corntalk

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Inside

- Corn farmers hindered by emissions standards
- Building international markets for corn and ethanol
- Corn farmers invest in their future

Investing in the future of farming

In February, the Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC)—in partnership with the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) Board of Directors—approved its 2024 research and outreach investments through the Minnesota corn check-off. Over 90 research projects, conferences, agriculture organizations, and agriculture education and leadership initiatives will receive over $2.5 million in corn check-off funds.

These investments aim to increase the productivity, profitability, and sustainability of corn farming while supporting rural communities and the next generation of agriculture professionals. They cover communities across the state and multiple aspects of corn production, from conservation practices to new uses for corn and ethanol.

This edition of Corn Talk has more information on the 2024 check-off investments, from how they were selected to how they will impact growers. More information about Minnesota Corn's 2024 check-off investments is also available online. To view the complete list of outreach investments, go to **mncorn.org/outreach.** To learn more about Minnesota Corn's research portfolio, visit **mncorn.org/research.**

Learn more about the Minnesota corn check-off and how it benefits the state's corn farmers at **mncorn.org/your-corn-check-off.**

Look for this icon in this issue to learn about research, promotion and outreach efforts fueled by farmers' investment in the Minnesota corn check-off.

table of contents

3 MCGA follows key bills at State Legislature

4 Finalized emissions rule hinders growers

4 MCGA grower-leaders advocate in D.C.

5 Summertime Unleaded 88 waiver urged

6 Building international markets for corn exports

8 Farmers invest in their future

14 How MN Corn is advancing biofuel in 2024

15 Where you can find Minnesota Corn

15 MN Corn offering free nitrate screenings

16 Minnesota Corn announces 2024 sponsorships

17 Meet MN Corn's 2024 scholarship recipients

18 An overview of key state labor laws

19 MN Corn wraps up successful MN Ag Expo

20 Winter 2024 in photos for MN Corn

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MCGA follows key bills at State Legislature

MCGA is closely following bills that would impact family corn farmers at the State Capitol this spring.

During the 2024 state legislative session, the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) has been following key bills that would impact the state's corn farmers. As of late March, efforts to impose a new fee on nitrogen fertilizers, pass a new statewide low-carbon fuel standard (LCFS), and enact a new property tax credit for Southeast Minnesota producers who implement water quality practices faced uncertain prospects in the 2024 legislative session.

The fertilizer fee bill would add a new fee on all nitrogen fertilizer sales in Minnesota to help Southeast Minnesota residents with private wells that exceed the drinking water nitrate standard.

The fee would apply to all nitrogen fertilizer sales since July 2023. It would start at 99 cents per ton, increase to $1.39 per ton for anhydrous ammonia in July 2025, and be indexed to total year-over-year increases in nitrogen sales starting in July 2026. For example, if Minnesota's total nitrogen sales increased 10% in one year, the fee would increase 10%.

MCGA supports efforts to proactively protect Minnesota's drinking water but opposes a new fee, particularly at a time of decreasing crop prices and tight margins. The organization has urged lawmakers to find alternative funding sources to alleviate drinking water concerns in Southeast Minnesota, such as the General Fund or the Clean Water Fund.

The fee bill faced bipartisan opposition when it received a hearing in the House Agriculture Committee in February and has not been scheduled for a hearing in a Senate committee.

The LCFS bill would require Minnesota's transportation fuel providers to reduce the aggregate carbon intensity of their fuels—eventually to net zero by 2051. Fuels that exceed carbon intensity-reduction thresholds would generate credits, which could be purchased by fuel providers who are out of compliance with the new standards.

MCGA has stressed that any standard must be fair to ethanol in its accounting of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The state bill creates uncertainty around the final accounting for lifecycle GHG emissions and could unfairly handicap the ability to accurately account for the carbon intensity of biofuels.

Because of opposition on several fronts, including from environmental groups, the LCFS bill is unlikely to advance further during the 2024 session. But MCGA will continue working to ensure that any LCFS does not adversely affect ethanol or other low- carbon biofuels.

Lawmakers have also been considering a proposal that would provide a modest property tax credit for growers in eight Southeast Minnesota counties that become certified under the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program. MCGA is supportive of this measure and thanks Rep. Steven Jacob (R-Altura) and Sen. Steve Drazkowski (R-Mazeppa) for sponsoring it.

Two other proposals introduced during the 2024 state legislative session could impact agricultural drainage. One would require property sellers to provide a report to buyers on the existence, status, and location of all known drain tile on the property. The other would clarify that a public water body is defined by state statute and not by whether that water body is on the state's Public Waters Inventory. Both bills could create additional uncertainty for growers, both in terms of which water bodies are subject to the state's 50-foot buffer requirement and the level of scrutiny over drainage improvement projects.

The 2024 state legislative session runs through May 20. Read weekly updates on the session's progress at **mncorn.org/news/policy.**

Finalized emissions rule hinders growers

In March, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a vehicle emissions rule for light- and medium-duty vehicles that will have negative implications for corn farmers, rural economies, and, ultimately, all drivers. The finalized rule essentially requires automakers to produce only electric vehicles in the future at the expense of other proven technologies that reduce tailpipe emissions, including higher biofuel blends.

The Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) is disappointed in the finalized rule, which does not offer a level playing field for evaluating the emissions-reduction potential of a suite of low-carbon fuels and technologies. Notably, the rule fails to account for emissions related to electricity generation and EV battery mineral mining and processing and gives no credit for emissions reductions from low-carbon fuel sources, including corn ethanol.

"The rule misses an opportunity to take advantage of ethanol's proven ability to reduce transportation sector emissions," MCGA President Dana Allen-Tully said in a statement. "It's disappointing that the EPA did not instead focus on outcomes and opening pathways for all low-carbon fuels and technologies, which would enable strong vehicle emission standards, cut tailpipe emissions, and offer greater fuel efficiency and consumer costs savings."

The EPA's finalized emissions rule favors electric vehicles over proven emissions-reduction technologies like renewable biofuels.

The EPA's rule will require that 56% of all new vehicles sold in the U.S. be electric only by 2032, discounting the emissions reduction benefits of ethanol blends.

In a statement, National Corn Growers Association President Harold Wolle said the organization is concerned that the EPA chose to force a one-size-fit-all solution to reduce emissions and ignored readily available solutions like biofuels.

"This decision will not only severely hamper the administration's ability to reach its own climate goals, but it will also hurt family farms and rural communities that rely heavily on the sale of biofuels," he said. "On top of that, it will remove consumer choice from the market."

MCGA grower-leaders advocate in D.C.

Grower-leaders meet with U.S. Senator Tina Smith (D-Minnesota) in March during MCGA's annual spring fly-in.

Grower-leaders meet with Chief Agricultural Negotiator Doug McKalip.

In March, members of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) Board of Directors met with members of the state's congressional delegation and other key federal policymakers during the organization's annual spring fly-in in Washington, D.C.

