

AGRICULTURAL GROWTH, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION

FISCAL YEAR 2021 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



Agricultural Marketing and
Development Division

February 1, 2022

625 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-201-6648
ashley.bress@state.mn.us
www.mda.state.mn.us

AGRICULTURAL
GROWTH,
RESEARCH, AND
INNOVATION

TABLE OF
CONTENTS



Executive Summary 3
Introduction..... 4
Background 5
Evaluation Report Summary 5

AGRI Programs

Beginning Farmer Farm Business
Management Scholarships 6
Bioincentive Program..... 6
County Fair Grants 7
Crop Research Grants 7
Farm to School Grants 8
Good Food Access Program 9
GAP/GHP Cost-Share 9
Livestock Investment Grant 9
New Markets Program Cost-Share 11
Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grants 12
Urban Agriculture Grants 13
Value-Added Grants 14

Appendices 16

As requested by MINN. STAT. § 3.197: This report cost approximately \$10,000 to prepare.

Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, Braille, or audio recording. Printed on recycled paper.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

AGRICULTURAL GROWTH, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION

Executive Summary

The Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Program, established at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) by MINN. STAT. 41A.12, advances Minnesota's agricultural and renewable energy industries. In Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21), the ninth year of the program, the MDA awarded just over \$14.15 million to farmers, agricultural businesses, and schools through:

- Bioincentive Program
- County Fair Grants
- Crop Research Grants
- Beginning Farmer Farm Business Management Scholarships
- Farm to School Grants
- Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) Certification Cost-Share
- Good Food Access Program (GFAP) Grants
- Livestock Investment Grants
- New Markets Development Cost-Share
- Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grants
- Urban Agriculture Grants
- Value-Added Grants

Highlights from FY21 include:

- Leveraging over \$33 million in non-State investment.
- Investing in projects that helped the agricultural community respond to the challenges brought by COVID-19, including over \$5.8 million in unexpected Federal funds.
- Completing a comprehensive, external evaluation of core AGRI programs.
- Revamping the AGRI Farm to School Grant to enable schools to use their grant funds to purchase foods from local producers.
- Investing \$1.48 million, including \$802,000 of AGRI and \$680,000 of Federal funds, in meat processing to increase capacity and alleviate supply chain bottlenecks.

In FY22, the AGRI appropriation is \$16.028 million. As of February 1, 2022, we continue to accept applications for the County Fair Grants, GAP/GHP Cost-Share, Biofuels Infrastructure Financial Assistance Program, Value-Added Grants, GFAP Equipment and Physical Improvement Grants, and GFAP Technical Assistance Grants. We are finalizing awards for all other grant programs.



Introduction

The Minnesota Legislature established the Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) Program (MINN. STAT. 41A.12) in 2009 to promote the advancement of the state’s agricultural and renewable energy industries. The statute authorizes the Commissioner of Agriculture to issue grants, loans, and other types of financial assistance for activities including, but not limited to grants to livestock producers under the Livestock Investment Grant Program (MINN. STAT. 17.118); bioenergy awards made by the NextGen Energy Board (MINN. STAT. 41A.105); grants for the installation of biofuel blender pumps; and financial assistance to support other rural economic infrastructure activities.¹

In FY21, the Commissioner implemented the following programs:

- **Bioincentive Program Payments** to encourage production of advanced biofuel, renewable chemical, and biomass thermal energy.
- **County Fair Grants** to help county fairs preserve and promote Minnesota agriculture, and provide public access to the state’s agricultural, historical, and cultural heritage.
- **Crop Research Grants** to catalyze research that will improve the quality, quantity, and value of crops grown in Minnesota.
- **Farm to School Grants** to help schools purchase and serve more Minnesota grown and raised products in their school meal programs.
- **Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) Certification Cost-Share** to increase the number of food safety-certified farms and food processors.
- **Good Food Access Program** to help grocery stores and small food retailers located in food deserts and low to moderate income areas buy equipment and make physical improvements that will increase accessibility to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods.
- **Livestock Investment Grants** to initiate or expand livestock production and processing.
- **New Markets Development Cost-Share** to help Minnesota’s small- to medium-sized food businesses and value-added agriculture producers explore new markets and expand their market reach.
- **Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grants** to enhance the environmental, economic, and social sustainability of Minnesota farms through farmer-led, on-farm research.
- **Urban Agriculture Grants** to stimulate urban youth agricultural education and/or urban agricultural community development.
- **Value-Added Grants** to buy equipment necessary to create, upgrade, or modernize value-added businesses.

In addition to these programs, legislatively named pass-through grants were also awarded to the Ag Innovation Campus (\$5 million) and the Minnesota Turf Seed Council (\$75,000).



Steve, Melissa, and their son Kyle Hennen of Hennen Swine added a farrowing barn to their operation. Over the years they have expanded their operation slowly and are now able to bring Kyle full-time into the operation. The new building was designed with animal and human comfort in mind by automating routine labor tasks and including cool cells for temperature control.

¹The NextGen Energy statute (MINN. STAT. 41A.105) created the NextGen Energy Board and authorized NextGen grants. It expired on June 30, 2015.

During FY21, the MDA also administered numerous financial assistance programs that helped the agricultural community weather the impacts of COVID-19. These programs were funded through a combination of unearmarked AGRI funds and Federal resources, such as the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Without AGRI's programmatic infrastructure and the Legislature's prudent decision to leave some flexible funds within the AGRI appropriation, it would not have been possible to swiftly distribute over \$5.8 million in Federal resources that often came with short deadlines. Although administered primarily during FY21, the programs that were funded wholly or partially with AGRI funds were detailed in last year's AGRI Legislative Report.

Background

Funds for the AGRI Program were first made available in FY13 after the state fulfilled its 10-year commitment to support the ethanol industry. In that first year, the Legislature combined \$641,422 in carryover funds from the FY12 ethanol producer payments appropriation with a separate \$2.3 million appropriation (Laws of Minnesota 2011 Ch. 14 sec. 3 subd. 4). The annual AGRI appropriation has gradually grown from \$10.235 million to \$16.028 in FY22. In FY21, the appropriation was \$14.354 million.

Evaluation Report Summary

During FY21, we hired an external firm, Transform LLC supported by A² Marketing Research and OneAirSpace, to evaluate cornerstone AGRI-funded programs. Evaluation focused on Crop Research Grants, Livestock Investment Grants, the New Markets Cost-Share, Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grants, and the Value-Added Grants between FY15 and FY19. The evaluation included both the grantmaking process (e.g., proposal submission, contracting, and reimbursement) and outcomes, and included interviews with staff, stakeholders, and program participants, surveys of program participants, and sectoral interviews.

The evaluation confirmed that AGRI is making a difference in the lives of Minnesota farmers, food producers, and processors.

- 99 percent reported that the grant or cost-share positively impacted their organization,
- 90 percent believe that it positively impacted the wider community or business ecosystem, and
- 89 percent increased their gross revenue (not applicable to the Crop Research Grant).

The report concluded that AGRI program staff are respected and provide exceptional service to grantees. Overall, 95 percent said the program met or exceeded their expectations and over 90 percent of participants reported that the application process was "very easy" or "fairly easy". Similarly, participants found the payment process easier than anticipated. Data also show that both the application process and the reimbursement process have become easier over time.

Some additional information about the outcomes of individual AGRI programs are highlighted in the relevant sections of this report.

In this local food space, I have never found an example where it didn't leverage a good result. Something about the entrepreneurial nature of the folks in the food space, they are not getting the monies just to meet payroll. They have a goal and a purpose when these (AGRI) dollars come in the door. For the most part these dollars are additive and do deliver outcomes that are beyond the work that is already being done. It is facilitating organizations taking on new initiatives, implementing new activities.

Tim Penny, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation

This program is by far the simplest, most efficient, and person-centered program I have ever been involved in. There is access to real people with emails. Runs beautifully!

Alisa Dale, Planet Princess Foods

Beginning Farmer Farm Business Management Scholarships

Farm Business Management (FBM) helps farm operators learn profitable business management strategies. The program teaches farmers how to use their own farm records to make sound business decisions. Instruction is offered by Minnesota State Colleges and University campuses statewide. Instructors meet with students 1 on 1 and/or in small group settings.

The program defines a beginning farmer as a person who has owned or operated a farm or ranch, wholly or in partnership with others, for ten years or fewer. As owner/operator, a person must have a financial interest in the farm, must participate in making some or all management decisions, and must participate in the operation of the farm on a regular basis. The FBM Beginning Farmer Scholarship Program pays 50 percent of the cost for beginning farmers to enroll in up to ten credits of FBM education per year until the student earns 40 credits.

In FY21, we awarded \$557,584 to the schools' foundations for scholarships primarily during the 2020-2021 school year. These funds helped 704 students afford FBM participation. During FY22, we've allotted an additional \$425,000 for scholarships.

Bioincentive Program

This program makes payments to eligible entities that produce advanced biofuels, renewable chemicals, and biomass thermal energy. MINN. STAT. 41A.15-41A.19 describe eligibility, requirements, payment amounts and limits, and program requirements. The FY20-FY21 budget rider appropriated \$2.5 million each year for this program.

