

The Senate Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming Committee met on Wednesday, February 2, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. in Room 112, Capitol. The following members were present:

Vickerman Chair
Skoe, Vice Chair
Day
Dille
Hann
Johnson, D.
Koering
Lourey
Murphy
Rest
Sams
Solon
Wergin

Senator Hann and Nienow were absent.

Senator Vickerman called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

Senator Vickerman stated we would hear the report from the Governor's Livestock Advisory Task Force Committee, of which he was a member over the summer. The report is titled "Minnesota's Animal Agriculture Industry Report."

Perry Aasness, Deputy Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture. "See Attachments A, B, and C." Mr. Aasness stated Minnesota's livestock industry is an \$11 billion dollar business and supports over 100,000 workers. He stated 170,000 dairy cows have been lost in the last 10 years. Attachment A contains the recommendations. Attachment B is the report itself and Attachment C is an example of separation distances (setbacks).

Lisa Heggedahl, farmer from Dodge County, member of Task Force. She stated her biggest concern is working with people and the counties/townships for control. She stated farmers that are retiring are causing the problems – but how do you control that. They are free to sell their land to whoever they choose.

Dave Hoelmer, Agstar, Mankato, member of Task Force. Mr. Hoelmer stated debt load is a key barrier to investment.

Senator Vickerman stated we would now hear from the Citizens Task Force on Livestock Farmers and Rural Communities. Their report is entitled: "Creating a Bright Future for Livestock Farmers in Minnesota."

Paul Sobocinski, Land Stewardship Project, "See Attachment D." His focus was on the fact that they want to promote livestock farming that benefits the environment and protecting rural democracy. He wants the current rights of townships and counties to enact zoning ordinances to regulate development in their communities, including large feedlots. The state should take no action regarding zoning.

Thom Peterson, MN Farmers Union, stated the Governor's report is heavy on siting issues. His focus was on livestock averages and said Farm Business Management has the best numbers.

Bob Arndt, National Farmers Organization of Minnesota, stated there are three areas that must speak for themselves: production agriculture, agri-business and agri-industry. He said he's not against corporate production but when big companies put their money into production agriculture – it lowers the price.

Senator Hann stated agriculture is the only profession that allows personal debt to finance their operation.

Senator Sams objected to Mr. Arndt's comments regarding the corporate farming law. He stated he wants a list of who is violating corporate farming laws in the State of Minnesota.

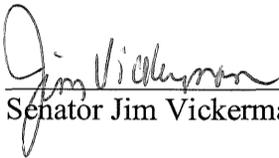
Mary Jo Forbord, Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, stated there is growth in the smallest and largest farms – however not in the medium farms. She would like to see \$200,000 restored to the U of M for alternatives and \$150,000 reinstated for the alternative swine program.

See Attachments F & G which is testimony provided from the League of Women Voters.

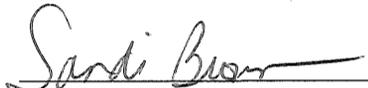
Senator Dille stated he wanted to read a letter that all members had signed. "See Attachment H." This letter has to do with ending Minnesota's "Feedlot War."

Meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

This meeting was taped.



Senator Jim Vickerman, Chair



by/Sandi Brown

02:00:10

Senate Agriculture, Veterans and Gaming Committee

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

3:00 P.M.

Room 112, Capitol

AGENDA

“Minnesota’s Animal Agriculture Industry Report”

Governor’s Livestock Advisory Task Force

Perry Aasness, Deputy Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

“Creating a Bright Future for Livestock Farmers in Minnesota”

A report by the Citizens Task Force on Livestock Farmers and Rural Communities

Paul Sobocinski, Land Stewardship Project

Thom Peterson, MN Farmers Union

Dennis Sjodin, MN Farmers Union

Bob Arndt, National Farmers Organization of Minnesota

Mary Jo Forbord, Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota

02:00:10

Senate Committee Meeting Log

Committee Name: Ag, Vets & Gaming

Date: Feb. 2nd, 2005 Day: Wednesday

Start Time: 3:09 pm

Agenda

	Bill # (or Topic)	MN Animal Ag. Industry Report
	Author	
3:12pm	Short Descriptor	Perry Asness
	Action(s)	
4:55pm	Bill # (or Topic)	
	Author	
	Short Descriptor	Paul Sobocinski, land stewardship project Thom Peterson, MN Farmers Union Bob Arndt, Naton farmers org.
	Action(s)	Mary Jo Forbord, SF Assoc. of MN
	Bill # (or Topic)	
	Author	
	Short Descriptor	
	Action(s)	
	Bill # (or Topic)	
	Author	
	Short Descriptor	
	Action(s)	

4:55pm

5:00pm



End time