

Minnesota Farmers Union hosts Rural Issues Discussions to allow the voices of family farmers and rural residents to be heard on important issues impacting their families and communities

Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU) has scheduled 15 Rural Issues Discussions from far Southeast Minnesota to far Northwest Minnesota, and many in between to hear directly from farmers and rural residents about the important issues affecting farmers and rural communities. Key stakeholders have been invited to participate in the discussions.

Among them are Minnesota Lieutenant Governor Tina Smith, and Commissioners: Mike Rothman of Department of Commerce, Emily Johnson Piper of Department of Human Services, Dave Frederickson of Department of Agriculture, and Deputy Commissioner Matt Wohlman Department of Agriculture. Also joining us to talk about the Farm Bill is Vice President of Government Affairs and Communication for National Farmers Union, Rob Larew. Larew previously served as a staff member for United States House Agriculture Committee member, Collin Peterson.

“MFU set up these Rural Issues Discussions to listen to community members about key issues in rural Minnesota,” stated MFU President Gary Wertish, “We want to hear their real stories, their feelings and get their feedback. These discussions allow us to hear the voices of those living in rural communities, which help to guide the policy work of Minnesota Farmers Union, and allows state leaders to hear those voices and issues directly. Political leaders and the media tell us they want to hear rural voices. Now, we are asking them to get out of their chairs in the city, and get in their cars and come out to the country to listen.”

Key topics expected to be raised are health insurance (including the

public option, hunger and farmers market issues, beginning farmer programs, buffer rules, property taxes, ditch mowing regulations, and commodity prices.

MFU President Gary Wertish, and Vice President Bryan Klabunde, will attend the Rural Issue Discussions, along with key MFU staff to help facilitate the discussions.

Minnesota Farmers Union Rural Issues Discussion schedule:

- March 27, 9:30 a.m., People's Energy Cooperative, Oronoco, MN
- March 27, 2:00 p.m., Blue Heron Coffee House, Winona, MN
- March 29, 9:30 a.m., Unhinged Pizza, Norwood Young America, MN
- March 29, 1:00 p.m., South Central College, RM E112, North Mankato, MN
- March 29, 7:00 p.m., River City Eatery, Windom, MN
- March 30, 9:30 a.m., American Legion, Willmar, MN
- March 30, 1:30 p.m., Holiday Inn Courtyard, Room 4, Alexandria, MN
- March 31, 9:30 a.m., Initiative Foundation, Little Falls, MN
- March 31, 2:30 p.m., Dry Dock Bar & Restaurant, Duluth, MN
- April 4, 9:30 a.m., Roseau Diner & Inn, Roseau, MN
- April 4, 1:30 p.m., Mike & Linda Hanson & Sons Dairy Farm, Goodridge, MN
- April 5, 9:30 a.m., Fryn' Pan Restaurant, Moorhead, MN
- April 5, 1:30 p.m., Bella Caffé, Park Rapids, MN
- April 6, 10:00 a.m., Wintergreens, Isanti, MN

Additional details on these meetings can be found at <http://mfu.org/pages/Events> or by contacting Outreach Director, Bruce Miller at 651-288-4064.