During meetings, grower-leaders advocated for continued enforcement of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, policies to expand market access for biofuels, and a robust Farm Bill that supports crop insurance and the farm safety net, and more. Leaders also highlighted the need for certainty in the current environment of decreased corn prices and thin margins due to stubbornly high input costs.

MCGA thanks the administration officials and lawmakers from both political parties who met with grower-leaders during the fly-in. To learn more about MCGA's advocacy efforts, and how you can get involved, visit **mncorn.org/advocacy.**

Summertime Unleaded 88 waiver urged

As this edition of Corn Talk went to press, the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) urged the Biden administration to use its existing authority to allow for nationwide sales of Unleaded 88/E15 in summer 2024.

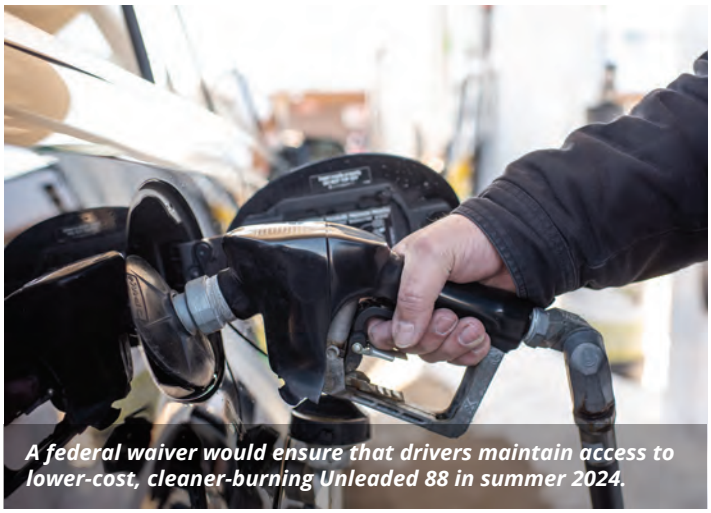
Currently, an arbitrary, outdated role not based on the latest emissions data prevents year-round sales of Unleaded 88/E15, the lower-carbon, lower-cost biofuel blend that's approved for cars, trucks, and SUVs model year 2001 and newer. For years, MCGA has asked Congress to remedy the situation by passing legislation to ensure permanent year-round Unleaded 88 sales. MCGA is grateful to lawmakers from both political parties including Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith and Representatives Angie Craig, Brad Finstad, and Michelle Fischbach of Minnesota, who have supported the effort.

In the absence of a structural solution, the Biden administration has taken the common-sense step the past two years of approving a waiver to allow for summertime Unleaded 88 sales. The action ensured that drivers could continue to access this lower-cost biofuel blend in 2022 and 2023, saving families money at a time of inflation and high gas prices.

Meanwhile, to partially remedy the situation, the governors of eight Midwestern states, including Minnesota, petitioned the federal government in April 2022 to allow for permanent year-round Unleaded 88 sales in their respective states. MCGA supported the move while continuing to advocate for a federal solution.

By law, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had 90 days to review the petition. Unfortunately, its review took about seven times as long. The agency finally approved the petition in February 2024, but it decided to delay implementation until summer 2025. That has injected uncertainty into the 2024 summer driving season and has the potential to adversely impact farm families and rural communities.

Minnesota Corn is a longtime champion of Unleaded 88 and higher biofuel blends such as E85/flex fuels. In 2021, the Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council invested $1 million in a state biofuel infrastructure grant program that helped 44 fuel stations upgrade to equipment compatible with Unleaded 88 and higher biofuel blends. MCGA successfully advocated for state funding for the program as well as another biofuel infrastructure grant program that passed during the 2023 legislative session.



A federal waiver would ensure that drivers maintain access to lower-cost, cleaner-burning Unleaded 88 in summer 2024.

Thanks in part to Minnesota Corn's efforts, Unleaded 88 sales in Minnesota have been at record levels in recent years. The latest data show that Minnesota broke its previous annual Unleaded 88 sales record in 2023, and Minnesota Corn expects momentum around Unleaded 88 sales to continue in 2024.

Support for latest GREET Model encouraged

MCGA this spring also urged the U.S. Treasury Department to maintain the integrity of the GREET Model, the gold standard for measuring the carbon intensity of lifecycle emissions model of a fuel. The GREET Model was developed by the U.S. Department of Energy. As maintained by the Energy Department, it's the most accurate lifecycle emissions model and the only one that accounts for all the climate-smart innovations happening on farms across America's heartland, according to the trade group Growth Energy.

This past winter, the Treasury Department said it would use a modified version of the model to determine whether a renewable jet fuel reduces greenhouse gas emissions enough to qualify for SAF tax credits. The greenhouse gas emissions reduction threshold required to quality for the tax credits, which were approved under the Inflation Reduction Act, is 50%. The department was expected to release its modified GREET Model by March 1, but it had not released the model as this edition of Corn Talk went to press.

Using the latest version of the GREET Model for SAF tax credits would mean ethanol-based jet fuel has a path to reaching the 50% emissions-reduction threshold. The widespread use of ethanol-based jet fuel would decrease emissions associated with air travel and increase demand for ethanol producers and family corn farmers.

Building international markets for corn exports

In January, Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) President Dana Allen-Tully and Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC) Treasurer John Mages traveled to Morocco and Southeast Asia, respectively, in their capacities as Minnesota Corn grower-leaders. Meanwhile, MCR&PC member Jim O'Connor traveled to South Korea in his capacity as a U.S. Grains Council (USGC) board member.

Below is a brief recap of each trip. You can read more about the trips and Minnesota Corn's efforts to develop and maintain export markets at **mncorn.org.**

Dana Allen-Tully—Morocco

From left to right: Minnesota Department of Agriculture Deputy Commissioner Andrea Vaubel, Duluth Seaway Port Authority Director of Trade and Business Development Kate Ferguson, MCGA President Dana Allen-Tully, Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council member Gene Stoel, and MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen.

Dana Allen-Tully, joined a Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) trade mission to Morocco aimed at promoting Minnesota grains to feed mills in the North African country. The group toured feed mills and met with representatives of the mills to talk about the benefits of using American grains.

MDA sees opportunities to increase Minnesota's grain exports to Morocco, given its growing feed market and free trade agreement with the U.S. Morocco imports over 2 million metric tons of corn annually—equivalent to about 80 million bushels—but most of it comes from South America since South American corn is less expensive than U.S. corn.

Allen-Tully said she talked with Moroccan grain buyers about the quality of U.S. corn and how Minnesota Corn is working to increase the sustainability of corn production. She also noted a recent USGC study that found that U.S. corn performs better than South American corn varieties as a poultry feed source. Poultry is the primary livestock in Morocco.

The Moroccan buyers "were very receptive to the conversation as a whole," Allen-Tully said. "I think a couple of the mills we met with were interested in paying a little more for quality instead of [their focus] just being price. They're not going to pay a huge premium, but there may be an opportunity to have more conversations."

MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen said Allen-Tully's background in animal nutrition—she has a doctorate in ruminant nutrition—made her an important part of the trade mission. He thanked Minnesota's corn growers for supporting MDA's trade development efforts.

