

# STATE OF MINNESOTA

## EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT



**MARK DAYTON**  
**GOVERNOR**

**Executive Order 14-09**

### **Directing Agency Cooperation on the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program**

**I, Mark Dayton, Governor of the State of Minnesota,** by virtue of the power vested in me by the Constitution and applicable statutes do hereby issue this Executive Order:

**Whereas,** Minnesota farmers provide food, feed, fuel, and fiber for the Nation and the World, and agriculture is a cornerstone of Minnesota's economy;

**Whereas,** Minnesotans value the health of our rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands, and groundwater;

**Whereas,** we must continue to protect the environment while supporting economic development in the State of Minnesota;

**Whereas,** we seek to recognize the environmental stewardship of farmers and ranchers who implement and maintain desired soil and water practices;

**Whereas,** on January 17, 2012, I signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding with Thomas J. Vilsack, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Lisa Jackson, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, pledging to work together to support the development of Minnesota's Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program;

**Whereas,** in 2013, the Minnesota Legislature passed Minnesota Statutes, sections 17.9891- 17.993, authorizing Minnesota Department of Agriculture, in consultation with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, to implement a Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program;

**Whereas,** this voluntary program will first be piloted in selected watersheds across the state, until the Commissioner of Minnesota Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program Advisory Committee, the Commissioner of the

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources, determines the program is suitable to be implemented in other watersheds;

**Whereas**, the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program will help to enhance the water quality of Minnesota's rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands and groundwater, as well as promote the environmental stewardship of Minnesota's farmers;

**Whereas**, Minnesota water quality protection authorities and responsibilities are shared between several state agencies.

**Now, Therefore**, I order that:

1. The Commissioner of Minnesota Department of Agriculture, on behalf of Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, will sign the certification contracts with the producers upon evidence that the producers have satisfied all program requirements; and
2. The Commissioners of Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, shall honor Minnesota Department of Agriculture's certification contracts with the producers; and
3. In accordance with Minnesota Statutes, each previously mentioned agency shall honor the producers' certification contracts with Minnesota Department of Agriculture, when implementing new water quality laws and rules that are adopted following the producers' certifications; and
4. By conclusion of the pilot period, the previously mentioned agencies shall develop a memorandum of understanding clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each agency for the permanent program.

This Executive Order shall remain in effect until rescinded by proper authority or until it expires in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 4.035, subdivision 3.

**In Testimony Whereof**, I have set my hand on this 9<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2014.

  
**Mark Dayton**  
Governor

Filed According to Law



**Mark Ritchie**  
Secretary of State

