



Agricultural Emergency Account

2018 Annual Report

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Background

In 2016, the 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 million was appropriated to the Agriculture Emergency Account in the Agriculture Fund.

The 2015 outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Minnesota, which caused \$650 million in economic losses for Minnesota's Turkey, Broiler and Egg Industry, 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 working 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.

Minnesota's agricultural economy is an economic cornerstone of our state, generating \$110 billion in economic activity and nearly 400,000 jobs. We are proud to be home to 73,000 farm operations and a multitude of major cooperatives, food companies and agricultural supply businesses.

As our world becomes more interconnected, we face growing threats of disease transfer that could quickly threaten the health and vitality of this important industry in our state. The Agricultural Emergency Account is designed to help Minnesota identify the threats; prepare and plan for an emergency event and respond if necessary.

Emergency Preparedness and Response Needs

Minnesota was successful in responding to the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza outbreak partly because the poultry industry, government and academia had developed a Secure Egg Supply Plan. This planning and preparedness gave Minnesota the tools to respond effectively and allow for continuity of business operations in areas of the state not effected by the disease.

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

The mounting of a major emergency response 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 foresight and planning is necessary to develop agricultural emergency plans. It requires development, adoption, and coordination of emergency preparedness and response systems at local, state, regional and national levels.

The reality is Minnesota is not well prepared to respond to potentially catastrophic outbreaks such as Foot and Mouth Disease, soybean or cereal rusts, or invasive insects or weeds. In order to better protect our agricultural and food economy, an all hazards business continuity approach should be developed in collaboration with industry, government, and academia.

The development of secure food supply plans, such as the one the Turkey, Broiler and Egg industry developed, would be critical to strengthening Minnesota's preparedness and response capabilities and helping our state prevent catastrophic events that could threaten trade partnerships and economic stability.

Additionally, when a threat arises that could impact Minnesota's agricultural and food sector, the Department of Agriculture needs to be able to respond quickly. With the Agricultural Emergency Account, the Department was able to quickly respond to the detection of Palmer Amaranth. This invasive weed has the potential to cause significant economic harm to Minnesota's crop farmers. But for these resources, the Department would not have been able to swiftly begin eradication activities.

Agricultural Emergency Account

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has established priorities in the area of agricultural emergency preparedness and response activities in order to ensure protection of our important agricultural industries.

Priority 1: Establish the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response. The Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response within the Department of Agriculture is structured such that it is responsible for all hazards emergency preparedness and response functions of the Department as well as overseeing, preparing, and training the Department 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 Department functions to continue. The Incident Management Team will be established through a formal sharing of positions with other Divisions in the Department.

Priority 2: EMERGENCY RESPONSE: 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 will continue in 2018.

The Ag Emergency Account was used to quickly respond to this situation to immediately begin eradication activities. The funding was used for personnel, travel, sampling and laboratory costs, equipment for eradication activities, and for contracts to the Conservation Corps for scouting of fields that had known presence of Palmer Amaranth.

Priority 3: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: 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, and Secure Broiler Supply, are collaborative programs utilizing a public-private partnership. Partners include federal and state agencies (United States Department of Agriculture, state boards of animal health and departments of agriculture), academic institutions, and the production livestock industry. The Secure Food Supply program allows for the movement of animals, commodities and foods products with no evidence of infection from a control area to harvest channels without the risk of expanding the outbreak. This provides a continuous supply of safe products and maintains business continuity for producers, transporter and processors.

The goal of this collaborative effort is to provide assistance and training to help Minnesota agriculture develop Secure Food Supply capabilities that allow for effective response to disease outbreaks, maintain business continuity, and protect our agricultural economy. In Minnesota, we have witnessed the significant impact the Secure Egg supply plan had on our response capabilities. With this effort, our goal is to help to develop similar plans for other commodities such as Pork, Dairy, Beef and our grain commodities. All of these efforts are being conducted in collaboration with these commodity organizations.

Agricultural Emergency Account Budget

Expenditures as of January 31, 2018.

| | FY17 | FY18 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Preparedness Personnel</i> | - | \$19,319.76 |
| <i>Preparedness Travel</i> | - | \$975.50 |
| <i>Palmer Response</i> | \$62,395.85 | \$3,807.66 |
| <i>Equipment</i> | \$17,119.24 | \$11,967.01 |
| <i>Insurance</i> | - | \$1,085 |
| Total Spent | \$79,515.09 | \$37,154.93 |
| Year End Balance | \$920,484.01 | \$883,329.08 |