

Subject Agriculture
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Summary

This bill modifies and increases existing appropriations for grants from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to Second Harvest Heartland to purchase food from Minnesota producers and processors for distribution to food shelves, shelters, and other similar entities.

In 2019, the legislature appropriated \$1,700,000 from the general fund for this purpose in each of fiscal years 2020 and 2021 (Laws 2019, 1st Spec. Sess. ch. 1). The 2019 law authorized Second Harvest Heartland to use this funding to purchase milk and surplus commodities (fruits, vegetables, etc.) only.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in April of 2020, the legislature appropriated an additional \$1,250,000 for grants to Second Harvest Heartland in fiscal year 2020 and specified that Second Harvest may only use this additional money to purchase milk or proteins (pork, poultry, beef, eggs, cheese, legumes, etc.). The 2020 law further specified that to the extent possible Second Harvest must acquire surplus proteins from Minnesota producers and processors based on low-cost bids.

H.F. 790 would: (1) appropriate an additional \$1,250,000 for grants to Second Harvest to purchase milk, surplus commodities, and proteins in state fiscal year 2021; (2) allow Second Harvest to use the money appropriated in April 2020 to purchase surplus commodities; and (3) eliminate the existing requirement that Second Harvest strive to purchase surplus proteins using low-cost bids.