DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Emergency Account

Annual Report

Mike Starkey
Director, Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response
625 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155
Phone: 651-201-6286

www.mda.state.mn.us

January 29, 2019

Table of Contents

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 3.197, the cost of preparing this report was approximately $250.00.

Executive Summary

The 2016 Minnesota Legislature established the Agricultural Emergency Account in the Agriculture Fund. The purpose of the account is to support emergency response and preparedness activities for animal disease outbreaks and other food and agricultural emergencies. A one-time transfer of $1,000,000.00 was appropriated to the Agriculture Emergency Account in the Agricultural Fund.

This report is submitted in accordance with Minnesota Statute 17.041 Subd.3. No later than February 1 each year, the commissioner must report activities and expenditures under this section to the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over agriculture finance.

Introduction

The 2015 outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Minnesota, with an estimated $650 million in economic losses, highlighted the strengths and underscored the weaknesses in Minnesota's ability to plan, prepare for, and respond to food and agricultural emergencies. To meet these challenges, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture is leading the effort to collaborate and coordinate with federal and state agencies, county governments, academia, Minnesota's food and agriculture production systems (food, crop, livestock, poultry) and allied industries to better plan, prepare for, and respond to agricultural emergencies and potential threats – from outbreaks of animal disease to eradication of destructive, invasive plant and pest species.

Background

Challenges in Agriculture Emergency Preparedness and Response

The emergency response costs associated with the 2015 HPAI and 2018 Exotic New Castle Disease outbreaks suggest the federal government cannot continue to bear the costs of prohibiting the movement of animals and animal products, and the cost of indemnification to producers and response actions including depopulation, disposal, and disinfection of all diseased animals and affected premises.

History has shown that the likelihood of a large-scale animal disease outbreak is low but when outbreaks occur, they have devastating effects on many agriculture industries that are highly interdependent. For example, limiting or stopping the movement of animals and or animal products can significantly impact processing, transportation, and retail activities.

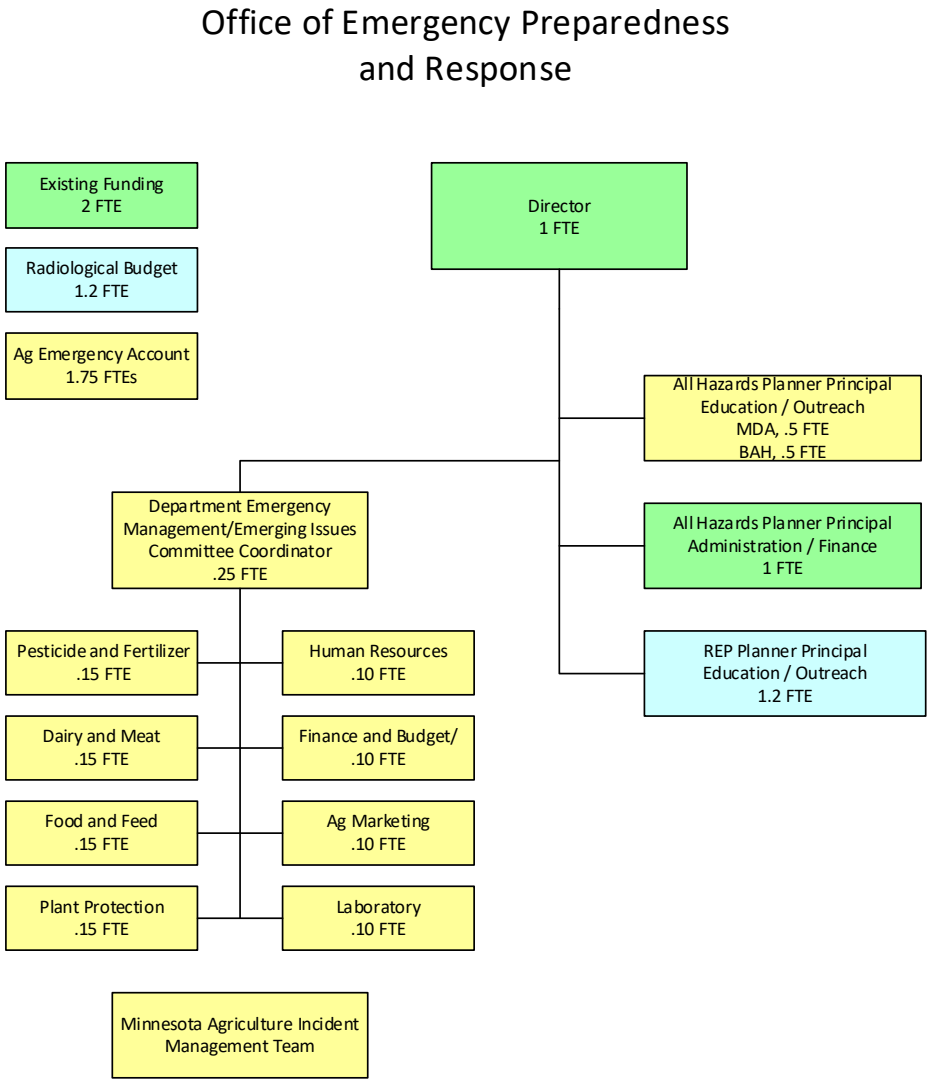
Mounting a major emergency disease control campaign is a complex logistical operation that requires very rapid and effective mobilization of resources. Teams of professional and technical experts of diverse disciplines and affiliations must mobilize into a unified response force. For these reasons, a great deal of forethought and planning is necessary to develop an animal disease emergency plan.

