2019 Legislative Accomplishments
FINANCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES

Farmers encounter many challenges on a daily basis that are out of their control. While farmers understand that we cannot change what has happened in the past, we can change how we respond moving forward. Many provisions within the Agriculture, Housing, and Rural Development bill directly address these challenges.

- The bill included funding for rural mental health outreach, farm advocates, 24-hour Farm and Rural hotline and additional statewide counselors. These tools will help continue the conversations that surround the financial and emotional challenges agriculture is experiencing.

Additionally, the bill includes funding for provisions that will help farmers and ranchers through the current financial challenges including:

- Continuation of funding for research through the Agriculture Research, Education, Extension and Technology Transfer program (AGRIETT) at the University of Minnesota. Researchers and educators have been hired to focus on issues that include clean water; crop and livestock productivity, microbial science; soil fertility; agricultural technology; pest resistance; and climate change.

- Provides continued funding for Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation (AGRI) programs that support the advancement of Minnesota’s agricultural and renewable energy industries including:
  - Innovative soybean processing and research.
  - Dairy assistance through the new Dairy Assistance, Investment, Relief Initiative (DARI) which will provide grants to Minnesota dairy farmers who enroll for five years of coverage under the federal dairy margin coverage program. Additional funding is also provided in the Jobs Bill.
  - Continuation of the Agricultural Fertilizer Research and Education Council (AFREC).
  - Rulemaking authority for Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) to continue development and implementation of industrial hemp programs.
  - Funding for the MDA Protection Services including money for wolf and elk depredation programs and additional mobile and laboratory inspection services.
  - Modifies existing definitions of “pasture” under the MPCA state feedlot status.
  - Strengthens the regulatory responsibility of grain elevators and board of directors to further protect farmers in cases of elevator insolvency.