or company with a water supply or disposal system that does not satisfy relevant state standards. Requires MDA to perform an investigation before making this determination.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Agriculture, bioenergy, and bioproduct advancement.</p> <p>Reduces funding for the Agriculture Research, Education, Extension, and Technology Transfer (AGREETT) Program in fiscal year 2021 by \$100,000. Allocates \$675,000 of AGREETT money in fiscal year 2021 for testing equipment and supplies at the University of Minnesota's Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. Adds salmonella and other turkey-related disease as eligible uses of AGREETT funding allocated to avian disease research. Requires MDA to give additional preference to meat and poultry processors when awarding AGRI Value-Added grants in fiscal year 2021.</p> |

Section	Description
4	<p>Farm safety grant and outreach; appropriation.</p> <p>Appropriates money to MDA in fiscal year 2021 for the farm safety grant and outreach program established in section 1 and specifies how this money is to be allocated among eligible uses.</p>
5	<p>Appropriations; response to COVID-19 crisis.</p> <p>Appropriates federal money received under Title V of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (aka the coronavirus relief fund) to MDA for specified purposes.</p> <p>Subd. 1. Farm loan origination fee grants. Appropriates federal aid to MDA in fiscal year 2020 for grants to farmers who have a net worth of less than \$800,000, are participating in farmer-lender mediation or have received a mediation notice pursuant to the Farmer-Lender Mediation Act, and have been approved for a debt restructuring loan guaranteed by the United States Department of Agriculture or a loan through the Rural Finance Authority. Grants would be equal to 50 percent of the loan origination fee paid by an eligible farmer. Authorizes MDA to use up to ten percent of the appropriation to administer the grants.</p> <p>Subd. 2. Farm advocates services. Appropriates federal aid to MDA in fiscal year 2020 for farm advocate services.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Retail food handler safety. Appropriates federal aid to MDA in fiscal year 2020 for grants to grocery stores and other MDA-licensed retail food handlers to execute Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Minnesota Department of Health COVID-19 requirements, guidance, and recommendations, and to develop safety procedures, update and retrofit retail locations, purchase personal protective equipment for employees, and educate the public on the need to follow safety procedures. Limits grants to \$500 per store and a total of \$2,000 for businesses with multiple locations.</p> <p>Subd. 4. Expanded meat and poultry processing grants. Appropriates federal aid to MDA in fiscal year 2020 to assist certain meat and poultry processors.</p> <p>Subd. 5. Rural mental health services and outreach. Appropriates federal aid to MDA in fiscal year 2020 for farm and rural mental health services and expands eligible uses to include suicide prevention training, and mental health awareness and training for farm and rural adolescents.</p> <p>Subd. 6. COVID-19 assistance to farmers and value-added businesses. Appropriates federal aid to MDA in fiscal year 2020 to assist farmers and value-added agricultural businesses negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>

Section **Description**

Subd. 7. Eligible expenditures from the coronavirus relief fund. Prohibits MDA from spending federal aid appropriated under this section unless Minnesota Management and Budget determines that the expenditure is an eligible use of federal CARES Title V aid. Authorizes MDA to transfer money between subdivisions 4 and 6 based on need, the availability of nonstate funds, or other factors. Extends the availability of the fiscal year 2020 appropriations in this section until December 30, 2020, to align with federal law limiting eligible state CARES Act Title V expenditures to those incurred by that date.

Effective date: This section takes effect on May 28, 2020.



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