



Emerging Farmers Working Group

Friday, April 8, 2022, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Attending members: Ben Dossman, Kyle Huneke, Bridget Guiza, Murugi Mutiga-Waititu, Shelly Woods, Hannah Bernhardt, Naima Dhore, Emily Reno, Janssen Hang, Hindolo Pokawa and Kaitlyn Walsh.

Welcome: Assistant Commissioner and Working Group Chair: Patrice Bailey

Overview and Housekeeping: Facilitator Michael Birchard, VP of Mitchell Hamline School of Law

Video: Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan offered congratulations from the Governor's Office in the opening of the Emerging Farmer Office and addressed members emphasizing (their) stories and expertise are changing the foundation of agriculture in Minnesota. She thanked members for offering their diverse voices in the working group and thanked Lillian Otieno for her instrumental role in building on the important work coming from this office. You will find a video link on the EFWG web page.

Lieutenant Governor Flanagan also thanked the young farmers of FFA and 4H for their work in producing the first MN AG Plate. She shared the Governor's "Move Minnesota Forward" budget proposals which include \$2 million dollars to support BIPOC and immigrant producers and businesses and \$3 million dollars in grant funds to support MN Farmers' Market Association for resiliency and technical assistance.

Legislative Session Overview: Deputy Commissioner Andrea Vaubel

As of April 8, Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) has been discovered in 12 MN counties. The MDA is working closely with the Board of Animal Health on tracking and outreach. The MN Legislature has rushed through \$1 million in emergency funding to the MDA to bolster the fight against bird flu, a highly contagious disease that has hit the state's turkey population. For more information visit the Board of Animal Health website: [Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Response | Minnesota Board of Animal Health \(state.mn.us\)](https://www.mn.gov/animal-health).

The Drought Bill is waiting to be conferenced yet between the House and the Senate and the Ag Budget Bill is in progress between both bodies. For more information, Links are posted below.

Here's a link to the current house bill

https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/text.php?number=HF4366&version=1&session=ls92&session_year=2022&session_number=0

And the current senate bill:

https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/text.php?number=SF4019&version=latest&session=ls92&session_year=2021&session_number=0

Emerging Farmer Office updates from Lillian Otieno, Emerging Farmer Outreach and Engagement Coordinator.

Lillian shared a *slide presentation highlighting the many Emerging Farmer Office (EFO) outreach and engagement opportunities she has connected this office with. A new grant opportunity to develop innovative and culturally appropriate ways of providing financial counseling, problem solving, and other forms of enterprise to support emerging and historically underserved farmers who are currently engaged in agricultural production. *Emailed to EFWG members.

The EFO now has a public facing email address: mda.emerging.farmers@state.mn.us This email allows for a more centralized communication and access by the EFO to respond to emails in a timely manner from the working group and the public. Please share this email address with your contacts.

The Emerging Farmer Office was recently featured in a full-page article in the March/April MOSES newsletter. Read the article: [Broadcaster-MOSES-mar-apr-2022-b.indd \(mosesorganic.org\)](#)

Lillian notified attendees that she has been redeployed to the Public Engagement Team at the Office of Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan beginning April 11, 2022 with an expected end date in June 2022. She plans to have MDA office hours on Thursdays and Fridays as able. Please reach out to Tammy with any immediate / urgent needs and she will be able to connect you with Lillian or Assistant Commissioner Patrice Bailey.

Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Update: Alex Cortes, MDA Produce Safety Outreach Analyst.

Alex thanked members who attended the March 10 and March 22 review and discussion meetings regarding drafting the USDA grant application.

This grant will provide funding for state and federally recognized tribal governments to purchase food from local and regional producers, targeting purchases from socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Funds will help increase the consumption of local food and build and expand economic opportunity for local and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. The application is due May 6th to the USDA.

The LFPA grant was introduced to the EFWG in February. Three meetings have been held with the EFWG members, and two public meetings were held to gather input. There were an estimated 45 attendees in two public sessions. Farmers, farmer support organizations, and hunger relief organizations were identified among those present during the public meetings. An “advisory group” concept was introduced at both the public input sessions and discussed at the March 22 EFWG meeting. As during the EFWG conversation, a recognized challenge being those on the advisory group would not be eligible to apply for the grant. As a result, the draft application to USDA no longer includes that concept and instead proposes on-going engagement that gathers public input through a variety of formats. Other feedback from the public included: Local business and individual organizations hosting listening sessions in their respective communities and a website presence is needed for outreach and communication.

Members shared their recollections of the past two EFWG LFPA meetings: March 10 meeting goal: established the big picture of how to roll out the grant. It must be equitable, accessible, and easy to apply. Discussed timing and start date of grant funding. A suggested “later” start date would offer two

full growing seasons. March 22nd meeting revisited timing and focused on process for collaborative decision making. The April 12 meeting will provide a draft proposal and request feedback and input. The meeting will also assess EFWG members' capacity and interest in remaining involved in the LFPA development process. Meeting agendas and notes are posted at [Emerging Farmers Working Group | Minnesota Department of Agriculture \(state.mn.us\)](#).

Farm Business Management Scholarships. Presented by Gigi DiGiacomo, UMN Research Fellow.

Dig Into your Farm Finances. Register for the Farm Business Management Program (FBM) and receive a 25 to 50% tuition scholarship in 2022. FBM instruction will provide you with one-on-one training in farm finance literacy. Learn record keeping, budgeting, cash flow planning, and income analysis. The FBM program is a Community College, credit-based course that provides personal instruction and financial mentoring. For more information and to apply, contact: gigi@umn.edu 612-710-1188 or Kyle Huneke kyle.huneke@riverland.edu

[Online Survey | Built with Qualtrics Experience Management™](#)

[Organic Farming Resources - AgCentric](#)

Partners: UMN Extension, MN State Colleges and Universities, Center for Farm Financial Mgmt., Farm Business Mgmt. Program and Wisconsin Technical Colleges.

Announcements and Looking Ahead: Michael Birchard

- EFWG Newsletter Scheduled for June and Sept
- EFWG Meetings: Scheduled for August 12, October 14
- MN AG License Plate is now available for purchase from DMV
- Emerging Farmer Conference – November 12-13, 2022

Workgroup Brainstorming on user experience. Emily Reno

A future meeting will be scheduled with members to discuss strategic work, prioritization, and collaboration with work in the Office of Emerging Farmers. Suggested topic: Emerging Farmer Office Work Plan.

Public Comment:

A constituent asked for an online platform to gather EFWG and public input regarding LFPA. Staff indicated a need for follow-up after the meeting to better understand the suggestion and determine what is possible.

For more information, email: tamara.mansun@state.mn.us or MDA.Emerging.Farmers@state.mn.us

Thank You & Adjourn. 3:00 pm.