



Meeting Minutes, Friday, March 10, 2023 – Virtual TEAMS Meeting. 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Emerging Farmers' Working Group

Open, Call to Order

Attending Members: Shelly Woods, Hannah Bernhardt, Ben Dossman, Kyle Huneke, Kelsey Zaavedra, Nikki Crowe, Alexandra Diemer, Caliton Ntahompagaze, Michael Birchard and Tamara Mansun.

Absent: Patrice Bailey – Chair, Lillian Otieno EFO Coordinator, Jane Windsperger, Celeste Verhelst, Ngozi Akubuike, Lisa Schultz, Ian Oundo.

Welcome

Facilitator Michael Birchard

Welcome & Legislative Updates from the Commissioner's Office

Deputy Commissioner Andrea Vaubel and Director of Government Affairs, Michelle Medina

The Agency budget bill to be heard by house and senate and is close to completion. The Bill includes several requests this group was integral in developing, including additional staff for the Emerging Farmer Office and ending the “sunset” date of 2025 for this EFWG so this work continues and funding for grant programs to support emerging farmer/beginning farmer tax credit.

The Ag Bill includes a request for a formal climate coordinator position to maximize the work we do with other agencies and federal partners.

The adult use cannabis conversation is being followed closely as we are creating a new agency: The Office of Cannabis Management and looking at what the role of MDA will be. Martha Josephson is our federal coordinator who is following the Farm Bill and working through priorities that will be put forward.

Valerie Gamble is leading our update of the MDA Strategic Plan. A document that guides us through the next four years and informs us of our progress, success and goals yet to develop. Your input is welcome.

The MDA is prepared to work with the Board of Animal Health to handle any reemergence of high path avian influenza in the coming weeks.

Contact andrea.vaubel@state.mn.us or michelle.medina@state.mn.us to suggest or inquire.

Related Legislative announcement: Emerging Farmer member Hannah Bernhardt, Medicine Creek Farm, Pine County, shared a new [Bill H.F.No. 1747 Next Generation Farmer Development Program](#). A grant program that helps pay interns who work on your farm. Senator Vang is one of the authors. Follow this and other ag Bills at: [Bill Search, Status, and MyBills - Minnesota State Legislature \(mn.gov\)](#)

Climate

Director, University of Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership
Assistant Professor of Climate Science, Dr. Heidi Roop

A UMN Extension program in collaboration with the College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences, researching climate and resilience in Minnesota. The mission: to collaborate with communities and landscapes on understanding and mitigating climate risk including projecting future soil moisture and temperature, lake temperature and humidity. Engaged at the state and federal level and are working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency developing climate indicators and metrics to determine best placement of state investments and resources.

Statistics show that we are already experiencing climate change; extreme transitions between wet and dry streams, happening more frequently. Implementing solutions to respond is incredibly important. The science provided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is integral as we converse, educate and partner with Minnesotans. To learn more, participate or provide input on how the UMN program is designed, contact Heidi Roop at hroop@umn.edu.

Health Plans for Ag

40 Square Cooperative Solutions, Executive Director, Amanda Beavens

40 Square is an independent cooperative partnered with Aetna, providing health plan offerings to MN agribusinesses. Qualifications for membership include

- actively work in production agriculture and file either Form 1065 or Schedule F with income tax return, OR agribusiness with 25% of income from production ag
- Have a minimum of one common law employee who you provide a W2
- Purchase voting stock in a onetime amount of \$100
- Purchase onetime Common Stock of \$1,000 over the first year.
- Commit to three years as a member or forfeit a portion of the \$1,100 investment

Learn more, contact abeavens@40square.coop or visit: www.40square.coop

MN Farm Bureau Conference for Emerging Farmers

Minnesota Farm Bureau Director of Communications, Rachel Reisig

This winter, the MFB applied and received funding from a USDA Urban Indoor grant to host a conference in August 2023 to work with emerging farmers, urban farmers and small agriculturists with the goal of connecting the attendees to resources, education, leadership opportunities, board openings and contact with local government and state legislators. The MFB is looking for input from this group on what your needs are from ag partners, educators and legislators across MN.

Please converse with Rachel. Your valuable feedback will help shape the agenda and bring together the resources and information that will help support your ag businesses.

Rachel.Reisig@fbmn.org or visit [Minnesota Farm Bureau \(fbmn.org\)](http://MinnesotaFarmBureau.org)

Announcements

Ag Legislative announcement: Emerging Farmer member Hannah Bernhardt, Medicine Creek Farm, Pine County, shared a new [Bill H.F.No. 1747 Next Generation Farmer Development Program](#). A grant program that helps pay

interns who work on your farm. Senator Vang is one of the authors. Follow this and other ag Bills at: [Bill Search, Status, and MyBills - Minnesota State Legislature \(mn.gov\)](#)

Alexandra Diemer, Business Development Director of Novel Supply Chains, AURI and emerging farmer working group member can offer grant services to small farmers/producers who need business development or applied science services.

New Uses Forum 2023, April 11th in Minneapolis. The Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI) and its partners, Compeer Financial and Georgetown's Rural Opportunity Initiative, are bringing together some of the most knowledgeable voices in the areas of finance, food, and agriculture. learn more about it at our event website: <https://auri.swoogo.com/NUF2023>.

Please find our latest invitation at: <https://conta.cc/3ZyyWKf> Thank you for your consideration and contact Alexandra: 218.281.7600 Ext: 149 Office | adiemer@auri.org

USDA Resource Training: Monday, April 3rd. 2pm - 6pm at: Shoreview Community Center. 4580 Victoria St. Shoreview, MN 55126. Register by Mon. March 27 by emailing Marisa Benasutti. mpenasutti@thefoodgroupmn.org Learn USDA specialty crop & direct market programs. Application process. Important documents for accessing resources. FSA / NRCS visits and locations.

Minnesota Farmers Union Evening Social Hour in Chisago City. April 5th, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Join us for a GrownBy Social Hour. Eric Sannerud is the National Co-op Organizing Lead from Farm Generation Cooperative and a fellow MFU member. he will touch on the history of Co-Ops and guide us through the decisions involved in starting a modern, farmer-led co-op. Join us at The Uncommon Loon Brewery, 10825 Lake Blvd. Chisago City, MN 55013. Email kelsey@heirloomista.com for information.

Clay County, NW Minnesota area: New Roots Farm Incubator Co-op is recruiting new members Contact Caliton Ntahompagaze for details: ntahocali72@gmail.com | [Learn about us.](#)

2023 UMN Green Summit presents: Community Environmental Justice Expo. April 21st. Noon to 3pm UMN Twin Cities campus. Mondale Commons @ Humphrey School of Public Affairs. Contact Lily Dodge dodge149@umn.edu or contact Britt Howell urbanfarmdirect@gmail.com A greener future begins here. Network with undergrad students. Learn and share your experiences working on environmental justice in the community.

Contact tamara.mansun@state.mn.us to receive today's power point presentation slides via email.

Public Comment. None

Adjourn meeting 3:00 pm

Next EFWG Meeting is May 12, 2023, at 1:00 pm. Look for the TEAMS link in your calendar or find it on our web page: [Emerging Farmers Working Group | Minnesota Department of Agriculture \(state.mn.us\)](#)

Email: MDA.Emerging.Farmers@state.mn.us | Call the Emerging Farmer Line # 651-201-6200