John Mages—Southeast Asia

John Mages, joined corn and sorghum growers from across the U.S. in Vietnam and Thailand as part of USGC's annual Grain Export Mission. The mission aims to show grower-leaders how their organizations' investments in USGC are increasing opportunities for U.S. farmers.

Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council Treasurer John Mages talks with Nguyen Van Nguyen, director of the APOTEC Research Institute for Aquaculture in Vietnam, during the Grain Export Mission.

Minnesota Corn is a longtime supporter of USGC as part of its mission to develop export markets and create long-term profitability for growers. Mages said the mission gave him confidence Minnesota Corn's investment in USGC is being put to good use.

In Vietnam, mission participants toured a feed mill and catfish farm at which the council has conducted sorghum and dried distillers grains feeding trials. They

also attended an event during which USGC presented its annual first-point-of-sale U.S. corn quality report, which aims to help grain buyers in making well-informed decisions. The report includes detailed information on corn samples taken from local grain elevators around the U.S.

"No other corn export market globally puts together such a comprehensive summary of its annual corn harvest quality," Manuel Sanchez, USGC director in China, said in a statement. "This is just one example of how we strive to strengthen our relationship with our top customers around the globe each year."

In Thailand, the group attended a USGC-sponsored conference that showed dairy farmers how they can increase productivity through improved animal comfort and rations that include DDGS, soybean meal, and corn silage.

Vietnam and Thailand represent significant opportunities for U.S. agriculture. Both countries use millions of metric tons of corn and DDGS each year, though neither imports meaningful amounts of corn from the U.S. Vietnam last bought U.S. corn in 2021-22 and relies mainly on Argentina, Brazil, and India for its supply. Thailand produces most of its own corn and relies on other Asian countries for the rest.

Jim O'Connor—South Korea

Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council member Jim O'Connor (center) speaks about the 2023-24 U.S. Grains Council Corn Quality Report at an event in South Korea.

Jim O'Connor, an MCR&PC member, participated in USGC's presentation of the first-point-of-sale report to grain buyers in South Korea. He was joined in the presentation by Nebraska Corn Board member Brandon Hunnicutt and Lee Singleton, a consultant at Centrec Consulting Group.

In their presentation, O'Connor, Hunnicutt, and Singleton noted how the 2023 U.S. corn crop had its lowest percentage of broken corn and foreign material to date. They also noted how the 2023 U.S. corn crop was the largest on record and had a high protein concentration, and they promoted USGC's corn sustainability assurance protocol. The protocol is a farmer-led initiative to show the strong institutional sustainability foundations underpinning U.S. agriculture, as well as the traditional and innovative techniques that U.S. corn producers are adopting daily.

South Korea is one of the leading purchasers of U.S. corn. Between 2018 and 2023, the country bought 12.2 million metric tons of U.S. corn—equivalent to 478.6 million bushels.

The U.S. faces significant competition in South Korea from Brazil and Argentina, in part because of price, but also because South Korean grain buyers prefer lower ratios of broken corn and foreign materials. O'Connor said that's because most corn in South Korea is steam-flaked for use in the dairy and cattle industries. "If you have broken or soft corn, [steam-flaking] just does not work," he said.

O'Connor thanked USGC's South Korea office and its director, Haksoo Kim, for their work. "Those relationships that their staff people have on the ground are very valuable," he said.

By the numbers—Corn exports

1.9 billion
Bushels of corn exported by the U.S. in 2023, accounting for about 13.8% of the country's corn use.

$13.2 billion
Value of U.S. corn exports in 2023

636 million
Bushels of U.S. corn exported in 2023 to Mexico, its largest export market for the year.

$1.8 billion
Value of Minnesota's corn exports in 2021, the latest year for which data is available.

Source: NCGA, U.S. Grains Council

feature story

Farmers invest in their future

To increase the profitability, productivity, and sustainability of corn production, the Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC) invests corn check-off funds in research focused on production stewardship and new uses for corn and corn co-products. The council works closely with the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) Board of Directors when making research funding decisions.

In February, the council finalized its 2024 research investments. Thirty-three projects covering everything from nutrient management to corn-based plastics and located in farm fields and labs across Minnesota will receive a combined $2.2 million in funding this year. Eleven of the projects are new, and 22 were funded previously.

Like in past years, Minnesota Corn solicited research proposals from farmers and university-level researchers. Farmers could apply for grants to conduct on-farm trials known as Innovation Grants, while professional researchers could apply for funding for more complex projects. Proposals were vetted by Minnesota Corn's Discovery & Development Team, which includes grower-leaders from the MCR&PC and MCGA board.

Below are brief overviews of the projects in Minnesota Corn's 2024 research portfolio. Learn more about them at **mncorn.org/research.**

University of Minnesota Extension Educator Brad Carlson leads a Nitrogen Smart seminar.

Education and outreach

Nitrogen Smart and Advanced Nitrogen Smart (Ongoing)

Principal investigator: Brad Carlson, University of Minnesota (UMN) water resources extension educator
Overview: Nitrogen Smart is an education program that provides growers and agriculture professionals with the latest information on the nitrogen cycle, nitrogen management, nitrogen loss pathways, nitrogen sources, and more. University of Minnesota Extension developed the program in partnership with Minnesota Corn. It provides information through online video courses and in-person meetings.

In 2024, funding from Minnesota Corn will support the production of a new online Nitrogen Smart course focused on how growers can reduce nitrate loss to water. Additionally, it will support the production of a new series of podcasts and short videos focused on nitrogen management topics and allow Extension to hold in-person Nitrogen Smart classes. Minnesota Corn is providing separate grants for each of the respective efforts.

University of Minnesota Extension water quality education (Ongoing)

Overview: This project funds a half-time water-quality Extension educator. In 2024, the Extension educator will continue educating Minnesota corn growers on the latest water quality research through presentations, articles, and online resources.


A scene from a Discovery Farms Minnesota field day.

MAWRC/Discovery Farms research and education program (Ongoing)

Principal investigator: Warren Formo, executive director, Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Center (MAWRC)
Overview: MARWC is a research and education organization aimed at helping growers and agriculture organizations address water quality issues. The center operates the Discovery Farms Minnesota program, which collects on-farm surface runoff and tile drainage data, and it hosts conferences to help growers learn about nutrient management and conservation practices.

In 2024, MAWRC will continue operating a controlled drainage research and demonstration project at Farmamerica in Waseca. The project is evaluating the extent to which holding back tile drainage through a control structure limits tile flow and nitrogen losses.

New uses

University of Minnesota researchers aim to increase the biodegradability of corn-based plastics.

Engineering degradability into corn-based plastics (Year 1)

Principal investigator: Thomas Hoye, professor, UMN College of Science and Engineering
Overview: This project aims to develop a new strategy to create more easily degradable versions of PLA plastic and other bioderived polyesters. Although PLA is compostable, that operation needs to be conducted in an industrial high-temperature composting facility to proceed at a viable rate, and the material does not degrade readily in the environment. Increasing the degradability of corn-based plastics like PLA could lead to increased usage.

