



84th ANNUAL CONVENTION

Special Orders of Business for 2026

Special Orders of Business approved by the 2025 State Convention for action in 2026 include:

1. Respond to the Crisis in Farm Country
2. End the Trade War
3. Reverse Healthcare Cuts and Improve Access
4. Invest in the Next Generation of Farmers
5. Restore Programs that Fight Hunger

Respond to the Crisis in Farm Country

Whereas every person relies on agriculture every day, and

Whereas family farm agriculture is the cornerstone of our rural economy, and

Whereas many family farms are under extreme financial stress, at best managing uncertainty, and at worst facing bankruptcy or foreclosure. Requests for Farmer Lender Mediation have more than doubled this year over last and farm bankruptcies have continued to climb, and

Whereas the ongoing trade war has depressed commodity prices, while the cost of seed, fertilizer, construction materials, health insurance, and basic living expenses have all continued to climb, and

Whereas monopolies are continuing to thrive at the expense of family farmers and main street businesses, and

Whereas those who lived through the farm crisis in the 1980s warn that we are on the precipice of a comparable, national crisis that will have consequences not just for those individual farmers and their families, but also our communities, state, and nation.

Therefore, be it resolved that MFU supports swift, meaningful action to address the crisis in farm country and long-term, systemic reforms that ensure a farm economy that is stable, resilient, distributed, and fair. In the near term, we call on state lawmakers to:

- 1) Fully fund Minnesota's Rural Finance Authority (RFA).
- 2) Extend and increase support for Minnesota's Farmer Lender Mediation Program.
- 3) Defend and expand funding for Minnesota's Farm Advocate program, Farm Business Management, farmer mental health and farm safety programming, and other state-funded initiatives that offer support for farmers.
- 4) Defend and expand investments in the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and related agencies, continuing support for creating local markets, expanding value-added processing, improving voluntary conservation programs, and supporting beginning and emerging farmers.
- 5) Keep investing in sustainable agriculture by supporting the continuation of the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) at the University of Minnesota, including maintaining the Endowed Chair Bench with MISA.

And whereas federal spending on agriculture programs dwarfs state spending, and federal policy plays a major role in shaping the rural economy.

Now therefore, be it resolved that MFU supports:

- 1) Restoring congressional oversight of tariffs and ending a trade war that has damaged our relationships, lowered commodity prices, and increased costs.
- 2) Passing a new, comprehensive Farm Bill that includes a competition title, a strong farm safety-net that includes payment limits, a restored nutrition title, strong investments in local foods, continued investment in conservation and climate smart agriculture, improved access to credit, and support for research.

- 3) Restoring staffing at federal agencies that serve farmers and rural communities, including USDA county offices for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).
- 4) Strong enforcement of federal and state antitrust laws along with other measures that will promote fair competition across our economy.

End the Trade War

Whereas farmers deserve a fair price for their work to grow and raise the products that feed, clothe, and fuel our communities, our nation, and much of the world, and

Whereas prices for farm commodities are being pushed below the cost of production as countries employ retaliatory tariffs and shift purchases to other nations, and

Whereas farmers built export markets through investing their time and money in trade missions,

Whereas tariffs not only reduce export markets, but also increase production costs by taxing imported fertilizer, equipment, parts, and other goods, and

Whereas these economic impacts are felt not only by farmers who rely on international markets, but also cooperatives, contractors, repair shops, and other main street businesses that are affected by increased costs and fewer dollars circulating in rural communities, and

Whereas stable trading relationships benefit our national security.

Therefore, be it resolved that MFU calls for an end to the trade war and a return to stable trading relationships that benefit family farmers and rural communities. We support that this includes restoring congressional oversight of tariffs, instituting mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (MCOOL), and otherwise ensuring markets are predictable and fair.

And whereas foreign markets are only a supplement to strong, diversified, local, regional, and domestic markets, we support investments in value-added processing, market and supply chain development, public research, and technical assistance that will enable sustainable and profitable farm businesses.

Reverse Healthcare Cuts and Improve Access

Whereas getting care when a person is sick or injured is central to economic opportunity, community vitality, and basic human dignity. It should not depend on zip code, employment status, or ability to pay, and

Whereas the cost of health insurance is spiking at a time when farmers are already facing financial challenges, forcing some families to make the difficult decision to forgo coverage, and

Whereas federal cuts to public healthcare programs—along with increases in the rate of uninsured—put pressure on hospitals and clinics, leading to closures in rural areas, and

Whereas Minnesota’s public programs are administered on the county level, meaning burdensome paperwork requirements will strain county budgets, leading to increased property taxes, and

Whereas our organization has long maintained that a system that guarantees care for every person would be simpler, cheaper, more dignified, and lead to better outcomes for patients, their families, and our communities.

