

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

**FILE NUMBER:** H.F. 545  
**Version:** First engrossment

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**Authors:** Johnson, C. and others

**Subject:** Veterans-to-Agriculture Program

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This bill requires the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) to establish a pilot program that encourages veterans to enter agricultural and food production-related career fields. \$150,000 is appropriated to MnSCU in FY 2016, and \$600,000 is appropriated in FY 2017 for this purpose.

The pilot program is to be coordinated by the Southern Minnesota Center for excellence for agriculture at the North Mankato campus of South Central College, in collaboration with a number of additional entities with relevant expertise, as specified in paragraph (c) of the bill. In addition to South Central College, funds are appropriated to offer the program at up to six additional colleges in FY 2017, including one in the metro area and five in greater Minnesota.

Enrollees in the pilot program would undergo an intensive four-to-eight week training involving academic study, employer-outreach and job development, and the development of career-building skills. Upon completion enrollees would earn a certificate of completion or other appropriate academic credit.

A report to the legislature on program operations, participation, job placements, and unmet needs is required no later than December 15, 2017.

A similar program, the “Veterans Agri-Food and Natural Resources Worker Training Program,” exists currently in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University.