Direct conversion of corn-derived carbohydrates to ether-based clean fuels (Year 1)

Principal investigator: Paul Dauenhauer, professor, UMN College of Science and Engineering
Overview: This study aims to assess the potential of a chemical process to convert corn to dimethyl-ether. The process utilizes a catalyst to break apart the carbon-carbon bonds of corn-derived carbohydrates, ultimately yielding methanol which can be readily dehydrated to dimethyl ether. Research will evaluate two general strategies for catalyst design and evaluate the economics of the corn-to-dimethyl-ether production process.

Modeling production of SAF from corn ethanol and CO2 (Year 1)

Principal investigator: William Northrop, professor, UMN College of Science and Engineering
Overview: This research will explore the potential for large-scale projects to combine captured carbon dioxide emitted from ethanol production to produce sustainable aviation fuel (SAF). Northrop will collaborate with the Chippewa Valley Ethanol Company plant in Benson to determine energy and cost benefits of generating SAF through waste carbon dioxide and ethanol.

Production and environmental stewardship

University of Minnesota Extension Nutrient Management Specialist Fabian Fernandez discusses research with a colleague.

Are increasing maximum return-to-nitrogen values related to nitrogen source? (Year 1)

Principal investigator: Fabian Fernandez, nutrient management specialist, UMN Extension

Overview: This project will study why corn farmers have needed more nitrogen to achieve higher yields in recent years than expected, based on past trial data. Projected yield is a key factor for farmers in determining how much nitrogen fertilizer they will apply. Researchers will also study how various nitrogen fertilizer sources fare when applied in the fall.

Tracking nitrogen mineralization in Northwest Minnesota soils (Year 1)

Principal investigator: Lindsay Pease, nutrient and water management specialist, UMN Extension
Overview: This project will study how soil texture, soil moisture, and nitrogen rate affect nitrogen availability and grain production. The researchers will plant corn plots at the University of Minnesota Northwest Research and Outreach Center in Crookston and use different rates of nitrogen for each plot. For each plot, they'll evaluate soil nitrogen availability, soil temperature, soil moisture, corn yield, and other production metrics. They'll use the metrics to improve nutrient recommendations for corn in Northwest Minnesota.

Evaluating nitrogen credits to corn following manured and non-manured alfalfa (Year 1)

A manure spreader runs through an alfalfa field.

Principal investigator: Melissa Wilson, manure management and water quality specialist, UMN Extension
Overview: This project will evaluate how manure and/or commercial fertilizer application affect nitrogen fixation in alfalfa fields. Alfalfa, a legume, fixes its own nitrogen, but exact amounts depend on how much fertilizer is available in the soil. The researchers will determine how corn fares on the alfalfa plots in following years.

Efficacy of insecticide seed treatments in corn for managing corn rootworm complex (Year 1)

Principal investigator: Fei Yang, corn entomologist, UMN Extension

Corn rootworm, seen here in the adult stage, can cause serious damage to corn plants if left untreated.

Overview: The researchers will study the effectiveness of the various rates of insecticides in seed treatments at plots in Rosemount and Lamberton. They'll also evaluate how the presence of Bt technology affects rootworm management.

Developing biocontrol against corn pathogens (Year 1)

Principal investigator: Devanshi Khokhani, assistant professor, UMN Department of Plant Pathology
Overview: This project will study the effectiveness of seven different bacteria species at combating the pathogen pythium ultimum, which causes damping-off and root rot disease in corn. The researchers hope to identify the compounds among the seven bacteria species that are responsible for combating pythium ultimum. The project could help advance efforts to develop biopesticides to counteract crop pathogens.

High-throughput gene platform for validating resistance against fusarium in corn (Year 1)

A no-till corn field with cover crops sits almost ready for spring planting.

Principal investigator: Josiah Mutuku, group leader, 2Blades
Overview: The project will fund work by the nonprofit biotech organization 2Blades to engineer corn varieties that are resistant to the soil fungi fusarium, which can cause stalk and ear rot and mycotoxins. 2Blades has identified genes responsible for encoding proteins that control fusarium and reduce mycotoxin accumulation. The organization eventually hopes to transfer these genes into corn.

Optimizing corn-soybean rotation: Reduced tillage, varied irrigation, and cover crops (Year 1)

University of Minnesota Extension Irrigation Specialist Vasu Sharma evaluates a field trial.

Principal investigator: Vasudha Sharma, irrigation specialist, UMN Extension
Overview: This project will study how conservation tillage, cover crops, and different irrigation management strategies affect crop production, soil health, and nitrogen losses in Central Minnesota. The project will start in October 2024 with the planting of a cereal rye cover crop, and the researchers hope to continue for three growing seasons, following a corn-soybean-corn rotation.

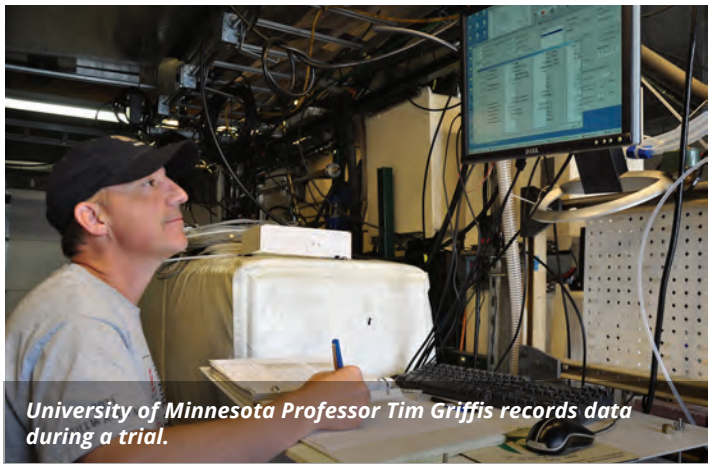
European corn borer resistance to transgenic Bt corn in Minnesota (Year 2)

Principal investigator: Fei Yang
Overview: This project is studying the susceptibility of European corn borer to Bt proteins and the frequency of Bt resistance among European corn borer in Minnesota. It's also determining the genetic basis for that resistance. Results generated will provide essential data to assist growers in the management of European corn borer using Bt technologies within the state.

Precision irrigation and nitrogen management for enhancing water-nitrogen use efficiency (Year 3)

Principal investigator: Vasudha Sharma
Overview: This project is a study of precision irrigation and nitrogen management tools, and technologies in Central Minnesota. In 2024, Sharma will conduct another set of trials comparing different combinations of variable-rate nitrogen and irrigation and uniform-rate nitrogen and irrigation. She'll once again measure and compare the plots in terms of nitrate leaching, plant growth and development, grain yield, and nitrogen and water-use efficiency.

Mitigating cold and warm season nitrogen losses from corn systems (Year 3)



University of Minnesota Professor Tim Griffis records data during a trial.

