

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

**FILE NUMBER:** H. F. 479 **DATE:** April 1, 1999  
**Version:** Second Engrossment  
**Authors:** Westrom and others  
**Subject:** Task force on agricultural producer contracts  
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### Overview

House File 479 establishes an advisory task force to review issues related to concerns about livestock, grain commodity, and specialty crops produced under contract with a processor. The Department of Agriculture serves as fiscal agent for the task force and provides staff support and technical services.

- 1 Agricultural producer contracts.** Establishes an advisory task force to study the issues involved in the production of agricultural crops and livestock under contract.
  - Subd. 1. Purpose, legislative findings.** States the legislative finding that more and more livestock and crops are produced under contract to processors. It is therefore important for the agricultural economy to determine how this change from traditional production is affecting farmers-especially those who choose not to produce under contract.
  - Subd. 2. Creation, membership.** The task force consists of 20 members. Chairs of the Senate and House agriculture committees each appoint 6 members, the governor appoints 4 members, the Farm Bureau Federation appoints 1 member, the Farmers Union appoints 1 member, the Cattlemen's Association appoints 1 member, and the Pork Producers Association appoints 1 member.
  - Subd. 3. Charge.** The task force is instructed to examine current and projected impacts on markets that result from the increasing use of contracts.
  - Subd. 4. Resources; staff support; contract services.** The department of agriculture is told to provide resources and staff support for activities of the task force, and to act as fiscal agent for the task force if contracts with non-state vendors are used.
  - Subd. 5. Public hearings.** The task force must hold at least 4 public hearings, three of them in greater Minnesota.
  - Subd. 6. Report.** The task force is to report its findings to the legislature by March 15, 2000.
  - Subd. 7. Expiration.** The task force expires 45 days after its report to the legislature or on June 1, 2000, whichever is earlier.

- 2 **Appropriation.** \$25,000 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of agriculture to provide staff support and fiscal agent services for the task force. Any amount that remains unencumbered after the task force expires reverts to the general fund.
- 3 **Effective date.** Sections 1 and 2 are effective the day following final enactment.