

Co-op Kudos

Congratulations to **Insight FS** for [breaking ground](#) on their new feed mill in Brandon, Wis.

Cooperative Network Calendar

July 27: Wisconsin Agricultural Credit Issues Conference, Stevens Point, Wis. [Learn More...](#)

Aug. 8: Electric Sector meeting, St. Cloud, Minn.

Aug. 23: Dairy Plant & Field Reps Conference, Eau Claire, Wis.

Sept. 6: Farm Supply, Grain and Fuel Committee meeting, Brainerd, Minn.

Sept. 20: Employment Law Update, Eau Claire, Wis. [Learn More...](#)



Cooperative Network News

Wisconsin



Secretary Ben Brancel

DATCP Secretary to retire. On July 20, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Ben Brancel, announced his plan to retire on Aug. 13, 2017.

Secretary Brancel has served in this role twice: under the appointment of Governor Thompson from 1997 to 2001 and most recently, beginning in 2011.

In a statement, Brancel noted: "My first job was a farmer, and my last job will be a farmer...I have always said that in agriculture, we are a family. Thank you for letting me be a part of it."

Cooperative Network would like to thank Secretary Brancel for his years of service and dedication to the role and to the state of Wisconsin. We wish him the very best.

To read his full statement, [click here](#).

Cooperative Network testifies on agricultural producer security rule changes

Cooperative Network testified at the July 19 Madison hearing on proposed changes to the Agricultural Producer Security (APS) program administrative rules pertaining to fund assessments. Cooperative Network

Sept. 21: Minnesota Agricultural Credit Issues Conference, St. Cloud, Minn.

Oct. 18: Wisconsin Co-op Day at the Capitol, Madison, Wis.
[Learn More...](#)

Nov. 14-15: Cooperative Network Annual General Meeting, St. Paul, Minn.

April 30 - May 1, 2018: SCH Conference, Minneapolis, Minn.

Link of the Week



Judy Ziewacz, President and CEO of [NCBA CLUSA](#), has designated the [Cooperative Development Foundation](#) as a recipient of contributions made in the name of her husband, Rick Merrill, who passed away in June. The couple was married for 35 years.

To learn more about this generous gift, [click here](#).

supports the proposed automatic reduction in the fund assessments paid by grain dealers when their portion of the fund exceeds the statutory maximum of \$6 million. We also support the reduction in assessments paid by milk contractors by 20 percent to better reflect fairness in what the sector should be paying into the fund. The Madison hearing was the final of two hearings on the proposed changes to ATCP 99, 100 and 101. The deadline for written comments on the rule is Aug. 2. Written comments should be sent to David Woldseth at the Division of Trade and Consumer Protection, DATCP, P.O. Box 8911, Madison, WI. 53708-8911. Comments may also be emailed to DavidA.Woldseth@wisconsin.gov.

Senate Republican budget proposal contains most of rev/ex recommendations

Among the provisions in the budget proposal released by Senate Republicans on July 18 are several of interest to Cooperative Network's members. They are the following:

- Includes most of the RevEx recommendations that are in Governor Walker's budget proposal that had not yet been acted upon by the Joint Finance Committee, and have received Cooperative Network's support. However, several modifications to the budget language are included in the Senate GOP version. The modifications are:
 - Establish a pesticide product registration fee of \$500 per product – an increase of \$20 from what is in the budget bill as submitted. In addition, language is clarified to specify that pesticide product registrations shall be paid by companies that sell or distribute pesticides in Wisconsin, which is a DATCP recommendation.
 - Specify that commercial feed inspection fees shall be paid by the first person to sell or distribute commercial feed in Wisconsin, or to a person in Wisconsin. This was a DATCP recommendation.
 - Establish surcharge reduction thresholds at Agricultural Chemical Cleanup Program (ACCP) fund balances of \$2.5 million and \$1.25 million (the bill uses \$1.5 million and \$750,000 thresholds). Also, provide that DATCP may request transfers from the Agrichemical Management (ACM) fund to the ACCP through a 14-day Joint Finance Committee passive review process.
 - Restore the \$7,500 deductible for pesticide license holders and larger businesses. (The budget bill incorrectly changed that to \$3,000.)
 - Re-estimate reimbursements of agricultural chemical cleanups at \$900,000 annually, a decrease from the adjusted base of \$1.5. That lower amount reflects DATCP projections for program activity beginning in the 2017-19 biennium.
- Includes the Joint Finance Committee's approved budget provision to restore the stray voltage program and associated statutory authorities in DATCP and the Public Service Commission.
- Provides an additional \$100,000 annually from the Agrichemical Management segregated (SEG) revenue account for administration of the livestock premises registration program, in addition to the currently provided \$250,000 general purpose revenue (GPR) annually.
- Provide an additional \$25,000 GPR annually for aids to county and district fairs. DATCP has base funding of \$406,400 GPR each year for fair aids. Awards are capped at \$10,000 per fair, subject to