Principal investigator: Tim Griffis, professor, UMN Department of Soil, Water, and Climate
Overview: This project is studying how to reduce nitrogen losses from corn fields during spring freeze-thaw cycles and how warmer temperatures are affecting nitrogen losses during the growing season. Using indoor growing chambers, the researchers will evaluate whether cover crops and enhanced efficiency fertilizers reduce emissions and whether the increased prevalence of warmer temperatures affects nitrogen loss.

Is fixed ammonium a part of nitrogen cycling in soils (Year 3)

Zac Aanerud, a doctoral student for Professor Fabian Fernandez, studies corn plants at the Southwest Research and Outreach Center in Lamberton.

Principal investigator: Dan Kaiser, soil scientist and soil/plant nutrient management specialist, UMN Extension

Overview: This project will assess how corn responds to nitrogen at various levels of potassium fertilization. The project will determine how much fixed ammonium is present in soils, how fixed ammonium could be impacted by fixed potassium and vice versa, and ultimately whether fixed ammonium relates to the amount of nitrate present in the soil.

Dialing in the most profitable and environmentally responsible nitrogen rate (Year 4)

Principal investigator: Fabian Fernandez
Overview: This study assesses the effects of various nitrogen rates on yield, economic return, nitrogen use efficiency, nitrate leaching in tile-drained fields, nitrous oxide emissions, and ammonia volatilization. Once again, the researchers will grow corn on tile-drained plots in southwestern Minnesota using different nitrogen rates. They'll use the data to create formulas for calculating yield and nitrogen losses based on nitrogen application rates.

Evaluating conservation practice effectiveness with a paired watershed approach (Year 6)

Principal investigator: Gary Feyereisen, agricultural engineer, USDA Agricultural Research Service
Overview: The project aims to quantify the effects of conservation practices on nitrate losses in drain tiles. For a fourth year, the researchers will monitor tile drainage outlets on adjacent southern Minnesota watersheds. Starting next year, they hope to begin implementing conservation practices such as cover crops and precision nitrogen management in one of the watersheds to get a better understanding of how the practices affect water quality.

Hyperstable enzyme to control plant diseases (Year 7)

Principal investigator: Mikael Elias, associate professor, UMN College of Biological Sciences
Overview: This project is studying the compatibility with currently available adjuvants of an enzyme that limits the virulence of the bacteria responsible for causing Goss' wilt. Adjuvants are additives that help water-based spray solutions penetrate their targets. Previous field studies found that the enzyme dramatically reduced Goss' wilt when sprayed on infected corn leaves. The researchers will determine whether the enzyme can remain active in adjuvants over a season and will continue to test new products. They'll also evaluate why the combination of the enzyme and an adjuvant resulted in increased cob weight at one site in 2023.

Innovation Grants

Effects of procyanidins on corn growth and nitrous oxide reduction (Year 2)

Principal investigator: CheJen Hsiao, postdoctoral scientist, UMN Department of Soil, Water, and Climate
Overview: This project is studying whether the naturally occurring compound procyanidin can effectively limit the ability of soil microbes to convert nitrates into nitrous oxide and nitrogen dioxide, a process known as denitrification. While nitrogen dioxide is harmless, nitrous oxide is a long-lived greenhouse gas. In 2024, the researchers will test their lab-created procyanidin product in indoor growing chambers and evaluate its effectiveness at reducing nitrous oxide emissions and its impact on corn growth.

Evaluation of variable-rate nitrogen in corn fields receiving manure (Year 2)

Principal investigator: Peter Anthony, farmer, Nicollet County
Overview: This project is studying how manure and cover crops affect the need for commercial nitrogen fertilizer in corn fields. Anthony will apply various rates of nitrogen in fields with manure application and/or cover crops to determine the optimal nitrogen rate. The results of the project will provide important guidelines for precision nitrogen management of corn in fields with manure application and/or cover crops in Minnesota.

Cover crops grow into a no-till corn field in southwestern Minnesota.

On-farm evaluation of variable rate sulfur application (Year 3)

Principal investigator: Kirk Stueve, farmer, Traverse County
Overview: The project is evaluating the potential benefits of variable-rate sulfur application in corn fields. Stueve will apply the nutrient at five different rates and assess different soil and agronomic properties. The project could provide important guidelines for precision sulfur management in Minnesota.

Azospirillum brasilense inoculation to enhance corn nitrogen uptake (Year 3)

Principal investigator: Paulo Pagliari, assistant professor and nutrient management specialist, UMN Extension
Overview: This project studies the ability of the bacterium Azospirillum brasilense to supply corn plants with nitrogen. In 2024, the researchers will test Azospirillum brasilense strains isolated from Minnesota soils in corn plots supplied with nitrogen at five different rates. Minnesota Corn is providing two grants for the project—one for trials in Becker and another for the trials in Lamberton.

Hands-on learning for future ag professionals: impacts of fertility (Ongoing)

Principal investigator: Adam Alford, Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU)
Overview: This project supports a series of research plots for students at SMSU. In 2024, Alford will plant corn in the plots, utilizing a different nitrogen rate in each. He and his students will evaluate how the different nitrogen rates affect the corn crop.

Wilkin SWCD soil health demonstration site (Year 4)

Principal investigator: Vance Johnson, farmer, Wilkin County
Overview: This project compares the impacts of cover crops, conservation tillage, and extended crop rotations on soil health in northwestern Minnesota. Johnson hopes to help farmers better understand the effects of implementing these practices, both in terms of economics and soil health.

Research findings are discussed at a field day in northwestern Minnesota

Effects of cover crops in a five-year crop rotation (Year 4)

Principal investigator: Mikayla Tabert, farmer, Red Lake County
Overview: This project studies the long-term impacts of integrating cover crops on a field with a corn-soybean-wheat-sunflower crop rotation. During corn and soybean years, Tabert interseeded a cover crop mix early in the growing season. The goal of the project is to demonstrate the lasting economic and soil health benefits of integrating cover crops into a rotation.

Manure vs commercial fertilizer vs 1/2 rate nitrogen/ manure corn plot (Year 4)

Fall nitrogen fertilizer application in Minnesota.

Principal investigator: Blair Hoseth, farmer, Mahnomen County
Overview: This project studies how the use of beef manure and/or commercial nitrogen fertilizer affects yield, profit, and soil health. In 2024, Hoseth will utilize one plot with manure, one plot with manure and urea, and a third plot with urea only.

Evaluating alternative strategies to side-dressing urea in corn (Year 4)

Principal investigator: Les Anderson, farmer, Goodhue County
Overview: Anderson will compare the effectiveness of side-dressing nitrogen to using a pre-plant nitrogen application along with a nitrogen stabilizer and the nitrogen-fixing microbial product Pivot Bio Proven 40. He'll use a 160-pound nitrogen rate in the side-dressed plots. On one of the pre-plant plots, he'll use a 120-pound nitrogen rate, and he'll use a 160-pound rate on the other.

How MN Corn is advancing biofuel awareness and use

To increase long-term profitability for corn growers, Minnesota Corn invests in efforts to develop and maintain demand for homegrown biofuels like Unleaded 88 and E85.