Now therefore be it resolved that MFU calls on lawmakers to reverse damaging healthcare cuts and renew work to lower costs, improve access, and ensure that everyone can get the care they need. We support:

- 1) Implementing a strong, affordable Public Option that allows farmers and others to ‘buy in’ to the state’s MinnesotaCare program which covers medical, dental, optical, auditory, mental health, and other services at affordable rates.
- 2) Structuring current and future programs in a way that creates a path toward universal, single-payer healthcare.
- 3) Taking steps to cap costs for those with insurance, including those who find they’re seeking care out-of-network.
- 4) Opposing the privatization of Medicare.
- 5) Addressing forces like Pharmacy Benefit Managers and private equity that drive consolidation, reduce access, and increase costs.

And whereas your ability to survive an accident or medical emergency should not depend on your zip code, and

Whereas the ability to get to a hospital quickly can be the difference between life and death, and

Whereas local Emergency Medical Services are under financial strain, leading to longer response times particularly in remote parts of the state.

Now therefore, be it further resolved that Minnesota invest in Emergency Medical Services, ensuring adequate response times across our state.

Invest in the Next Generation of Farmers

Whereas with hard work, every person should have the opportunity to build a good life in agriculture, and

Whereas the average age of farmers in Minnesota is near 60 years old while new and emerging farmers are struggling to find access to the land and capital needed to begin farming, and

Whereas local ownership of farmland promotes stewardship, encourages long-term investment in soil health and farm infrastructure, and helps build community wealth and keep it local, and

Whereas investments in new farmers mean new kids in rural schools, and support for main street businesses, and

Whereas the consolidation of farmland—along with corporate consolidation across our economy—is a threat to America’s national security and sovereignty,

Now therefore be it resolved that lawmakers on the state and federal level promote land ownership and access by farmers working the land, including by:

- 1) Fully funding Minnesota’s Beginning Farmer Tax Credit so that no farmer is turned away from this nation-leading program.
- 2) Improving access to credit for beginning farmers, making Farm Credit and Rural Finance Authority loans more accessible and competitive for all farmers.
- 3) Continuing to expand and target tax benefits, like the Ag Homestead Credit, for owner-operators, and improve tax incentives for transitioning farmland.
- 4) Support farmland navigators, Farm Business Management, the Emerging Farmers Office and other initiatives aimed at helping farmers access land and build sustainable and profitable farm businesses.
- 5) Transparent enforcement of Minnesota’s Corporate Farm Law.

And whereas any farmer’s long-term success depends on markets for their products.

Be it further resolved that we support investing in diverse, distributed market opportunities, public research, supply chain development, and technical assistance that will allow new farmers to build diverse, resilient, and profitable farm businesses and remain on the land.

Restore Programs that Fight Hunger

Whereas in a state and nation with such abundant agricultural resources, no person should go hungry, and

Whereas the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a win-win-win for hungry people, rural grocers, and farmers who benefit from increased demand for food products, and

Whereas a majority of the over 450,000 Minnesotans who rely on SNAP are from families with children, older adults, or people living with disabilities, and

Whereas new paperwork requirements and cuts to funding for administration will result in people losing assistance and place undue strain on county budgets, and

Whereas strong funding for nutrition programs has long enabled a bipartisan Farm Bill coalition that has benefited rural and urban communities alike.

Therefore, be it resolved that MFU supports reversing the cuts to SNAP, eliminating new, burdensome paperwork requirements, and restoring funding for SNAP Education. We support making these changes as part of a comprehensive, bipartisan Farm Bill.

And whereas the Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) program, farm to school and early care programs, Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), and other programs have a proven track record of not only connecting people with nutritious, local food, but also establishing new markets for locally grown farm products, and

Whereas accessing wholesale markets with the help of food programs can be an important first step in helping beginning and emerging farmers build their farm businesses, and

Whereas our members take great pride in providing nutritious food for kids and other community members.

Therefore, be it resolved that MFU supports increased investment in the LFPA program, farm to school and early care programs, FMNP, and other programs that help connect farmers with local markets.

And whereas international food aid has not only helped combat world hunger, but also expanded international trade, extended diplomacy, and promoted world peace.

Therefore be it further resolved that MFU supports reinstating the USAID, including the Food for Peace program and other initiatives that help ease hunger across the globe.