In FY21, eight producers received payments totaling \$2.5 million. Payments were distributed as follows:

- Advanced Biofuels: \$761,053
- Renewable Chemicals: \$1,438,001
- Biomass Thermal Energy Production: \$300,946

Several companies received less than the amount for which they qualified because the \$2.5 million appropriation was quickly exhausted by claims made in quarters 1 and 2. Claims exceeded available funds by:

- Quarter 2: \$410,541
- Quarter 3: \$2,122,609
- Quarter 4: \$1,269,777

Total unpaid claims for FY21 amounted to \$3,802,927.

In FY22, \$4.5 million is available for the program and we anticipate that funding will be fully used by the end of second quarter. More detailed information about this program is available in the separate *Bioincentive Program Legislative Report*.

I am a student at Northland Community and Technical College in the Farm Business Management Program, and I have received the MDA Beginning Farmer Scholarship. This scholarship is important to me because it has helped provide financial support as I learn how to complete the appropriate tasks needed to run a successful farming operation. As a young farmer starting out, this financial support is so nice to have as it helps to cover some fees that beginning farmers encounter. It is wonderful knowing there is support out there to help those that are just starting out. We don't have to be afraid to dig as we learn how to get on our feet and get off to a successful start.

Courtney, Goodridge, Minnesota

I am a current student at Northland Community and Technical college enrolled in the Farm Business Management Program. Receiving the Minnesota Department of Agriculture scholarship helped me afford to be a part of this program. This scholarship was very important because it helped me understand my farm financials. FBM has helped me during the last few years when commodity prices were lower and crop yields suffered. FBM helped me come up with a feasible cashflow plan that helped my operation become more successful.

Jason, Fertile, Minnesota

County Fair Grants

These non-competitive grants help county fairs enhance Minnesotans' access to agricultural education and preserve and promote Minnesota agriculture.

In FY21, a total of \$1,010,610 was available to Minnesota's 95 county fairs; each was eligible for up to \$11,614. The program distributed \$993,412 to 86 county fairs, which used the funds in various ways. For example, the Steele County Free Fair upgraded the security system in their barns and brought in a dairy demonstration; Lincoln County Fair improved their livestock and agricultural buildings, and Filmore County Fair paid for livestock judges.

In FY22, \$935,000 is available in equal share to each of the state's 95 active county fairs. In addition to these AGRI funds, funds from the Legacy Amendment will provide an additional \$400,000 for programming related to the arts or the state's agricultural historical and cultural heritage.

Crop Research Grants

Crop Research grants generate university-level applied research to improve the quality, quantity, or value of crops grown in Minnesota. Awards of up to \$250,000 can fully reimburse grantees for their project costs (no match is required). Research projects must provide near-term benefits for Minnesota agriculture and associated industries and include a robust outreach component to transfer results and technology to farmers. This program differs from other funding sources, such as federal grants, by supporting research that can focus on emerging or chronic crop production issues that are specific to Minnesota. With the goal of developing practical applications from projects in three to seven years, these grants are uniquely positioned to support the immediate research needs of local farmers.

In FY21, we received 32 proposals requesting a total of \$6.8 million. A panel of MDA and external reviewers recommended six projects, which received a total of \$1.44 million in grant funds. Please see Appendix A for information about grantees. In FY22, we received 20 proposals totaling \$4.2 million and expect to award \$1 million through five grants in February.

The comprehensive AGRI evaluation revealed that AGRI Crop Research Grants are impacting both researchers and growers as intended, and the knowledge gained from grant-funded research is being widely disseminated. Ninety-five percent of grantees shared knowledge with the community/world, often through venues like University of Minnesota Extension, industry and commodity associations, regional and national conferences, and field days. This knowledge is being passed both to relevant academic communities and, most importantly, to farmer/producer groups. In addition, the research funded through this grant program has been frequently published, cited by other publications, and used as the basis for further research projects.

Because the AGRI Crop Research grant has enabled us to conduct a first-of-its-kind study, the benefits to us as a company are substantial within the industry. I was hoping for a good response to our research, but the interest and response has been much larger than expected.

Mike Swanson, Far North Spirits

Some of the farmers have cited this research as some of the best research we've had in the last two decades. Implementing the results have saved thousands of dollars, increased yields, and reduced the amount of pesticides applied annually.

Beth Nelson, Minnesota Wild Rice

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

University of Minnesota Researchers George Weiblen and Thomas Michaels received an AGRI Crop Research Grant to improve industrial hemp through plant breeding and to develop DNA tests for certification of planting seed.

Industrial hemp is a source of durable fiber and nutritious grain that present opportunities for greater economic diversity in Minnesota agriculture but its similarity to marijuana presents significant legal challenges. The project aims to reduce farmers' risk of producing illegal *Cannabis* with genetic testing of seed prior to planting. The project is also developing new cultivars adapted for our region that are derived from feral *Cannabis* and from historic fiber cultivars.



Professor Tom Michaels and research associate Jonathan Wenger examine a selection of feral hemp at the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station in Saint Paul.

Farm to School Grants

The goal of this competitive grant program is to increase the sales of Minnesota agricultural products by making it possible for more schools to buy, store, and serve Minnesota grown and raised products as a part of the National School Lunch Program. In the FY20-21 agriculture appropriations budget rider, the Legislature provided the MDA with the authority to reimburse schools for purchasing Minnesota grown and raised products for use in their school meal programs. We developed two programs in FY21 tailored towards schools with differing levels of Farm to School experience:

- **First Bite Mini Grants:** intended for school districts who are new to Farm to School. Schools were eligible to apply for grants up to \$5,000 and were not required to provide matching funds.
- **Full Tray Grants:** designed for school districts with some prior Farm to School experience. Schools were eligible to apply for up to \$35,000, depending on the number of meals served in their school lunch program. A 1:1 cash match was required.

In FY21, we received 28 proposals requesting more than \$400,000. We awarded 27 Farm to School Grants for a total of \$294,907. Schools are using their funds to purchase a wide variety of Minnesota grown and raised products. For example, Mesabi East is planning to purchase 400 pounds of wild rice from Bois Forte, and Robbinsdale is working towards purchasing products such as wild rice, honey, oats, cheese curds, and turkey. Through a Specialty Crop Block Grant partnership with Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy and University of Minnesota Extension, the economic impacts of this program are being evaluated and grantees are receiving technical assistance to improve their Farm to School programs. Please see Appendix B for a list of recipients and a map of their locations.

In FY22, we revised the Request for Proposals to allow schools to request both food funds (through the First Bite Mini-Grant and Full Tray Grant) and equipment funds. We received 68 proposals requesting over \$1.3 million and we're in the processing of awarding nearly \$750,000 to 46 schools and school districts.

Good Food Access Program

This program increases availability of and access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food, including produce, for underserved communities in low- and moderate-income areas. The GFAP provides financial support and technical assistance to open, renovate, or expand the operations of grocery stores and small food retailers, and expands access to credit and reduces barriers to investment. MINN. STAT. 17.1017 describes eligibility requirements, program administration, and additional selection criteria. The FY20-FY21 budget rider allowed the Commissioner to use up to \$300,000 each year for this program.

In FY21, the GFAP Advisory Committee recommended that the full appropriation be used for GFAP Equipment and Physical Improvement Grants. We received 51 applications requesting over \$1.7 million and selected 14 projects for a total of just over \$300,000 (a small portion was funded through a separate appropriation). Awards ranged in size from \$2,500 to \$40,000. Grant funds were primarily used to upgrade and expand existing infrastructure. Common purchases included new coolers, freezers, refrigeration units, and display units.

In FY22, \$400,000 is available for GFAP Equipment and Physical Improvement Grants and Technical Assistance Grants. Applications are being accepted until mid-March. More detailed information about this program can be found in a separate *Good Food Access Program Legislative Report*.

GAP/GHP Cost-Share

The Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)/Good Handling Practices (GHP) Certification Cost-Share program defrays farmer and processor costs to obtain GAP and/or GHP certification for food safety. This kind of certification is increasingly required to sell produce to schools, institutions, and through retail markets.

GAP and GHP certifications focus on improving the safety and quality of produce in the field and/or during handling. They require food safety plans and independent audits to verify that farmers and processors are producing, packing, handling, and storing fruits and vegetables in the safest manner possible. In FY21, growers and handlers who met USDA GAP and/or GHP standards, as assessed by an accredited certifier, were eligible to receive a reimbursement of 75 percent of their certification costs of up to \$2,500 for a maximum of three years.

In FY21, \$15,000 was available for GAP and GHP cost-share. We paid two eligible cost-share claims for a total of \$1,898. On average, farmers and processors reported spending \$948 on GAP/GHP certification.

In FY22, we have budgeted \$15,000 for this program. Applications will be accepted through May 15, 2022.

GAP/GHP Cost-Share Recipients & Legislative Districts

Minnesota Harvest, LLC (55B)
Fresha, LLC (12A)

Livestock Investment Grant

The AGRI Livestock Investment Grant (LIG), (MINN.STAT. 17.118), encourages long-term industry development for Minnesota livestock producers through investments in infrastructure and equipment. Grantees are reimbursed for 10 percent of qualifying expenses with a maximum award of \$25,000 per year and a lifetime cap of \$50,000 per operation.

