



Minnesota Crop Production Retailers

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INPUTS

Capitol Update

MN Legislature Passes Bonding and Tax Bill, Finally and Section 179 Conformity Included

Recently, the legislature passed a \$1.8 billion Bonding Bill, which also featured tax policy and supplemental budget items, both with House and Senate bipartisan support. The Governor signed it into law. It took five tries to do the job. When the House and Senate convened in February, they said the bonding bill was the only must-do of 2020.

The five special sessions, were convened to pass judgment on each extension of the peacetime state of emergency. The DFL House defended the Governor so he could keep restricting opening fully the MN State Economy. The DFL House was provided five extra chances to work with the Republican controlled Senate to pass a bonding/spending bill. Four were missed.

The fifth finally allowed lawmakers to avoid going into the November 3, 2020 election without having failed to accomplish their one assignment of the year. The bill included the Section

179 conformity, which brings the state and federal tax treatment of how equipment purchases are depreciated, a move MCPR strongly supported that helps farmers and small businesses.

MCPR strongly lobbied in the 2020 Session the full Section 179 conformity. This much needed fix provides tax relief for MCPR members when they invest in equipment for their Minnesota businesses. This bill also retroactively fixes the tax hit some taxpayers experienced when they traded in equipment in 2018 and 2019.

In last year's Tax Bill, like/kind exchanges were treated as an income gain, but the immediate expensing provision was not adopted to offset the difference. Without this change, farmers and small business owners would continue to be hit with retroactive tax increases because state law does not conform to federal law for each business tax offset.

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Executive Director's Report

Hello MCPR members,

The cancellation of the Crop Pest Management Short Course and MCPR Trade Show was a drastic decision which is just one more landmark in this year of COVID-19. The attitude and strategies to effectively deal with the pandemic is very different in rural Minnesota as compared with the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Frankly, the Minneapolis and Minnesota restrictions on size of gatherings and other meeting restrictions made the meeting impossible. Furthermore, the riots, property damage, and threats by the folks who destroyed a significant section of the Minneapolis core business districts factored into the MCPR Board of Directors decision.

The Board reflected the opinions and attitudes of MCPR members that these actions should and will change the location of the meeting in 2021. Expect announcements related to these matters.

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Executive Director's Report (continued from page 1)



As part of MCPR cost effectiveness, we contract for two cubicles and a meeting space along with support services in the Association Management Companies' offices. This strategy was a necessary and significant effort to contain costs when the MCPR Board discovered prior to selecting me as the new Executive Director in 2004 that the organization had a structural annual operating deficit of nearly \$100,000 on a \$500,000 annual budget. Moreover, much of the MCPR budget was financial pass through exchanges in operation of the massive annual trade show.

I researched options and recommended that MCPR close the office operations and contract with an association management company for services to substantially reduce costs and also substantially improve service capabilities including digitizing the newsletter, the static web site, and data base. I found a company with which I was familiar and knew had a culture which could accommodate MCPR staffing needs including hiring me as a staff member. The decision to close the office was difficult for the Board, but the outcome exceeded our expectations.

The Board soon begin to focus on strategic crop input industry issues and solutions which fortified MCPR's reputation as an industry leader. MCPR also beefed up our legislative affairs capabilities which proved important as water quality public policies begin to refocus on agriculture and our industry as a significant source of water contamination. Laws and rules have followed the massive Minnesota

spending on water quality. MCPR has risen to the challenge. Our trade show swelled in size and impact to become one of the best in the region.

When the association management company lost their lease at the Maple Grove offices recently, MCPR moved with the company to their new office at the Carlson Towers at the corner of I-494 and Hwy 12. A couple of MCPR members wondered out loud if MCPR was spending extravagantly to now office in this fancy building. MCPR has not spent one cent more for our new office space. We still have the same two office cubicles and access to a nice Board meeting room plus better office back up capabilities. So, instead of extravagance, turns out the MCPR Board was very shrewd to get more for the same hard-earned dollars MCPR members spend to support their association.

One of the outcomes of the annual trade show cancellation was the loss of nearly \$160,000 net income which is the largest source of income to support MCPR operations. Some members find that hard to grasp, but the income from annual member dues is less than the trade show income.



As a result, the MCPR Board decided to contribute as a special fundraising effort the amount they would have invested in the exhibit hall or registration for the meeting. In addition, the MCPR Board decided to ask the same of all MCPR members which they computed would cover the MCPR net income needs as all members participate.

To date, I can report that nearly \$60,000 toward the \$160,000 need has already been raised. Thank you, MCPR members! Expect a special recognition of each of these members in the weeks to come.

Until next time,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bill Bond'.