Government support is critical to ensure the continuity and longevity of any such response. This requires development, adoption, and coordination of emergency preparedness and response systems at local, state, regional and national levels. An all-hazards business continuity approach must be woven into agriculture emergency preparedness, and response policy and strategies in order to safeguard Minnesota's production agriculture industry, to promote sustainable economic development, and prevent catastrophic events that could threaten our nation's food security, trade partnerships, and economic stability.

MDA emergency preparedness and response priorities

Priority 1. ***Establish the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response***

The Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response within the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is structured such that it is responsible for All Hazards emergency preparedness and response functions of the MDA, including the creation, oversight and training of the Minnesota Agriculture Incident Management Team (IMT). The IMT will build response capabilities and capacities that could be sustained for an extended period of time while also allowing normal agency functions to continue. The IMT will be established through a formal sharing of positions with other MDA Divisions.



Priority 2. ***Develop Commodity Specific Secure Food Supply Plans***

The Secure Food Supply (SFS) program including Secure Pork Supply, Secure Milk Supply, Secure Beef Supply, Secure Turkey Supply, Secure Broiler Supply, Secure Egg Supply and Secure Upland Gamebird Supply are collaborative programs utilizing a public-private partnership approach of government, industry, and academia. Partners include federal and state agencies (USDA, state boards of animal health and departments of agriculture), academic institutions (primarily University of Minnesota, Iowa State University, and University of California, Davis), and production livestock/poultry industry representatives. During an animal disease outbreak response, the SFS program allows for the movement of animals and animal products from a "control area", with no evidence of infection, to harvest channels or other production sites **without the spread of disease or expansion of the outbreak**; providing a continuous supply of safe and wholesome food to consumers; and maintaining business continuity for producers, transporters, and processors.

The goal of this collaborative effort with the MDA, Minnesota Board of Animal Health, University of Minnesota, and private industry, is to provide assistance and training to Minnesota's livestock industries and those in border states to build Minnesota and Midwest Secure Food Supply capacities and capabilities.

Minnesota is uniquely positioned to lead this effort with more than 73,000 farms, and nearly 1,000 agriculture and food companies. Seven of Minnesota's top 20 companies have roots in the farm and food sectors and Minnesota has several agricultural-focused firms on the Forbes List of America's Largest Companies. Minnesota's high quality agricultural products are in demand around the globe and as we look toward a future in which the world's food needs are expected to double by 2050, it is evident that Minnesota agriculture will become more important and prominent in the years to come.

- Minnesota has an existing agricultural emergency response system that is experienced and nationally recognized
- Minnesota pioneered the development of the Secure Poultry Supply Plan
- Production agriculture is a major contributor to Minnesota's economy, creating nearly $90 billion in economic activity and providing more than 340,000 jobs

It is our goal that, through proper collaborations and agriculture-specific efforts, we can earnestly operationalize and socialize the science and processes of SFS to create a system that can effectively manage all hazards facing the vitality of agriculture and survive a catastrophic event.

Priority 3**. *Palmer Amaranth Eradication***

Palmer Amaranth was first identified in Lyon and Yellow Medicine counties in August of 2016 and in Todd and Douglas counties in 2017. Eradication work began in the fall of 2017 and continued in 2018.

- Since 2016, Palmer amaranth infestations have been identified in 46 individual sites in 6 counties.
    - 18 farmers have been impacted.
    - 42 in conservation plantings and 2 row crop fields
- MDA responded to over 50 reports of potential Palmer infestations in 2018.
    - 2 of those reports were identified as Palmer infestations in Jackson and Redwood Counties.
    - These were the first row crop fields to have Palmer invasions.
    - MDA was on site immediately and eradicated the plants before seeds developed.
- Palmer amaranth was not found on the 2016 and 2017 sites where plants had previously been established.
    - Emergency funding for scouting, eradication, treatment, and outreach efforts has had positive results.

- This has helped slow the spread of Palmer amaranth in Minnesota which in turn has saved farmers significant dollars by not having to battle this invasive weed. .

Minnesota held a regional meeting of all border states to discuss future plans to slow the spread of Palmer amaranth in the upper Midwest and coordinate efforts to protect agricultural pathways from increased infestations.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Office of emergency Preparedness and Response
Report of Expenditures
As of 1/8/19

	2017	2018	2019
Preparedness Personnel		56,255.89	83,263.43
Preparedness Travel		5,299.22	4,069.21
Preparedness Supplies		1,355.79	318.24
Preparedness MNIT			1,235.35
Preparedness Equipment	17,119.24	11,967.01	
Preparedness Insurance,Title, Registration,Plates		2,453.66	1,085.00
Palmer Amaranth	62,395.85	4,531.19	24,821.98
Total Spent	79,515.09	81,862.76	114,793.21
Unspent Balance (CASH)	**920,484.91**	**838,622.15**	**723,828.94**
Original Transfer in FY 2017	**1,000,000.00**		
FY 2017 Expenditures	**(79,515.09)**		
FY 2018 Expenditures	**(81,862.76)**		
FY 2019 Available	**838,622.15**		
FY 2019 Special Projects-Palmer Amaranth Budget 6991	**(199,276.00)**		
FY 2019 Ag Emergency Office Budget 6911	**(370,000.00)**		
Unobligated - Available to Budget 1/8/2019	**269,346.15**		