The Livestock Investment Grant is a great program. Although it was a very small portion of what the building cost, every little bit helps, and it is great that Minnesota is promoting agriculture allowing young kids, who are willing to take over their family farms, to do so.

Hennen Family, Ghent, Minnesota

Grants are awarded competitively based upon recommendations made by a panel of MDA and external reviewers with experience in the livestock industry. This year, evaluation criteria prioritized new farmers, generational transitions, recovery from natural disasters, farm management plans/programs, accessibility improvements, improving profitability, and positive environmental impacts.

We received 99 grant applications requesting \$1.6 million and awarded \$756,000 to 44 producers. Participating farmers invested

\$24 million in private funding, a 32 to 1 ratio of private to public funds leveraged to enhance livestock operations in the state. Producers of dairy, beef, pork, sheep, goats, and poultry received grants.

A list of awardees and a map of their locations are available in Appendix C.

Of the grants awarded:

- 100 percent foresee a positive economic outcome from their investment.
- 81 percent were awarded to applicants who were either beginning farmers or working towards transitioning the farm to the next generation.
- 95 percent of recipients will make improvements that will make a positive impact on animal welfare.
- three recipients intend to start or transition to a robotic dairy system and three are responding to a natural disaster.

In FY22, approximately \$1.3 million is available for grants, split between rounds in the fall and the spring. The fall round resulted in awarding 50 grants totaling \$860,000. The second round of applications for the remaining \$440,000 will be open until April 5, 2022.

The comprehensive AGRI evaluation highlighted some of the impacts of the LIG program. A total of 93 percent of grantees saw a positive impact on their organization/institution. LIG grants are enabling farmers to maximize their farms' revenues—92 percent of grantees experienced increased gross revenue, with almost half experiencing an increase of more than 20 percent. Critically, most of the outcomes/benefits achieved by grantees because of the grants were sustained over time. These include improved animal welfare and health, increased efficiency and profitability, more sustainable practices/processes, and improved mental health and optimism about the future of the operation. Nearly half of grantees cited an increased ability to bring in a new generation of owners/operators, and many noted that LIG funding had already allowed them to successfully transition from one generation to the next.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

Providence Pig Parlour's Tim Harder and his son are the 5th and 6th generations on the farm dating back to the 1880's and have been in the swine production industry since 1973. Their LIG project, adding a new 3,200 head hog barn to their operation, will support the sustainability of the family farm operation and the environment. The manure from the facility will be used as fertilizer for their organic crops as they anticipate completing their transition to organic farming in 2023. The project is also adding significant technology enhancements to the farm.



The technology in the barn is amazing: computer monitor that emails, texts, calls your cell phone with any warnings or updates, feed bin scales that knows the tonnage of feed remaining and based on how the weight has decreased and the pace of the decrease will tell you how many more days of feed remaining before the need to order again, and lots of other bells and whistles.

Tim Harder, Butterfield, Minnesota

New Markets Program Cost-Share

The AGRI New Markets Program helps Minnesota farms, food, and beverage companies explore new markets and expand their market reach. The program serves both startup companies and more established entrepreneurs with business development and financial assistance. Funds are intended to help them gain a competitive advantage in regional, national, and international markets. The Program also works to connect Minnesota farm products to Minnesota-based food manufacturers. Other resources include lists of Minnesota copackers and commercial kitchens and the *Roadmap to Food Business Development* to assist small businesses.

During more typical years, programming revolves around Minnesota Pavilions (branded areas within domestic and international tradeshows that features Minnesota farms, food, and beverage companies) and cost-share programs. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we couldn't lead any Minnesota Pavilions. Instead, we expanded cost-share programs to help entrepreneurs weather marketplace changes.

- **Wholesale Cost-Share Program** assisted Minnesota-based food and beverage makers with participation in business-to-business trade shows (including virtual events), store sampling/product demonstrations, and contracted store merchandising and promotional work.
- **E-commerce and Digital Marketing Program** aided with e-commerce, email, and digital marketing to Minnesota farms and food and beverage manufacturers with an MDA food license.

Between the two cost-share programs, the MDA invested \$385,000 of AGRI funding and assisted 144 Minnesota farms and food and beverage companies.

Nearly half of program participants responded to a year-end survey. Notable impacts include:

- \$8.4 million in project new sales, averaging about \$58,000 per participant
- 2,460 new markets explored
- Products in 8,200 new (to them) stores
- 138 new relationships with distributors

In the same survey, respondents indicated that 62 percent self-identify as “woman-owned” and 16 percent self-identified as “Hispanic/Latino/a/x”, “African American”, “Asian-American or Pacific Islander”, “Native American”, or “Veteran”-owned.

Please see Appendix D for a list of AGRI New Markets Program Cost-Share participants.

According to the comprehensive AGRI evaluation, 76 percent of participants in the program reported increased sales and increased awareness of their products/services/processes, and most reported that these increases were sustained over time. In fact, about half of the program participants saw an increase in revenue of more than 20 percent, and nearly one-third saw their revenue more than double. In addition, over 80 percent of participants increased their marketplace connections as a direct result of the program—these included connections with new retail companies, an increased footprint within existing retailers, or the addition of new wholesalers or distributors.

In FY22, \$340,000 is available for the program. We continue to operate cost-share programs and hope to be able to participate in other trade events.

Pivoting to online sales saved our growing season. The Cost-Share Program helped soften COVID's blow and keeps us hopeful for 2021.

Kerri Meyer, Good Courage Farm
Hutchinson, Minnesota

Cost-Share helped us when restaurants closed, as we lost those markets. With your help, we quickly pivoted to direct-to-consumer online.

Noreen Thomas, Doubting Thomas Farms
Moorhead, Minnesota

Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grants

Since 1989, the Sustainable Agriculture (SustAg) Demonstration Grant (MINN. STAT. 17.116) has helped farmers, nonprofit groups, agricultural researchers, and educators explore ways to enhance the sustainability of a wide range of farming systems. The program was originally funded through a dedicated biennial appropriation. Funding shifted to the AGRI program in FY13.

The program funds projects that research or demonstrate farm-based agricultural techniques or systems that address energy efficiency, environmental benefit, or profitability. Grantees report annually on their progress, and their reports are compiled and published by MDA in the **Greenbook** so other farmers and researchers can learn from their experiences.

SustAg Grants are competitive; proposals are reviewed and scored by a panel of MDA staff and outside experts, including farmers, agriculture scientists, educators, and marketing specialists. The program funds two and three-year projects with a maximum award of \$50,000.

In FY21 we received 22 proposals requesting \$693,607 and funded nine projects for a total of \$256,981. Please see Appendix E for more information about grantees.

The comprehensive AGRI evaluation found that all grantees surveyed increased their personal knowledge of important concepts in sustainable agriculture, and two-thirds were able to successfully implement more sustainable processes on their farms. Some of the positive outcomes noted by grantees as a direct result of their awards include increases in regenerative processes, including more cover crops and better grazing management, a reduction in tillage, increases in biodiversity and topsoil retention, and reductions in water runoff and/or use of synthetic fertilizer. All the grantees surveyed noted a positive impact on their own farms/organizations, and 93 percent also noted a positive impact on their broader community/business ecosystem.

In FY22, we received 18 proposals requesting \$548,224. We anticipate awarding \$250,000 in February.



The MDA distributed approximately 500 printed copies of the 2021 Greenbook. More than 700 people visited the MDA website's Greenbook webpage page in FY21.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

Philip Stowe of Walking Plants Orchard is conducting a coordinated research project that looks at Honeyberry/Haskap yield, pollination, and labor requirements on farms in west-central and northeastern Minnesota. The goal of the project is to collect production data that may help to make this fruit crop more commercially viable in Minnesota.



A “Waxwing” manual harvester (left) used to harvest the fruit and a Smart Net Systems Ltd. netting (overhead) are essential pieces of equipment required for this project. George Terwey of Haskap Minnesota, and one of the collaborating farms working on the project, receives a little bit of extra harvesting help from his granddaughter.



A Robert Marvel Model 2400 Mini Layer is laying mulch/fabric prior to transplanting Boreal Beauty and Boreal Beast Haskaps in year one of Walking Plant Orchard's SustAg grant project.

Photos above courtesy of George Terwey, Haskap Minnesota

Urban Agriculture Grants

These grants are designed to promote urban youth agricultural education and/or urban agriculture community development in urban and peri-urban areas throughout the state. For-profit businesses, nonprofit organizations, schools, local government entities, and Native American Tribal communities are eligible to apply for the program. Funds can be used to purchase equipment, make physical improvements, and cover dedicated staff time to carry out urban agriculture-related programming.

This is a competitive program. A panel comprised of MDA staff and external reviewers evaluates proposals for long-term sustainability, capacity to implement the project, impacts on economic justice and the environment, and commitment to serving communities of color or Native American Tribal communities.

In FY21, we received 53 proposals requesting more than \$1.87 million. We awarded 13 grants for a total of \$300,000. Please see Appendix G for a list of recipients.

