

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: Programs to support the training of licensed agriculture educators

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Overview

H.F. 1051 takes a number of steps to support existing agricultural education programs and encourage Minnesotans to become licensed agricultural educators.

- Offers rental subsidy grants to agricultural land owners to expand access to rental land or lower land rental costs for agricultural education programs.
- Appropriates money to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) to create online courses in farm business management and farm and ranch management.
- Appropriates money to the Minnesota Agricultural Education Council to increase awareness of the online courses among high school students who could take them under the postsecondary enrollment option (PSEO). Appropriates additional money to ensure that PSEO students can participate in Future Farmers of America.
- Establishes a grant program within the Agricultural Education Leadership Council to reimburse agricultural educators for expenses not paid by their employers.
- Appropriates money to the University of Minnesota and MnSCU to develop new teacher preparation programs for licensed agricultural educators.

Section

- 1** **Activities authorized.** Dedicates \$1,000,000 of Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) program spending each year to rental subsidies that expand access to

Section

rental farmland or lower land rental costs for school districts that provide agricultural education and community-oriented agricultural programs. The AGRI program is administered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

2 **Sunset.** Extends the AGRI program for ten years, to June 30, 2025.

3 **Appropriation; online course creation.** Appropriates \$100,000 in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to the Board of Trustees of MnSCU to develop new online courses in farm business management and farm and ranch management. Institutions are required to develop courses that are introductory in nature.

Postsecondary institutions that receive funds to develop courses must coordinate with one another to avoid offering duplicative courses. Institutions that receive funds under this section must have one course developed and ready for student enrollment within a year of receiving funds.

4 **Appropriation; Minnesota Agricultural Education Leadership Council.** Appropriates \$1,000,000 in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to the Minnesota Agricultural Education Leadership Council for two purposes:

1. Increase awareness of the online courses created under section 3 of this bill amongst high school students eligible to take the courses through the postsecondary enrollment option (PSEO).
2. Establish a “regional agriculture educator advisor program” to serve as an in-person contact for students participating in PSEO to ensure that they are eligible for Future Farmers of America participation.

These appropriations are added to the Minnesota Agricultural Education Leadership Council’s base.

5 **Appropriation; agriculture educator grants.** Appropriates \$1,500,000 in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to the Minnesota Agricultural Education Leadership Council to develop a new grant program. Under the program, the council will award grants to agriculture educators for activities that advance the agricultural education of students but for which an educator is not compensated. This appropriation is added to the Agricultural Leadership Council’s base.

6 **Appropriation; college agricultural education programs.** Appropriates \$500,000 in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota and the Board of Trustees of MnSCU for the creation of agricultural education teacher licensure programs. The University of Minnesota appropriation is for the creation of an agricultural education licensure program at the Crookston campus, and the MnSCU appropriation is for the creation of such a program at Southwest Minnesota State in Marshall.

Institutions receiving funds under this appropriation must submit reports to the committees of the Minnesota House and Senate with jurisdiction over agriculture policy, K-12 education policy, and higher education policy. In these reports, an institution must report its progress in developing the licensure program and increasing the number of students receiving a license in agricultural education. The institution must submit such reports by February 15, 2016, and February 15, 2017.