Below is a rundown of Minnesota Corn's planned work in this area for 2024. Learn more about the efforts at **mncorn.org/utilization.**

Promoting Unleaded 88 and E85 to drivers

New in 2024, Minnesota Corn will reach drivers by supporting events at Twin Cities fuel stations during which KS95 radio personalities and Minnesota Biofuels Association (MBA) staff will highlight the benefits of Unleaded 88. The events are set for spring and summer 2024. MBA will offer prizes to drivers who fill up with Unleaded 88.

Also new in 2024, Minnesota Corn is reaching drivers with positive messages about biofuels through its support of the "Unleaded88: Engine Smart. Earth Kind." outreach campaign on the Big Ten Network (BTN). In total, the campaign is supported by eight state corn organizations and the Nebraska Ethanol Board.

Throughout the 2023-24 academic year, the campaign has aired ads touting the benefits of Unleaded 88 during games on BTN and on the network's social media platforms. Additionally, Minnesota Corn is reaching drivers through its support of Growth Energy's "Get Biofuel" campaign, which is in its second year. The campaign includes ads touting the benefits of Unleaded 88 on the apps GasBuddy and Waze, partnerships with fuel stations across the Midwest, and posts by social media influencers on the benefits of Unleaded 88. Thanks to the campaign's success at reaching consumers in 2023, it has expanded in 2024 into new markets, including Rochester and Mankato.

Generating awareness among auto professionals

In 2024, Minnesota Corn is once again enlisting the consulting firm MEG Corp to train automotive, small engine, and powersports technicians on ethanol.

Throughout 2024, MEG Corp will hold 14-16 ethanol and gasoline training courses for students on Minnesota Corn's behalf. It will also provide technical support to Minnesota Corn and other partner organizations as requested and education as requested to auto fleets, fuel distributors, auto technicians, and salespeople.

The goal of the efforts is to ensure automotive technicians enter the workforce with accurate knowledge of the capabilities and benefits of ethanol blends. That could reduce the likelihood of them blaming ethanol on vehicle and engine problems, thereby increasing consumer trust in biofuels.

Additional efforts

Through its support of the U.S. Grains Council (USGC), Minnesota Corn is once again investing in efforts to build demand for biofuel internationally. Throughout the year, USGC will promote the environmental and health benefits of ethanol to foreign governments and markets. It will also work with foreign leaders to develop biofuels policies, address trade barriers, and show ethanol's value as an octane source.

Additionally, Minnesota Corn is investing in a National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) effort to ensure fuel stations across the U.S. are capable of handling E15 and higher ethanol blends. In 2024, thanks in part to support from Minnesota Corn, NCGA is working with the manufacturer Gilbarco Veeder-Root to distribute fuel dispensers certified to handle E25. That follows an effort by NCGA to work with Wayne Fueling Systems to ensure that its dispensers can handle higher ethanol blends.

By the numbers—Biofuel in Minnesota

127.5 million

Number of gallons of Unleaded 88 that Minnesota fuel stations reported to the state Department of Commerce in 2023. That topped the previous high for reported sales by 20.9%.

483.4 million

Estimated number of bushels of corn that went into ethanol production in Minnesota in 2023, representing about one-third of Minnesota's 2023 corn harvest.

$2.8 billion

Estimated amount the state's 19 ethanol plants paid for corn in 2023. The sales supported $5.1 billion in economic activity, 17,440 jobs, and $1 billion in wages.

Source: Minnesota Department of Commerce, University of Minnesota Extension

Where you can find Minnesota Corn

Stay up to date on all the latest Minnesota Corn news and happenings this spring. Whether your favorite media is radio, podcast platforms, or social media, here's where you can find Minnesota Corn.

Radio

We know you're busy and one way we try to deliver pertinent and useful news to you is by radio. Minnesota Corn partners with several radio stations to give you a lot of opportunities to hear news that's important to you. We're on KASM/KDDG, the Linder Farm Network, and Brownfield Ag News.

Listen to 'Corn Matters' Wednesday mornings on the Red River Farm Network and 'Corn Update' Thursdays at noon on the Linder Farm Network.

Podcast

The Minnesota Corn Podcast continues to grow in popularity. A dedicated 15–30-minute conversation with host Mark Dorenkamp features a Minnesota Corn research or new uses investment and discusses why it's important for Minnesota corn farmers and the public to understand. Find the Minnesota Corn Podcast on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you get your podcasts.

Social Media

Minnesota Corn is active on X and Facebook. Be sure to hit that Follow button to stay in the know when it comes to news affecting Minnesota Corn farmers.
Check out our series, Nate on the Farm, on the Minnesota Corn YouTube channel. Nate Gotlieb, our very own PR manager, visits corn farms across the state to explore topics from the planting and harvest cycle and to family farm legacies, to financial planning and news uses.

You can follow Minnesota Corn's research efforts and broader news on Linder Farm Network's YouTube channel, where you can check out Lynn Ketelsen's interviews with Minnesota Corn leaders and researchers. You can also follow Minnesota Corn news on the Red River Farm Network's YouTube channel. Of note this spring, the Red River Farm Network will feature women farmer-leaders in a special video series, Agricult-HER, on their YouTube channel.

Corn Talk

And, don't forget that you receive a copy of Corn Talk each quarter for a look back and a look forward at issues and happenings important to Minnesota corn farmers. All corn farmers in the state receive Corn Talk, regardless of their membership status. To officially join Minnesota Corn Growers Association, complete the online membership form or contact your district field manager for a hard copy form.

MN Corn offering free nitrate screenings

This spring, Minnesota Corn is once again offering free nitrate screenings to corn farmers. The screenings are an easy way to better understand water conditions and the potential for nutrient loss on your farm. Testing will be offered throughout the spring and early summer, and results are confidential.

Collecting a sample for testing is simple.

To take a sample of ditch, stream, or tile water:

- Collect 1 cup of water in a clean plastic or glass container.
- Freeze sample after collection. Remove from freezer only when you bring the sample for testing and allow time for the sample to thaw.

Samples taken and analyzed the same day do not need to be frozen, just kept cool.

To take a sample of well water:

- Run your cold tap for 5-10 minutes.
- Collect about 1 cup of water in a clean plastic or glass container.
- Follow the same storage process used for ditch, stream, or tile water. One sample per well is sufficient for screening.

If you are interested in submitting a sample for testing or have questions, please contact your MCGA district field manager. Their information can be found at **mncorn.org/contact/staff.**

Minnesota Corn announces 2024 sponsorships

A scene from a 2023 Farm Camp hosted by the nonprofit Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom, which is one of over recipients of a grant from Minnesota Corn's sponsorship program in 2024.

Minnesota Corn has announced the slate of conferences, agriculture organizations, and agriculture education and leadership initiatives it will fund through the Minnesota corn check-off in 2024.