For FY22, a total of \$551,000 is available. We received 53 applications requesting approximately \$2.3 million. We anticipate awarding grants in early March.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

The Boys and Girls Club of Bemidji received an AGRI Urban Agriculture grant for an indoor hydroponic growing system to expand their current gardening program into a year-round endeavor.

The hydroponic growing system was installed in March 2021 and has already been incorporated into regular programming for youth at the Boys and Girls Club. Program participants work together to maintain the growing system, while learning about science, healthy eating, and leadership. During the summer of 2021, the hydroponic farm grew lettuce, which students enjoy shortly after harvest.

The Boys and Girls Club of the Bemidji Area installed a hydroponic growing system, which provides year-round ag-based learning opportunities for their youth. The photo is a peek inside the door of the growing system to see lettuce that is almost ready for harvest.



Value-Added Grants

The AGRI Value-Added Grants help value-added businesses invest in equipment and related physical improvements to increase sales of products produced with Minnesota grown ingredients by helping businesses invest in production capacity, market diversification, and market access. For the purposes of this grant, we define value-added as the addition of value to an agricultural product through processing.

In FY21, this program offered equipment purchases and related physical improvements to improve the capacity of the businesses to process Minnesota grown/raised products. Awards covered up to 25 percent of expenditures, with a maximum award of \$150,000. In some prior years, we have also offered grants to businesses conducting feasibility studies, but we were unable to offer this option because of limited funding.

Projects that received priority responded to one or more of the following needs: creating additional meat/poultry processing capacity, increasing food safety to improve marketability, responding to changing market conditions because of COVID-19, and responding to civil unrest, primarily in the Twin Cities Metro Area.

In total, we received 93 applications requesting a total of \$5.2 million. A total of 31 projects were awarded a total of \$1.3 million. These projects were matched by non-State investments of \$9.2 million, resulting in a 7 to 1 ratio of non-state to state funds leveraged to expand and modernize value-added businesses that use Minnesota grown agricultural products. A list of awardees and a map of their locations are available in Appendix F.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

Belen Rodriguez immigrated to the United States from Argentina with a dream of opening her own food business. After working in the restaurant industry for a few years to gain experience, in 2018 she realized her dream by establishing Quebracho, which focused initially on producing ready to eat food and catered events. The emergence of COVID required changes to Quebracho’s business plan, and the company shifted its focus to producing pre-packaged empanadas and wholesaling them to grocery stores.

The AGRI Value-Added Grant allowed Quebracho to purchase the necessary equipment, including an empanada press and food processor, to aid in this transition and ensure the safety and profitability of the new business model. Belen noted, “This project allowed us to work faster, reduce labor costs, and also ensure that, by working faster, we reduced possible biological hazards for our ingredients and better complied with our USDA license.” Quebracho’s empanadas are now available in 107 grocery stores across four states.



Photos courtesy of Belen Rodriguez, Quebracho

Of the FY21 grants, 17 projects totaling \$786,000 are helping to alleviate bottlenecks and increasing capacity in meat, poultry, egg, or milk processing. Grantees are reporting increasing their beef processing from 2,652 to 4,394 head per year, hogs from 2,704 to 4,670 per year, chickens from 18,000 to 25,000 per year, and sheep/goat from 50 to 164 per year.

According to the comprehensive AGRI evaluation, some of the benefits that can be directly attributed to the program include business and production growth, improved quality of products and services, increased investment in innovation, increased use of Minnesota grown/raised products, and better compliance with regulations, such as food safety. In addition, most grantees experienced increased sales and long-term profitability of their business/farm, both of which were sustained over time. Of those grantees that process livestock, 86 percent reported increased processing capacity, and over 20 percent were able to more than double their capacity. Over half of grantees increased the number of people they employ due to the grant—among those who did, the average increase was seven employees, with five of those positions being permanent.

In FY22, we are offering two programs for value-added processing. A new Meat, Poultry, Egg, and Milk Processing Grant, tailored to these types of processors, offered up to \$750,000. Response to this program exceeded our expectations, with 64 businesses submitting requests totaling \$3.2 million. We are in the process of awarding grants to 16 businesses. In January 2022, we released the typical Value-Added Grant that is open to all types of processors. We anticipate awarding an additional \$1 million through this application process.

Crop Research Grant Recipients

Project Title	Organization	Principal Investigator	Crop(s)
Expanding the Use of Hail Netting for Non-Chemical Insect Pest Management in Apple Production	Regents of the University of Minnesota	Annie Klodd	Apple
Hybrid Rye as a Grain and Forage Crop for Minnesota	Regents of the University of Minnesota	Daniel Kaiser	Hybrid rye and corn silage
Developing Molecular Markers for Selecting and Improving Minnesota Hemp	Regents of the University of Minnesota	George Weiblen and Tom Michaels	Industrial hemp
Increasing High Tunnel Vegetable Productivity through Improved Soil Health	Regents of the University of Minnesota	Julie Grossman	Greens
Accelerating the Development of Winter Barley Cropping Systems for Minnesota	Regents of the University of Minnesota	Kevin P. Smith	Barley and soybean
Developing Nutrient Recommendations for East African Leafy Crops Grown in Minnesota	Regents of the University of Minnesota	Paulo Pagliari	Malvaceae, Cleomaceae, Vigna, Poaceae, and Fabaceae families

Farm to School Grant Recipients

First Bite Grants

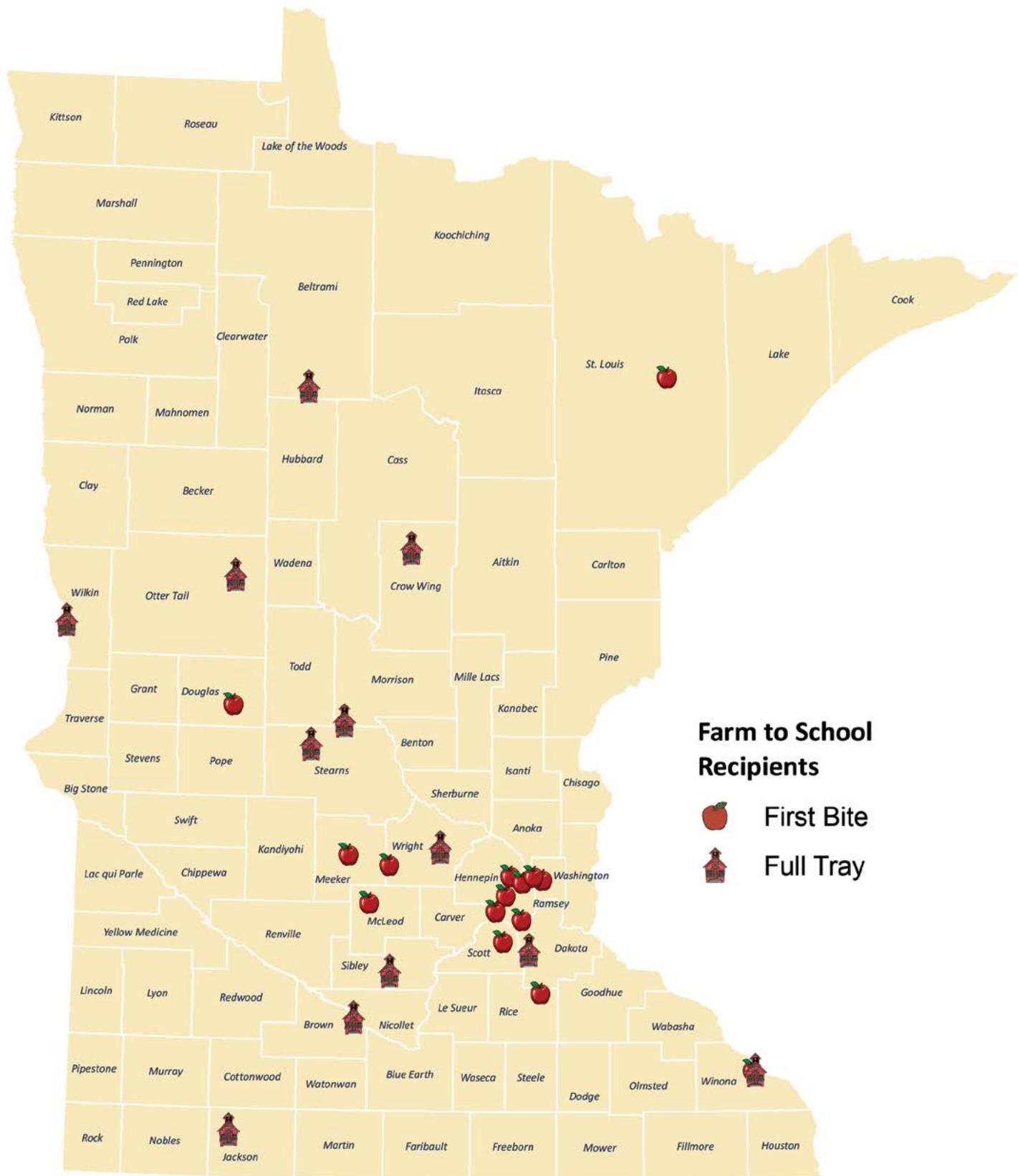
School District	County	Summary
All Saints Catholic Schools	Dakota	Purchasing local produce, meat, and poultry from Minnesota farmers.
Aurora Waasakone Community of Learners	Beltrami	Purchasing local fruits, vegetables, and herbs.
Buffalo Public Schools	Wright	Purchasing local produce from Minnesota farmers.
Crosslake Community School	Crow Wing	Purchasing local apples and protein from Minnesota farmers.
Heron Lake-Okabena Public Schools	Jackson	Purchasing meat, poultry, and produce from Minnesota farmers.
Immanuel Lutheran School	Sibley	Purchasing eggs, meat, and produce from local farmers.
Melrose Public Schools	Stearns	Purchasing local meat and produce from Minnesota farmers.
New Ulm Area Catholic Schools	Brown	Purchasing bison and vegetables from local producers.
New York Mills Public Schools	Otter Tail	Purchasing beef and produce from Minnesota farmers.
Saint Mary's School, Breckenridge	Wilkin	Purchasing beef and produce from Minnesota farmers.
Upsala Public Schools	Morrison	Purchasing local fruits and vegetables from Minnesota farmers.
Winona Area Public Schools	Winona	Purchasing local meat, poultry, and produce from Minnesota farmers.

