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### **MFU sees positive progress for Agriculture in Legislative session**

Tuesday May 30<sup>th</sup>, Governor Mark Dayton signed all of the spending bills passed by the 2017 legislature for the 2018-19 budget years. Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU) was pleased to see many of the priorities the organization listed prior to session having positive outcomes for farmers including a strong agriculture budget, buffer and road ditch mowing modifications, a tax credit for agriculture land relating to school capital improvement levies, action on health care, and other important issues.

“MFU would like to thank legislators from both parties, Governor Dayton and his administration for working hard to ensure that Minnesota farmers have the resources and support they need to prosper and continue farming” said MFU President Gary Wertish.

Among the highlights from the legislative session for agriculture that MFU supported are:

- Passage of a 40% credit to farmers for the portion of their property taxes coming from a new or existing school capital improvement levy.
- \$35 million dollars in bonding dollars for the Rural Finance Authority (RFA) to help make loans to farmers.
- Creation of a tax credit for renting or selling land to a beginning farmer.
- Ability for farmers to get an 8 month waiver for buffer compliance of public waters, option to use alternative practices and clarifications on what waters are covered by buffer law.
- Passage of \$300 plus dollars for health insurance premium relief.
- New and continued investments in Industrial hemp, farm safety, dairy, palmer amaranth control, county fairs, livestock and value-added grant programs, wolf depredation, MinnesotaGrown, and other programs.
- One-year moratorium on changes to state ditch mowing regulations.
- A transportation funding package to help improve rural roads and bridges.
- Extension of the Farmer-Lender Mediation Act and more dollars for Farm Advocate program.

Despite efforts of this year’s Legislature, MFU is concerned about continued availability and affordability of quality health care for all parts of Minnesota and long term dedicated transportation funding, MFU will be working in the coming weeks to educate members about these and many more changes to state laws and how they will impact for farmers.

*Minnesota Farmers Union—Standing for Agriculture, Fighting for Farmers ([www.mfu.org](http://www.mfu.org)).*

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