Over 50 conferences, agriculture organizations, and agriculture education and leadership initiatives will receive funding. They cover everything from agriculture training and resources for K-12 teachers to seminars that develop the leadership skills of growers and agriculture professionals.

Each year, as part of its mission to support agriculture and rural communities, Minnesota Corn budgets corn check-off funds for conferences, agriculture organizations, and agriculture education and leadership initiatives. The organization solicits funding proposals for its sponsorship program each fall.

The Minnesota Corn Research & Promotion Council (MCR&PC) approves funding decisions working in close collaboration with the Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) Board of Directors. The organization's Membership & Consumer Engagement (MCE) Team—comprised of members of the MCR&PC and MCGA board—evaluates proposals based on the priorities of engaging younger generations; developing ag leaders; promoting modern farming, building connections, and providing information to the non-farm public.

For 2024, the MCE Team received nearly 80 proposals and allocated funding to 54 projects. One of its largest allocations was for the agriculture education organization Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom, which provides free curriculum, educational resources, grants, outreach, and professional development opportunities to K-12 teachers and students. In 2024, thanks in part to Minnesota Corn's funding, MAITC will continue offering curricular resources, virtual field trips, its AgMag, Farm Camp program, and more.

Additionally, Minnesota Corn allocated funds once again to the Southwest Minnesota State University-based Minnesota Agriculture & Rural Leadership (MARL) Program, which helps growers and rural professionals develop leadership skills through a series of seminars around the state. Participants learn about agriculture in Minnesota, develop travel skills, and learn about leadership and personal topics.

Minnesota Corn also continued its longtime support of youth-development initiatives such as 4-H and FFA.

View the complete list of organizations and initiatives Minnesota Corn is sponsoring in 2024 at **mncorn.org/outreach.**

Additional investments

To increase the profitability, productivity, efficiency, and sustainability of corn farming, Minnesota Corn also invests corn check-off funds in research. The organization's Discovery & Development Team evaluates research proposals. Learn more about Minnesota Corn's 2024 research investments on page 8.

Additionally, Minnesota Corn's Utilization Team allocates funds on a rolling basis to projects and initiatives focused on commercializing new uses, developing export markets, and promoting biofuels such as Unleaded 88 and E85.

Each fall, Minnesota Corn also allocates funds to the National Corn Growers Association and the U.S. Grains Council. Other corn check-off allocations go to Minnesota Corn's county matching funds program, CommonGround Minnesota, advertising, public relations, events, consulting services, and more.

To learn more about the Minnesota corn check-off, visit **mncorn.org/your-corn-check-off.**

Meet Minnesota Corn's 2024 scholarship recipients

Each year, as part of its mission to support agriculture and rural communities, Minnesota Corn awards $5,000 scholarships to young adult members pursuing careers and degrees in agriculture. In March, Minnesota Corn announced its 2024 scholarship recipients. This year's scholarship winners are Luke Gordon of Worthington, Kyle Hagen of Glencoe, Sarah Hagenow of Rio, Wisconsin, and Rena Johnson of Buffalo. Learn more about scholarship opportunities available from Minnesota Corn and affiliated county organizations at **mncorn.org/scholarships.**

Luke Gordon

Luke Gordon, of Worthington, is a second-year student at South Dakota State University studying agriculture systems technology and minoring in agriculture business, precision agriculture, and unmanned aviation systems. During college, he has worked as a precision ag support center specialist, a data capture specialist, and an operator and technology specialist for his family farm. He's also been an SDSU College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences ambassador, a member of the SDSU marching band, and involved in multiple agriculture clubs. Gordon eventually hopes to grow his drone spraying business while working as a precision ag support specialist for his local John Deere dealership and maintaining a role on his family farm.

Sarah Hagenow

Sarah Hagenow, of Rio, Wisconsin, is a junior at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities majoring in agricultural and food business management and minoring in international agriculture. During college, she has worked as a student administrative assistant for the Department of Animal Science, an operations and trading intern for a dairy company, a show cattle intern, and a student research assistant. She's also participated in the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences' Policy Engagement Program, the University of Minnesota Dairy Judging Team, and the CFANS Mentor Program, among other activities. After college, she hopes to work in agricultural policy.

Kyle Hagen

Kyle Hagen, of Glencoe, is a sophomore at South Dakota State studying agriculture systems technology and minoring in agriculture business and precision agriculture. During college, he has worked as a seed lab technician, a farm laborer, and a Golden Harvest intern. He has also been an SDSU College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences ambassador and a member of multiple agriculture clubs. After college, he hopes to work in seed or agricultural equipment sales, and eventually he hopes to operate his multi-generation family farm.

Rena Johnson

Rena Johnson, of Buffalo, is a junior at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities majoring in agricultural education and minoring in agronomy. During college, she has been a University of Minnesota Extension student worker and a farm hand and held internships in agronomy sales, ag teaching, and crop scouting. After graduating, she plans to become an agricultural educator.

An overview of key state labor laws

In recent years, the Minnesota Legislature has passed and/or updated labor laws that impact all employers in the state, including corn growers. Below is a brief overview of several of these policies. Learn more about Minnesota labor laws on the state Department of Labor and Industry's website, **dli.mn.gov/laborlaw.**

Earned sick and safe time

Overview: In 2023, the Legislature passed an earned sick and safe time policy covering all non-independent contractors who work at least 80 hours a year for an employer in Minnesota. The policy requires at least one hour of paid sick and safe time for every 30 hours worked, up to at least 48 hours annually, effective Jan. 1, 2024.

Employers must include the total number of earned sick and safe time hours and total hours used on earning statements provided to employers at the end of each pay period.

In 2026, Minnesota will launch a new paid leave program that will provide workers with paid time off for health issues and to care for loved ones.

Protections for pregnant and lactating employees

Overview: In 2023, the Legislature updated the Women's Economic Security Act, a 2014 law that strengthened workplace protections and flexibility for pregnant and lactating employees. The law requires employers to provide pregnant employees with reasonable accommodations. It also requires employers to provide breastfeeding parents with reasonable break time to express milk and a private room or other location for milk expression.

Additionally, employers cannot prohibit employees from disclosing their own wages. The law also requires employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid pregnancy and parental leave to an employee within 12 months of the birth or adoption of a child.

Wage theft protections

Overview: In 2019, the Legislature passed the Minnesota Wage Theft Prevention Act to create additional protections for workers, including adding criminal penalties for employers that commit wage theft.

The law requires all employers to provide each employee with a written notice at the start of their employment that contains the required information about a worker's employment status and terms of employment. It also must include a statement, in multiple languages, that informs employees they may request the notice be provided to them in another language. Employers are also required to provide employees in writing any changes to the information in the notice before the date the changes take effect.

In addition to the pre-employment notice, the new law added requirements to the specific information that must be included on the earnings statements provided to employees each pay period. It also updated the list of records employers must retain for three years and banned retaliation.

Fair labor standards

Overview: The Minnesota Fair Labor Standards Act requires employers to pay overtime for all hours worked over 48 per workweek, unless the employee is exempt under state law. Overtime pay must be at least 1.5 times the employee's regular rate of pay.