Farm to School Grant Recipients

Full Tray Grants

School District	County(ies)	Summary
Alexandria Public Schools	Douglas	Purchasing turkey, squash, beets, potatoes, broccoli, lettuce, kale, and carrots from local producers.
Bloomington Public Schools	Hennepin	Purchasing apples and turkey from local producers.
Dassel-Cokato Public Schools	Wright and Meeker	Purchasing Minnesota eggs, grains, meat, and produce.
Eden Prairie Public Schools	Hennepin	Purchasing local produce, cheese, chicken, flour, mushrooms, and Jonny Pops.
Hopkins Public Schools	Hennepin	Purchasing grains and turkey from local producers.
Hutchinson Public Schools	McLeod	Purchasing Minnesota fruits and vegetables.
Litchfield Public Schools	Meeker	Purchasing Minnesota fruits and vegetables.
Mesabi East Public Schools	Saint Louis	Purchasing local produce from Minnesota farmers.
Minneapolis Public Schools	Hennepin	Purchasing turkey, tomatoes, peppers, squash, radishes, green beans, and cucumbers from local producers.
Northfield Public Schools	Rice	Purchasing local fruits, vegetables, and turkey.
Prior Lake Public Schools	Scott	Purchasing local meat, grains, and produce from Minnesota farmers.
Riverway Learning Community	Winona	Purchasing produce from Minnesota farmers.
Robbinsdale Area Schools	Hennepin	Purchasing local beef, oats, honey, wild rice, turkey, cornmeal, cheese curds, and a variety of fruits and vegetables from Minnesota producers.
Roseville Public Schools	Ramsey	Purchasing vegetables, fruits, and turkey from Minnesota farmers.
St. Anthony-New Brighton Public Schools	Hennepin	Purchasing turkey, vegetables, and fruits from Minnesota producers.

Farm to School Grants by County Fiscal Year 2021



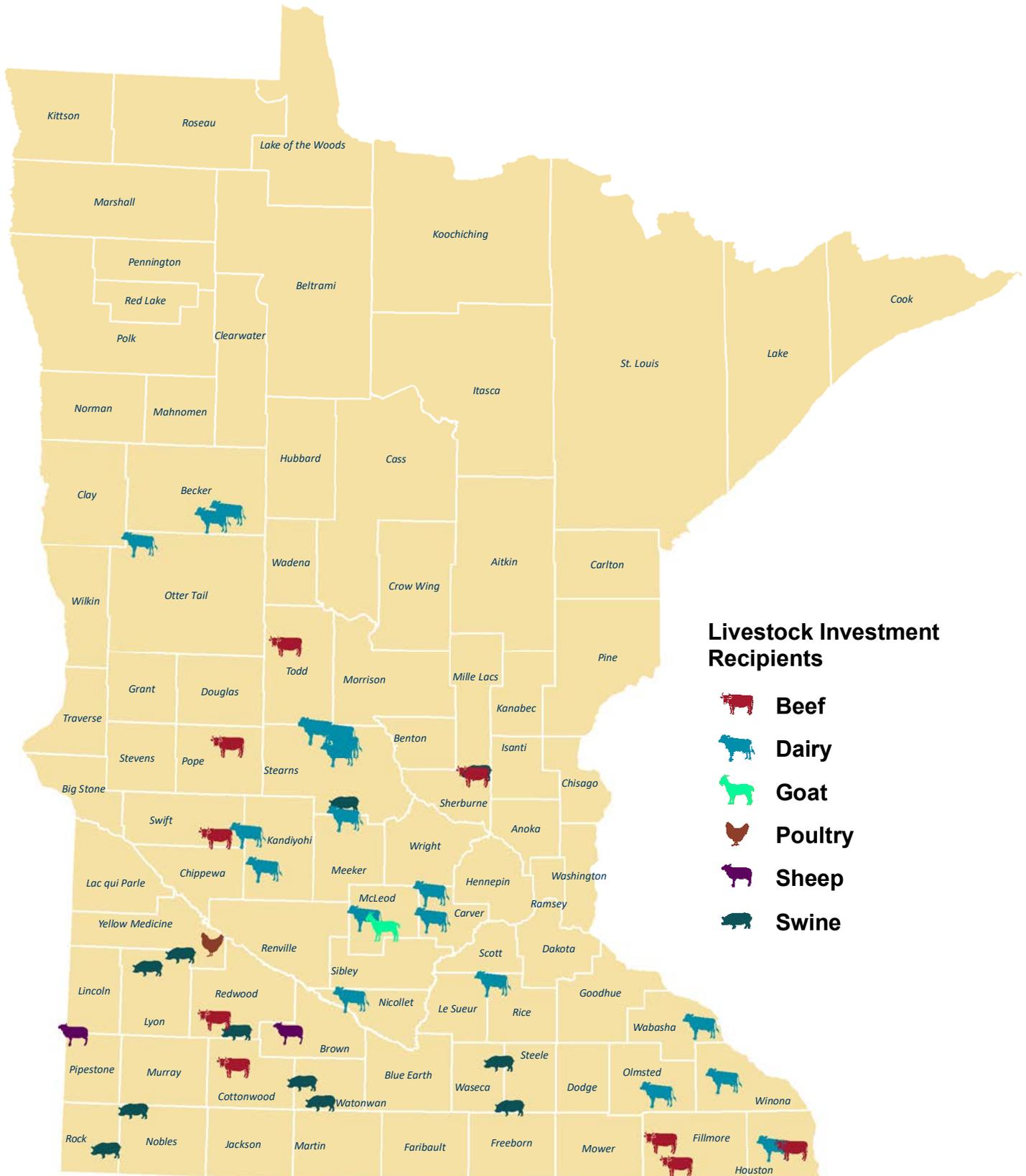
Livestock Investment Grant Recipients

Legislative District	County	Name	Species
02B	Becker	Andrew Ingvalson, Ingvalson Dairy	Dairy
02B	Becker	Jamin Aho, J & A Dairy	Dairy
08A	Otter Tail	Philip Rotz, Twin Oaks Dairy	Dairy
09A	Todd	Jeremiah Korfe	Beef
12B	Pope	Jennifer J. Olson, Golden Banty Farm	Beef
12B	Stearns	Floyd Rodenwald	Dairy
12B	Stearns	John Schiffler, Schiffler Dairy, LLC	Dairy
12B	Stearns	Kimberly Ann Engelmeyer	Dairy
12B	Stearns	Lynn Ann Gerads, Gerads Family Farm	Dairy
12B	Stearns	Sadie J. Frericks, Blue Diamond Dairy	Dairy
13A	Stearns	Kenneth Gruenes	Hog
15A	Sherburne	Anneliese Walker, Walker Farms, LLC	Beef
15A	Sherburne	Carla Mertz, Iron Shoe Farm	Hog
16A	Lyon	Braden T. French	Hog
16A	Lyon	Stephen A. Hennen	Hog
16A	Yellow Medicine	Hunter Steven Kvistad, Kvistad Ag Co.	Poultry
16B	Brown	Heather Holles	Sheep
16B	Redwood	Timm Gabriel Bever, Bever Farms	Beef
17A	Swift	Luke M. Sanders, Wilts Family Farms	Beef
17B	Kandiyohi	Chris Schueler, Deerview Dairy, LLLP	Dairy
17B	Swift	Warren Johnson, Building Block Holsteins	Dairy
18A	McLeod	Tammy Howe, Howe Holsteins	Dairy
18A	Meeker	Rachael Rusch, Ru-Be Dairy, LLC	Dairy
18B	McLeod	Curt Bussler, B3 Goats Mitigation Services	Goat
19A	Nicollet	Cory Wilson, Wilson Dairy	Dairy
20B	Rice	Emily Pieper, Metogga Lake Dairy, LLC	Dairy
21B	Wabasha	Dalon H. Miller	Dairy
22A	Nobles	Nicole Vis, Vis Incorporated	Hog
22A	Pipestone	Justin Fruechte, Sturdy Post Ranch	Sheep
22A	Rock	Cody Penning	Hog
22B	Cottonwood	Tyson Anderson, Highwater Creek Ranch	Beef
22B	Redwood	Ryan Mark Benedict	Hog