Bill Bond



AFREC Report

Conservation Drainage Research

The UMN Northwest Research and Outreach Center, is looking at conservative drainage practices, and how they impact soil quality. The center is looking into normal agricultural practices and seeing how they are influencing water quality within the field. They installed a subsurface and surface lift stations on a 60-acre field. The other area of the study is to see how long it takes for soil to recover after the drainage instillation. View Lyndsay Pease, Research Specialist, in a 7 minute video by clicking here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfYEbbvUafU>

2019 On-Farm Trial Data

Similar to the 2018 data, we are working on getting the 2019 data into a format to upload onto the website. This data, which includes nitrogen, potassium, and sulfur will be promoted through creative and paid campaigns on the AFREC platforms in the next two quarters. We will continue to keep you updated on the progress of this data set.

2018 On-Farm Trial Data

To date, we have had 221 people visit the 2018 data page and view the content we have provided on that page. This is without any promotion above and beyond being present on the website for those to view. We expect this to increase as we continue to drive people towards the website in the upcoming months. To view the 2018 data, [click here](#).

Facebook Activity

In this past quarter, AFREC created a content calendar with the U of M as well as an individual AFREC page. We have started sharing on the AFREC Facebook page and will continue to do so in the upcoming months.

AFREC in Agriculture News

- AFREC nutrient management unique web page views increased over 82% from July-September 2019 (32,889) to July-September 2020 (59,960)
- A record 18 nutrient management posts were published on the Minnesota Crop News blog this quarter which generated 12,880 total views.
- AFREC crossed the 4,000 mark for Facebook followers this quarter! The UMN Extension Nutrient Management Facebook page currently has over 4,400 followers.
- Fabian Fernandez's blog post about late-season nitrogen application received over 1,200 clicks. DTN/Progressive Farmer highlighted it in a feature article and in their fertilizer column.
- Our July podcast episode featured Dan Kaiser, Lindsay Pease, Brad Carlson, and Greg Klinger with a mid-summer update on growing conditions and research projects, as well as some timely soil fertility recommendations for growers and consultants.
- Dan Kaiser provided readers with some tissue sampling tips for corn, soybean, sugar beet and wheat.
- Lindsay Pease gave an update on her AFREC-funded drainage research project in a short video presentation.
- Melissa Wilson and Chryseis Modderman discussed manure management research and events on our August podcast episode. Melissa gave an update on AFREC-funded manure nitrogen and phosphorus credit study.

- New Extension educator Taylor Becker co-wrote a blog post with Greg Klinger about MDA's updated Groundwater Protection Rule, which went into effect September 1. The post received over 1,200 link clicks and was republished by The Farmer online and in their print magazine.

To read more about the specific outreach activities broken down by month, [view full 2-page overview provided for reference here](#).

Capitol Update

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The bill is a little different than what was proposed in early 2020. What was being considered earlier this year was a more comprehensive tax bill which including other provisions. This bill has been streamlined to be just a Section 179 conformity bill so the language has retroactive component to the like-kind exchanges in calendar year 2018 and 2019 and then, the full expensing is provided for related to all properties in 2020.



Due to the Short Course Cancellation are you looking for CEU Opportunities?

Classroom-Subscribe from the Certified Crop Advisers Offers Live Webinars and an Online Classroom Subscription

A subscription to the live webinar and Online Classroom gives you unlimited access to numerous educational resources for one full year. It provides a low cost, easy way to earn CEUs on a diverse array of topics that impact your daily work in the field and in the office. See below to explore features and pricing and to sign up for this service.

Features:

- Unlimited access to most courses in the Online Classroom for one year: The classroom is composed of roughly 230 courses. Only a few multi-module courses are excluded from the subscription, meaning most of these courses are available to you anytime, anywhere.
- Unlimited access to nearly all live webinars for one year: This includes both sponsored and non-sponsored webinars, meaning you can attend nearly any webinar you want, enabling you to interact with the speaker through dynamic question and answer periods. As with the Online Classroom, a few multi-module webinar series are excluded from the subscription.

- On-demand, low cost Continuing Education Unit (CEU) opportunities from anywhere you have an internet connection: With a subscription, you can earn as many CEUs as you need to meet your certification's CEU requirements. Since the ASA/SSSA Online Classroom is full of courses spanning all the CEU categories, you don't need to worry about finding a way to fulfill your CEU obligations. Plus, with nearly unlimited access to live webinars, you can conveniently earn CEUs while learning the latest in agronomy science through interaction with subject matter experts.

Pricing:

- \$100/year for Certified Crop Advisers (CCAs), Certified Professional Agronomists (CPAGs), Certified Professional Soil Scientists (CPSSs), Certified Soil Classifiers (CPSCs) and Society Members
- \$145/year for all others

Have questions or comments? Please reach out to Lacey Edwardson at 1-608-268-4953 or [send an email](#).

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