Migrant agricultural workers

Overview: Under Minnesota law, at the time a migrant agricultural worker is recruited, an employer must provide a written employment statement in English and Spanish, or English and the worker's preferred language. Recruited migrant agricultural workers are individuals at least 17 years of age who travel more than 100 miles to Minnesota from another state to work in agriculture based on an offer or the possibility of employment.

State law requires employers to pay recruited migrant agricultural workers at least every two weeks, except upon termination, when the employer must pay within three days. Recruited migrant agricultural workers are also guaranteed a minimum of 70 hours pay for work in any two successive weeks.

Agricultural employees in Minnesota must be paid overtime at the rate of time-and-a-half the employee's regular rate of pay for all hours worked above 48 hours in a workweek. Agricultural workers are exempt from Minnesota overtime requirements if they are paid a salary greater than a certain minimum amount each week—$797.48 for larger employers and $650.48 for small employers.

MN Corn wraps up successful MN Ag Expo

Current and former Minnesota Corn grower-leaders and staff gather for a group photo after MCGA's annual meeting at MN Ag Expo.

It was another great MN Ag Expo for Minnesota Corn in January at the Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center in Mankato! Growers from the state reconnected, learned about new farming practices and technology, and explored the sold-out trade show floor.

At the Minnesota Corn booth on the trade show floor, grower-leaders and staff talked about corn check-off-funded research and investments and the benefits of Minnesota Corn Growers Association (MCGA) membership. Near the booth, university-level researchers displayed posters on projects funded through the Minnesota corn check-off and answered questions about their studies.

Throughout Expo, speakers covered topics such as mental health, first aid training on the farm, livestock, computer security, and more. MCGA President Dana Allen-Tully and board member Nick Peterson were featured alongside Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Assistant Commissioner Dana Vanderbosch on a panel about nitrogen and water quality. The panel was moderated by Brad Carlson, a University of Minnesota Extension Educator whose work focuses on nutrient management, water quality, and precision agriculture.

From the Expo banquet hall stage, Commissioners Petersen and Vanderbosch talked about the steps state agencies are taking in response to a petition asking for emergency action to regulate nitrates from agricultural sources in southeast Minnesota.

President Allen-Tully and Nick Peterson talked about practices they've implemented on their own farms and how Minnesota Corn is addressing water quality in southeast Minnesota.

Corn growers also participated in MCGA's delegate session and annual meeting on the second day of Expo. Sitting alongside delegates from their districts, grower-leaders voted on changes to MCGA's resolutions book and re-elected Richard Syverson, Brad Neumann, Rob Tate, and Blair Hoseth to the MCGA board.

Afterward, Minnesota Corn leaders recapped the organization's efforts in 2023 and President Allen-Tully presented awards to several longtime champions of agriculture. Richard Syverson received the Gavel Plaque Award in recognition of his leadership as MCGA president in 2022-23. Jeff Harrison of Combest, Sell & Associates received the Friend of Ag Award for his many years of dedicated advocacy on behalf of growers. And, Tim Waibel received the Golden Kernel Award for his many years of leadership with MCGA.

President Allen-Tully also recognized Minnesota Corn CEO and Executive Director Dr. Adam Birr for 10 years of service with the organization. Dr. Birr recognized District Field Manager Macy Kahler for five years with Minnesota Corn and Director of Grower Services and Operations Missy Gilbertson for 20 years with the organization

The event also featured a keynote speech on the first night from Minnesota Gophers football coach P.J. Fleck. Speaking to a packed room of growers in the Expo banquet hall, Fleck talked about building a program, what he looks for in his athletes, and the culture he works to build.

Winter 2024 in photos for MN Corn

Each winter, Minnesota Corn hosts and sponsors a variety of educational events, conferences, and trade shows as part of its mission to connect growers and increase opportunities. Additionally, many of Minnesota's 52 organized county corn grower associations hold events during the winter months. The following is a snapshot of events hosted by Minnesota Corn and county organizations in winter 2024. Find out more about upcoming Minnesota Corn events at **mncorn.org/events.**

The McLeod County Corn & Soybean Growers Association Board of Directors with local FFA students during the organization's annual banquet in January.

NCGA President Harold Wolle, who farms in St. James, gives an update to the Watonwan County Corn & Soybean Growers Association at the organization's annual meeting in January.

Southeast Minnesota FFA students and Olmsted-Wabasha County Corn & Soybean Growers Association board member Judy Kahn (right) at the group's annual banquet in January.

From left to right: Winona County corn yield contest winners Ryan Steele, Dave Heublein, Gary Sobeck, Garrett Wardell, and Glen Groth.

From left to right: Wright-Hennepin County Corn Growers Association board members Stan Vander Kooi, Dennis Muckenhirn, Jay Thissen, Mark Diers, Marty Kane at a county fuel event in December.

Bailey Grubish of Minnesota Soybean and Lyon County Corn & Soybean Growers Association board member Ken Lanoue talk with FFA students at the annual SMSU Ag Bowl Scholarship Invitational in February.

Corn growers look at the silent auction offerings during the Minnesota Corn Growers Association's annual county reception at MN Ag Expo in January.

Minnesota Gophers football coach P.J. Fleck talks with growers before delivering the keynote speech at MN Ag Expo.

MCGA President Dana Allen-Tully recaps the organization's 2023 activities during MCGA's annual meeting at MN Ag Expo.

From left to right: Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Assistant Commissioner Dana Vanderbosch, MCGA board member Nick Peterson, MCGA President Dana Allen-Tully, and University of Minnesota Extension Educator Brad Carlson during a nitrogen and water quality panel at MN Ag Expo.

The Minnesota Corn booth on the trade show floor at MN Ag Expo.

University of Minnesota postdoctoral scientist CheJen Hsiao was on hand at MN Ag Expo to present his corn check-off-supported research to growers.

St. James farmer and National Corn Growers Association President Harold Wolle (left) introduces his family during the NCGA president's reception at Commodity Classic in Houston.

From left to right: Grower-leaders Jim Kanten, Wes Beck, and John Swanson with Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson (R-East Grand Forks) during MCGA's Day on the Hill in St. Paul in February.

From left to right: MCGA President Dana Allen-Tully, Chairman of the Board Richard Syverson, State House Ag Committee Chair Samantha Vang (DFL-Brooklyn Center), MCGA Secretary Todd Wentzel, and board member Angela Guentzel.

MCGA President Dana Allen-Tully (right) talks with Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan.

From left to right: MCGA Senior Public Policy Director Amanda Bilek, grower-leaders Richard Syverson and Rob Tate, House Minority Leader Lisa Demuth (R-Cold Spring), and grower-leader John Mages.

We want to hear from you.
Send photos and brief descriptions of your county events to your district field manager.
Find your DFM on our maps at **mncorn.org/contact/staff.**

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calendar of events

may 1	MCR&PC election results available
may 20	Last day of 2024 legislative session
may 27	MCGA offices closed for Memorial Day