Livestock Investment Grant Recipients

Legislative District	County	Name	Species
23A	Watonwan	Ryan W Brandts	Hog
23A	Watonwan	Tim Harder, Providence Pig Parlour, LLC	Hog
24A	Waseca	Paul J. Zimmerman, Woodville Pork	Hog
24B	Steele	Taylor T. Holland, Taylor Holland Pork	Hog
26B	Olmsted	Kevin Borst, Borst Family Dairy	Dairy
28A	Winona	Carey Tweten, Valley Acres Dairy	Dairy
28B	Fillmore	Kenneth Fetterly, Fetterly's Oakside Farm	Beef
28B	Fillmore	McKinnen Gartner	Beef
28B	Houston	Connor Kevin McCormick, McCormick Farm	Beef
28B	Houston	Robert Ellenz	Dairy
47A	Carver	Tim Stender, Stender Dairy, LLC	Dairy
47A	Carver	Daryl Barfnecht, Barfnecht Farm, LLC	Dairy

Livestock Investment Grants by County Fiscal Year 2021



New Markets Cost-Share

Legislative District	County	Business Name	City
03A	Lake	Wildly Organic	Silver Bay
03B	Lake	Ruth's Vegetarian Gourmet	Two Harbors
04A	Clay	Doubting Thomas Farms	Moorhead
04B	Norman	Chisholm Trail Farm	Gary
05A	Beltrami	KC's BEST Inc.	Bemidji
05B	Itasca	Grand Rapids Farmers Market	Jacobson
07A	Saint Louis	Alakef Coffee Roasters	Duluth
07A	Saint Louis	Duluth Coffee Company	Duluth
07B	Saint Louis	Saltless Sea Urban Farm	Duluth
08A	Otter Tail	Northstar Seeds	Vergas
08A	Otter Tail	Terroir Chocolate	Fergus Falls
08B	Douglas	Dutch House Confections	Nelson
08B	Douglas	Stanley's Sugarbush, LLC	Miltona
09A	Todd	Stone Hill Farms, LLC	Browerville
09B	Morrison	Alaska Wild Fish Co.	Cushing
10B	Aitkin	Ole Lake Farm	Aitkin
12A	Wilkin	Bruders' Butcher (Breckenridge)	Breckenridge
12B	Stearns	Bruders' Butcher	Melrose
12B	Stearns	Jer-Lindy Farms, LLC	Brooten
12B	Stearns	Redhead Creamery, LLC	Brooten
15A	Mille Lacs	Brown Family Farm, LLC	Oak Park
15A	Sherburne	Iron Shoe Farm	Princeton
15B	Sherburne	Thousand Hills	Becker
16B	Brown	Sweethaven Tonics, LLC	New Ulm
17B	Kandiyohi	Mr. B's Chocolates	Willmar
18A	McLeod	Good Courage Farm, LLC	Hutchinson
18B	McLeod	Grounded Gardens	Silver Lake
20A	Scott	Sweetland Orchard, LLC	Webster
20B	Rice	Keepsake Cidery	Dundas
20B	Rice	Little Hill Berry Farm	Northfield
20B	Rice	Loon Liquors	Northfield
21A	Dakota	CannonBelles Cheese	Cannon Falls
21A	Goodhue	Clear Spring Farm, LLC	Welch

New Markets Cost-Share

Legislative District	County	Business Name	City
21A	Goodhue	Red Wing Farmers Market	Red Wing
21A	Wabasha	Wabasha Farmers Market	Pepin
22B	Cottonwood	Krienke Foods International Inc.	Mountain Lake
22B	Nobles	Austin Williams	Brewster
23A	Faribault	Blue Dirt Farm	Blue Earth
23B	Waseca	Elysian Fields, LLC	Janesville
24A	Steele	Curly Girlz Candy, Inc.	Owatonna
25A	Olmsted	Squash Blossom Farm, LLC	Oronoco
25A	Olmsted	The Bee Shed, SBC	Oronoco
26A	Olmsted	Rochester Downtown Farmers Market	Rochester
27A	Freeborn	Grandma's Gourmets, LLC	Albert Lea
27A	Freeborn	Winebrook Farm	Albert Lea
27B	Mower	Flavour in a Jar	Dexter
28A	Winona	Big River Beverage Company, LLC	Goodview
28A	Winona	Metz's Hart-Land Creamery	Rushford
28B	Houston	Au Bon Canard Foie Gras Inc.	Caledonia
28B	Houston	Gardner Family Farm	Spring Grove
28B	Houston	Sno Pac Foods, Inc.	Caledonia
31A	Anoka	Live Organically	Oak Grove
31B	Anoka	Fiddlehead Farm	Andover
33A	Hennepin	North Mallow	Golden Valley
33A	Hennepin	Putting on the Ritts	Maple Plain
33A	Hennepin	Savor More, LLC	Saint Bonifacius
33B	Carver	Terranova Brands, LLC	Chanhasen
33B	Hennepin	Mostly Made	Wayzata
34A	Ramsey	Rooted Reserves, LLC	Saint Paul
36B	Hennepin	Chef FLO-K Foods	Brooklyn Park
39A	Chisago	Eichten's Cheese, LLC	Center City
39A	Washington	Sailor Mercy Company	Stillwater
39A	Washington	The Berry Patch	Forest Lake
39B	Ramsey	Costa Produce Farm & Greenhouse	Saint Paul
39B	Washington	Facepunch Foods	Stillwater
39B	Washington	Sara's Topsy Pies	Stillwater
39B	Washington	Vanilla Bean Project	Lakeland
40A	Hennepin	Kathie's Bakery	Brooklyn Park
40B	Hennepin	Get Bizzy Inc.	Brooklyn Center
41B	Hennepin	K-Mama Sauce, LLC	Minneapolis

New Markets Cost-Share

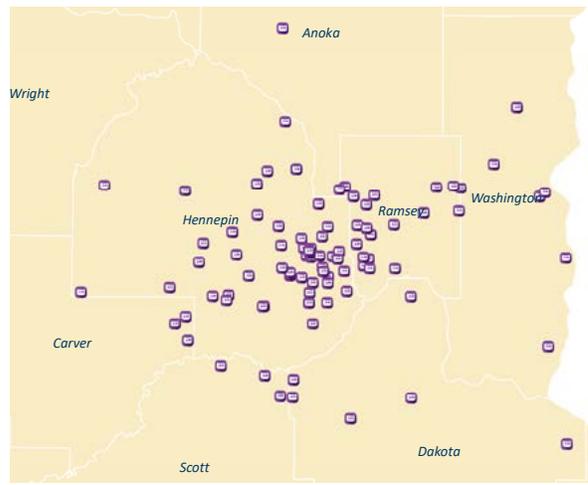
Legislative District	County	Business Name	City
42A	Ramsey	Planet Princess Foods	New Brighton
42A	Ramsey	Tastemakers LLC dba Maazah	Arden Hills
42A	Ramsey	White Bear Meadery	Gem Lake
43A	Hennepin	International Gourmet, Inc.	Saint Louis Park
43A	Ramsey	Henke Foods, LLC	Saint Paul
43A	Ramsey	Pure Ginger for You	New Brighton
43B	Ramsey	LUV Ice Cream	North Saint Paul
44B	Hennepin	TC Farm	Minnetonka
45A	Hennepin	Healthy America, LLC	Minneapolis
45B	Hennepin	Chocolate San Jose	New Hope
45B	Hennepin	Patti's Nuts & Granola	Minneapolis
46A	Hennepin	Kakookies	Plymouth
46A	Hennepin	The Functionist	Saint Louis Park
46B	Hennepin	HEPP'S Spice Co.	Hopkins
46B	Hennepin	Origin Meals, LLC	Wayzata
46B	Scott	Zambezi Kitchen, LLC	Savage
47B	Carver	Hinkemeyer Tree Farm	Chanhausen
48A	Hennepin	All Clean Food, LLC	Minnetonka
48A	Hennepin	Dashfire, LLC	Minnetonka
48A	Hennepin	Maddy & Maize	Eden Prairie
49A	Hennepin	Double Take Salsa	Edina
49A	Hennepin	Mama Kicks, LLC	Edina
49A	Hennepin	The Twisted Shrub	Edina
50A	Hennepin	Hellraising Hot Sauce, LLC	Richfield
52A	Dakota	GrIk, LLC	West Saint Paul
52B	Dakota	Let's Dish!	Burnsville
54B	Washington	Minnesota Hemp Farms, Inc.	Hastings
55A	Scott	Stone Gate Foods	Shakopee
56A	Dakota	Sprowt Labs	Burnsville
56A	Scott	Oak Valley Creations	Savage
57A	Dakota	Pahl Farms Inc.	Apple Valley
57B	Dakota	Coconut Whisk, LLC	Rosemount
58B	Dakota	Creative Confectionaire	Hastings
58B	Goodhue	TH Livestock, LLC (Churchill Reserve)	Cannon Falls
59B	Hennepin	Black Pearl Farms	Minneapolis
59B	Hennepin	Papa George's	Minneapolis
59B	Hennepin	Seven Sundays, LLC	Minneapolis

