

March 6, 2019

Senate Agriculture, Rural Development and Housing Finance Committee
Chair Torrey Westrom
3201 Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue West
St. Paul, MN 551155

Dear Members of the Committee,

The undersigned organizations represent a significant portion of Minnesota's agriculture sector and thousands of farms and ag-related businesses and strongly support agriculture research at the University of Minnesota. Our organizations support SF 1840 which proposes to increase funding to the Agricultural Research, Education, Extension and Technology Transfer Program (AGREETT).

The purpose of AGREETT is support agricultural productivity growth through research, education and extension through long-term base funding. Since 2015, when the AGREETT program was established by the state legislature significant progress has been made towards restoring and expanding capacity and research capabilities at the University of Minnesota in the College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS), Extension and the College of Veterinary Medicine. The first round of funding has led to the hiring of 14 faculty positions, five extension educators and number of needed infrastructure upgrades in the areas of crop and livestock productivity, soil fertility, water quality and pest resistance.

A multi-sector, interdisciplinary advisory panel provides strategic direction for the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to prioritize available funds to meet research, extension and infrastructure needs. The structure of AGREETT is working effectively but additional funding is needed to meet demand in the areas of: crop and livestock productivity; microbial science; advancing soil fertility and water quality; agricultural technology and decisions-making; nutrient recycling and management; agro-ecological innovation; and technology aimed at managing pest resistance and climate change.

Our organizations are excited by the significant progress made through AGREETT over the last three years and we urge your support in continuing the base funding for AGREETT in addition to increased funding as outlined in SF 1840. Thank you for your support of Minnesota agriculture.

Sincerely,

Chicken & Egg Association of Minnesota

Minnesota Milk Producers Association

Minnesota AgriGrowth Council

Minnesota Pork Producers Association

Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers

Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association

Minnesota Corn Growers Association

Minnesota Soybean Growers Association

Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation

Minnesota Turkey Growers Association

Minnesota Farmers Union