

MINUTES

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON Agriculture and Rural Development

DATE: April 9, 2019

Chairman VanWoerkom called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Representatives VanWoerkom, Albert, Green, Kennedy, Sabo, and Brixie were present. Chair VanWoerkom indicated that Representative Bollin was excused from the meeting.

Representative Albert moved that the minutes of the March 19, 2019 meeting be approved; the motion was approved by voice vote without objection.

The subcommittee then heard testimony from George Smith, PhD, Associate Director, MSU AgBioResearch; Associate Dean for Research, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Dr. Smith updated the subcommittee on several programs that have received funding through state appropriations – either the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) budget or the Higher Education budget. Specifically, Dr. Smith described: On-campus Fruit & Vegetable Processing Lab Renovations; Food Processing Mobile Labs; Project GREEN; and the Michigan Alliance for Animal Agriculture.

Dr. Smith indicated that one of the **mobile labs** should be on-line for the fall 2019 academic year. He also indicated that **Project GREEN**, which is supported in the Higher Education budget, helps support the MSU Plant Diagnostics Lab, the MSU Product Center, and provides research grants for projects that support industry priorities. Project GREEN also provides \$175,000 in annual funding to MDARD to support two FTE positions in Pesticide and Plant Pest Management.

Dr. Smith indicated that MSU and industry partners are requesting ongoing \$2.5 million in state support for the **Michigan Alliance for Animal Agriculture**, a program similar to Project GREEN. A copy of Dr. Smith's PowerPoint presentation is included in the official HFA minutes and is posted to the HFA website.

The subcommittee then heard testimony from Ken Nobis, representing the Michigan Milk Producers Association, in support of ongoing funding for the Alliance for Animal Agriculture. Mr. Nobis described the need for applied research related to animal health as well as production efficiency. He noted that there had been a research grant related to Bovine Tuberculosis. He also noted that Michigan was a national leader in terms of industry/university/state cooperation.

The subcommittee then heard testimony from Rebecca Park, representing the Michigan Farm Bureau, in support of ongoing funding for the Alliance for Animal Agriculture.

The subcommittee then heard testimony from Kate Krauss, Chief Operating Officer, Fair Food Network, in support of the Governor's budget proposal with respect to the **Double Up Food Bucks** program. A copy of Ms. Krauss testimony is included in the official HFA minutes and is posted to the HFA website.

Among other things, Ms. Krauss described the history of the program and how state and foundation funding has been used to match federal grant funds. She also indicated the funding request in the MDARD budget would allow for expansion of the program into all 83 Michigan counties and to additional grocery stores and farm markets. She indicated that some program costs relate to integrating the Double Up Food Bucks program into store Point of Sale (POS) systems. She indicated that grocers can participate in the program if they accept SNAP payment and can adapt POS systems.

In response to member questions, Ms. Krauss discussed fraud controls and program metrics/goals.

The subcommittee also received written testimony from the Michigan Vegetable Council in support of the Double Up Food Bucks Program.

Chair VanWoerkom adjourned the meeting at 10:30 AM without objection.