New Markets Cost-Share

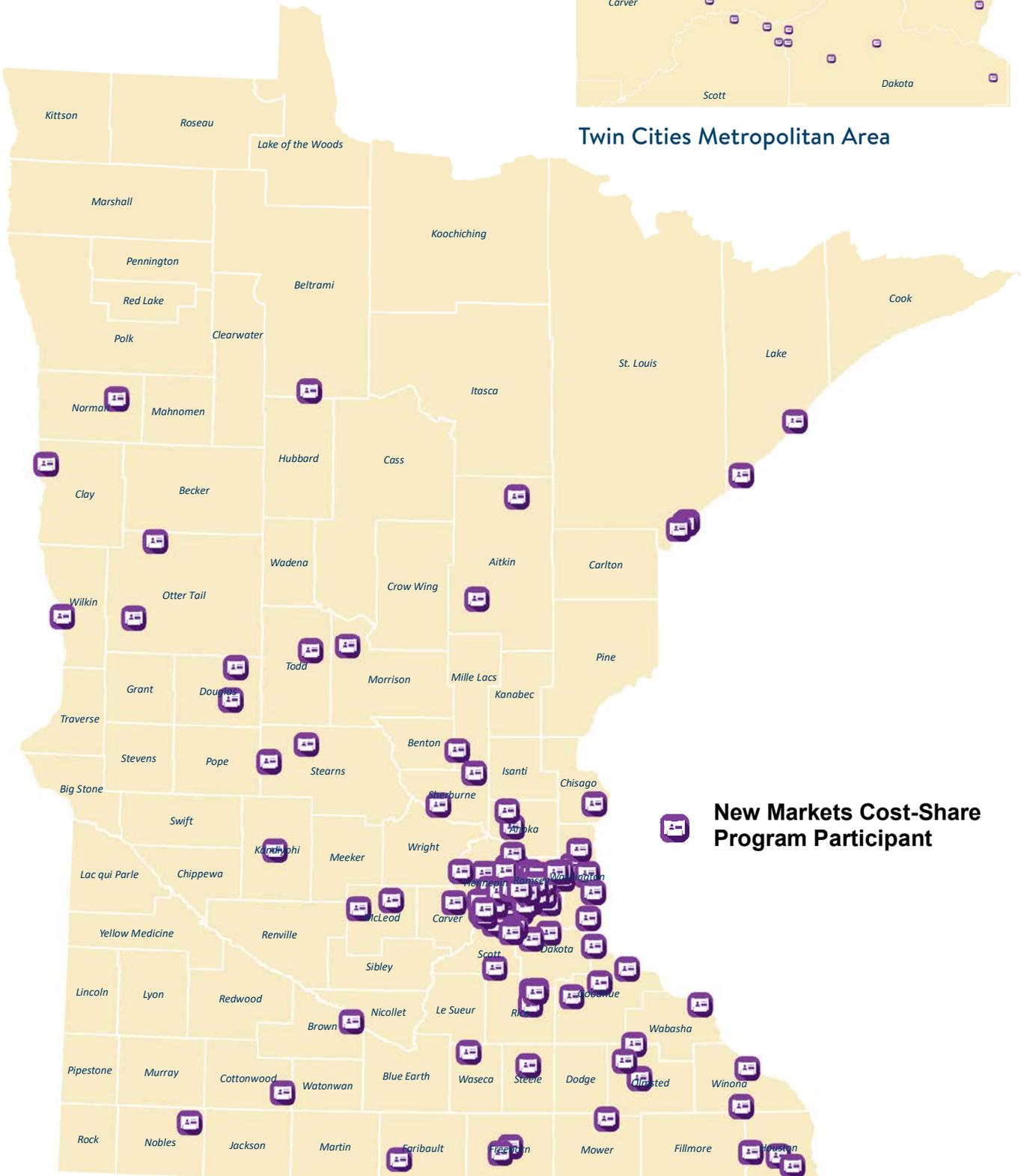
Legislative District	County	Business Name	City
60A	Hennepin	Laune Bread, LLC	Minneapolis
60A	Hennepin	Nutrisolutions, LLC	Minneapolis
60B	Hennepin	Bare Honey, LLC	Minneapolis
61A	Hennepin	Acme Organics, LLC	Minneapolis
61A	Hennepin	Coco, Bee & Nut, LLC	Minneapolis
61A	Hennepin	Crooked Water Spirits	Minneapolis
61A	Hennepin	Gustola Granola	Minneapolis
61A	Hennepin	Humble Nut Butter	Minneapolis
61A	Hennepin	Qwiznibet Foods	Minneapolis
61B	Hennepin	Daddy Sam's, LLC	Minneapolis
61B	Hennepin	Isadore Nut Company	Minneapolis
61B	Hennepin	Plucky Pickle Dip	Excelsior
62A	Hennepin	Big Watt Beverage	Minneapolis
62A	Hennepin	Five Friends Food, Inc.	Minneapolis
62A	Hennepin	Hoyo	Minneapolis
62A	Ramsey	Simpls	Saint Paul
63A	Hennepin	Peace Coffee	Minneapolis
63A	Hennepin	Social Mixers, LLC	Richfield
63A	Hennepin	University of Fisheries, LLC	Minneapolis
63A	Hennepin	You Betcha Fermentcha	Minneapolis
63B	Hennepin	Urban Chemist, LLC	Minneapolis
64A	Hennepin	Mr. Fuzz's Fiery Foods	Minneapolis
64A	Hennepin	Vikings and Goddesses Pie Company	Minneapolis
64A	Ramsey	Local Flavor, LLC (Ancient Indian Spices)	Saint Paul
64A	Ramsey	Nordic Waffles, LLC	Saint Paul
64B	Ramsey	Panache, LLC - Apples Just Right	Saint Paul
65A	Hennepin	Quebracho, LLC	Minneapolis
65A	Ramsey	Bolton Bees	Saint Paul
65A	Ramsey	Lovejoy's Bloody Mary Mix Inc.	Roseville
65B	Ramsey	Beautiful Necessity	Saint Paul
66A	Hennepin	Harmony Cricket Farm	Chanhausen
66A	Hennepin	SMACKIN' Sunflower Seeds	Minneapolis
66A	Ramsey	Blume Brauhaus, LLC (Bent Brewstillery)	Roseville
66A	Ramsey	Taking Stock Foods, LLC	Saint Paul
66A	Ramsey	The Good Acre	Falcon Heights
67B	Hennepin	Pipz Jerky	Bloomington

Appendix D

New Markets Program Cost-Share Participants by County Fiscal Year 2021



Twin Cities Metropolitan Area



New Markets Cost-Share Program Participant

Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant Recipients

Legislative District	Counties	Organization	Summary
03A	Lake, Cook, and Saint Louis	Friends of Finland, Stefan Meyer	Increase harvest and processing of wild rice and other small grains for small-scale growers in northeastern Minnesota.
08B	Carlton, Douglas, and Washington	Walking Plants Orchard, Phil Stowe	Research on-farm honeyberry production to determine best growing conditions.
21A	Goodhue	Grassfed Cattle Co., Valerie Luhman	Evaluate the impact of feed on animal health, growth rates, and meat quality in pastured poultry.
22A	Murray	Jason Miller	Evaluate erosion, yield, and economics in different tillage regimes after a winter-kill cover crop.
22A	Lincoln	Olsen Custom Farms, Chad Olsen	Research use of on-farm compost to reduce or eliminate commercial fertilizer.
28B	Houston	McCormick Farm, Connor McCormick	Compare no-till and conventional till for alfalfa hay establishment and production for a three-year stand.
60B	Stearns	Regents of the University of Minnesota, Vasudha Sharma	Compare variable to uniform rate irrigation for impacts on groundwater quality and quantity.
60B	Waseca	Regents of the University of Minnesota, Charlie Rohwer	Research tomato phosphorus removal rates with high- or low-phosphorus transplant solutions and grafting.
62B	Houston, Mower, Scott, and Winona	Land Stewardship Project, Shona Snater	Build and evaluate biodiverse, aerobic composts using the Johnson-Su method for crop and livestock farmers.

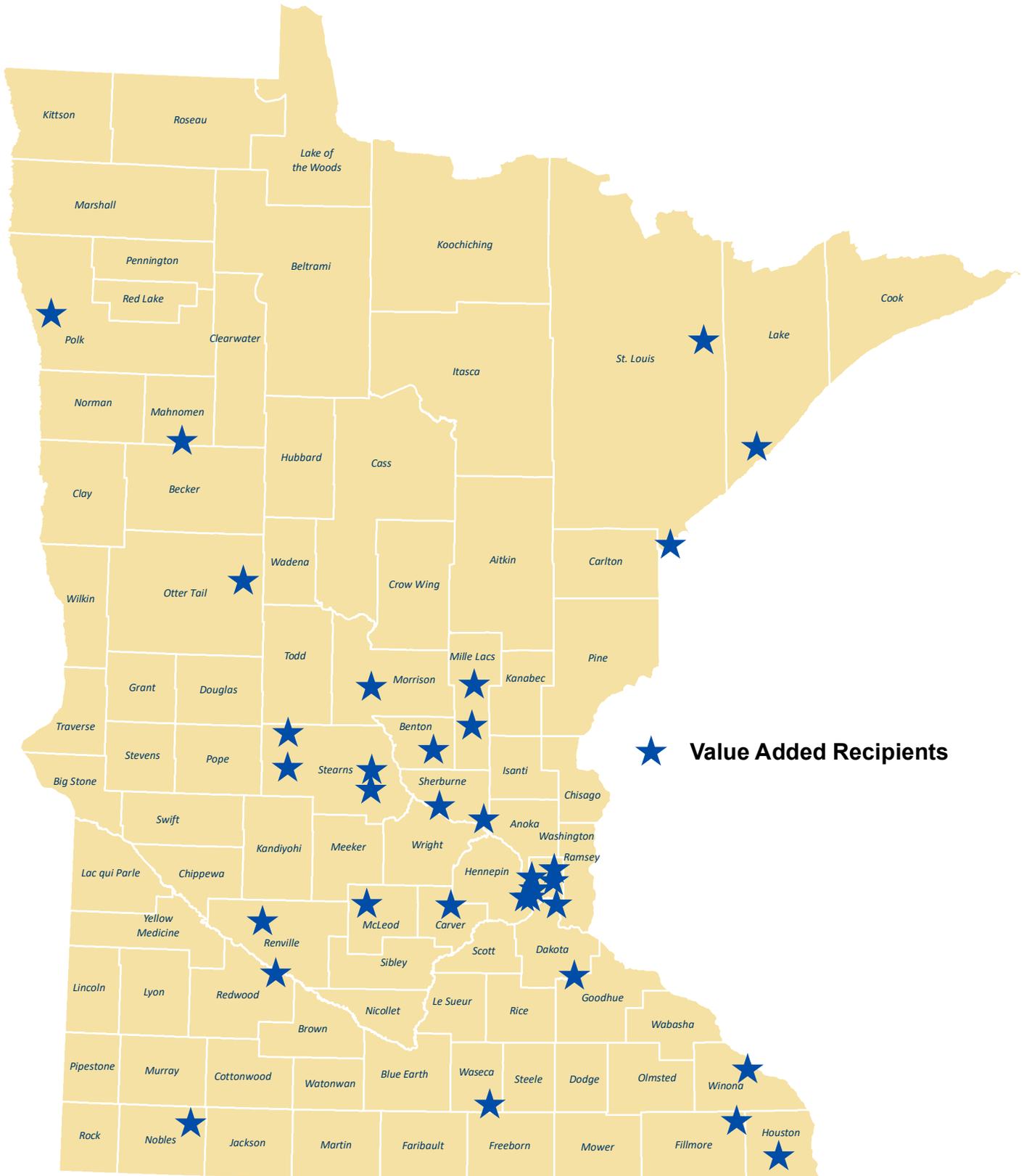
Value-Added Grant Recipients

Legislative District	County	Business Name	City
01B	Polk	Vertical Malt	Invest in ten-ton malting system.
02B	Mahnomen	Benson + Turner Foods, Inc.	Construct USDA-inspected meat processing plant and purchase equipment.
03A	Saint Louis	Zup's Market-Babbitt	Buy sausage stuffer and linker to expand product line.
03B	Lake	Love Creamery	Remodel production facility and support ice cream production.
07B	Saint Louis	Duluth Cider	Expand cider production with new equipment.
08B	Otter Tail	Midwest Meat, LLC	Open custom exempt meat processing facility.
09B	Morrison	Foothills Orchard	Complete fruit product lineup with equipment purchases.
12B	Stearns	Harry's Frozen Foods	Automate cheese application for frozen pizza.
12B	Stearns	MN Meats and Markets (Schaefer's Market)	Build meat processing and sausage production facility.
13A	Stearns	Milk and Honey Ciders	Enhance shelf stabilization with beverage equipment purchase.
13A	Stearns	Stickney Hill Dairy	Increase milk processing with reverse osmosis/ultra filtration equipment.
15A	Mille Lacs	Backroad Meats	Increase productivity of bacon with processing and packaging equipment.
15A	Mille Lacs	ForageScape Farm, LLC	Increase egg production with purchase of automated egg washing/candling equipment.
15B	Benton	Foley Locker, Inc.	Purchase grinder, tumbler, and sanitizing equipment.
15B	Sherburne	Thousand Hills Lifetime Grazed	Build out meat processing room and purchase equipment to grind, portion, and package fresh grass-fed beef.
16B	Renville	Lower Sioux Indian Community	Buy hemp processing equipment to process hemp hurd and make hempcrete.
18B	McLeod	Schwarzrock Meat Market, Inc.	Convert building for slaughter and hog processing, and purchase walk-in carcass cooler, refrigerated delivery truck, and other equipment.
21A	Goodhue	Lorentz Etc., Inc. (Lorentz Meats)	Build hide processing building and dry good packaging storage building, and purchase equipment.
21B	Winona	Big River Beverage Company, LLC	Increase production with purchase of brew kettle, keg washer, sanke kegs, and additional cold storage.
22B	Nobles	Austin Williams	Acquire equipment for new meat processing center.
23B	Waseca	Morgan's Meat Market	Upgrade production equipment, purchase new smokehouse, and replace production room floor.
24B	Renville	Prairie Meats, Inc.	Start second production line and resurface floor in processing, slaughter, and retail area.

Value Added Grant Recipient

Legislative District	County	Business Name	City
28B	Filmore	Featherstone Farm	Construct addition to warehouse and cooler upgrade.
28B	Houston	SnoPac Foods	Purchase sliver sizer removal and conveyor equipment.
30A	Sherburne	Clean Chickens and Co.	Purchase truck and aluminum trailer for mobile poultry processing.
42B	Ramsey	Ranchers Legacy US OP, LLC	Integrate Tomahawk TM-400 forming system to increase production capacity.
43A	Ramsey	Bare Honey, LLC	Create single-serve honey processing and packaging.
47A	Carver	Sovereign Estate Winery	Upgrade bottling line.
54A	Dakota	Concord Fresh Meat, Inc.	Purchase Indoor cooler, rail system, refrigerated truck, indoor freezer unit, and processing cooler.
63A	Hennepin	Laune Bread, LLC	Transform bakery and purchase equipment including bread oven.
63A	Hennepin	Quebracho, LLC	Sustain growth with purchase of new empanada press, food/meat grinder, and Robot Coupe continuous feed food processor.
64A	Ramsey	Bang Brewing Company, LLC	Increase production capacity with purchase of additional fermentation and lager tanks.
66A	Ramsey	R&R Cultivation	Purchase an indoor walk-in cooler, stainless steel tables, scales, reusable packaging containers, and an order preparation rack system.

Value-Added Grants by County Fiscal Year 2021



Urban Agriculture Grant Recipients

Legislative District	County	Organization	Summary
04B	Becker	Detroit Lakes High School	Building a long-lasting greenhouse for ag-based curriculum and projects, making agricultural education accessible to all students at every grade level.
05A	Beltrami	Boys and Girls Club of the Bemidji Area	Install a hydroponic growing system at their site to expand their youth agricultural lessons and extend their growing season year-round.
07B	Saint Louis	American Indian Community Housing Organization	Work with middle and high school students to foster youth development, strengthen the Indigenous food system, and ensure greater and more sustainable access to healthy Indigenous foods through community gardening projects.
11A	Carlton	Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Remodel and expand the Babaamaadiziwin Gitigaan (Journey Garden) and their outdoor kitchen space to serve as a centerpiece for agricultural education and community development.
19B	Blue Earth	Mankato Area Public Schools	Build a technology-enhanced greenhouse project to prepare students for “22nd Century” jobs focusing on farm to fork production and sustainability.
49B	Hennepin	Lionsgate Academy	Build a greenhouse to advance career exploration and other learning opportunities for their students.
59A	Hennepin	Growing North Minneapolis	Hire youth workers to work at 21 community garden sites, learning ag-based entrepreneurial skills through hands-on growing experiences with farmers and mentors.
60B	Hennepin	Twin Cities Community Agricultural Land Trust	Upgrade and install garden equipment to enhance youth lessons and improving accessibility at the UMN Peace Sanctuary Garden, located in Saint Paul.
62A	Hennepin	Hope Community, Inc.	Educate and engage 40 youth in three “Farm Science” community garden projects.
62A	Hennepin	North Country Food Alliance	Work with the Somali American Farming Association to expand and update the community garden located at the Horn Towers. The project will also include two food fellows and cultural interpreters to increase accessibility to the garden for residents.
62B	Hennepin	Youth Farm	Hire teens and a program specialist for the Youth Social Enterprise program, using urban agricultural experiences to improve food access, community health, education, and career development.
65B	Ramsey	Nova Classical Academy Green Team	Install raised beds and a composter to create educational opportunities for all students.
67B	Ramsey	Urban Roots	Continue the development of the Rivoli Urban Farm Site on the East Side of Saint Paul.