further proration if total eligible reimbursements exceed the appropriated amount.

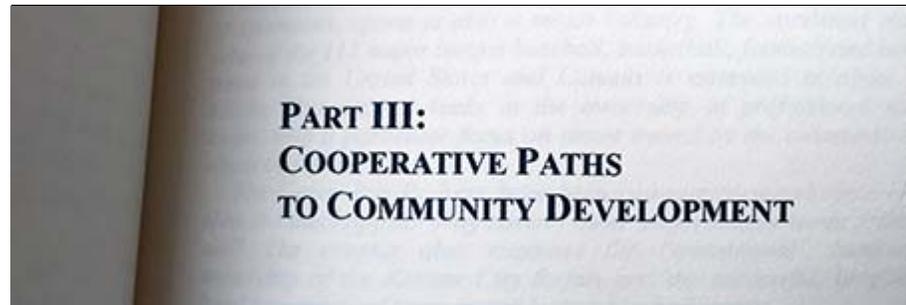
- Increase the maximum grant under the Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant program from \$20,000 to \$40,000 and continue to fund the program with up to \$250,000 nonpoint SEG each fiscal year instead of GPR as the budget bill would provide.

State Budget update

Wisconsin's 2017-19 State Budget is 24 days overdue. Last week the Senate Republican's announced their budget in a press conference attended by Cooperative Network. Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald (R – Juneau) acknowledged that the Senate proposal is a working document and that changes could be made before final passage. Fitzgerald also thinks that the Senate Budget meets Governor Walker's goal of funding k-12 education, holding the line on property taxes, and insuring sound investments in transportation without raising taxes.

According to the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau, the Senate proposal includes \$712 million in bonding for transportation which is more than Governor Walker and the Assembly have proposed. The level of bonding is a point of contention between the Senate and the Assembly.

On July 20, Governor Walker proposed to use \$200 million that he had planned to use for income tax cuts to go towards transportation funding. Assembly Republicans have indicated their support for Walker's plan while the Senate Republicans are still reviewing. The Senate and the Assembly seem to agree to keep the Governor's \$600 million increase in K-12 Education funding.



Have you read "Cooperation Works!" by E.G. Nadeau & David J. Thompson?

Minnesota

Judge rules against Gov. Dayton's line-item veto of legislative branch funding

A Ramsey County judge ruled last week that Gov. Mark Dayton's line-item veto of funding for the legislative branch was unconstitutional. In his ruling, Judge John Guthman ruled: "The court holds that the governor used his line-item veto authority to gain a repeal or modification of unrelated policy legislation by effectively eliminating a co-equal branch of government. Therefore, the unique and limited circumstances of this case, the governor's line-item veto of the legislature's appropriations offended the Separation of Powers clause of the Minnesota Constitution. They are null and void." After the ruling was rendered, the governor indicated that he will appeal the decision to the Minnesota Supreme Court and that the ruling was a preliminary step in the case's judicial process.

House Speaker Kurt Daudt (R – Crown) stated his disappointment that the governor refuses to accept the court's opinion. Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka (R – Nisswa) commented that the governor should accept the verdict and allow the people of Minnesota to move on, instead of continuing to waste taxpayer dollars on expensive litigation. Dayton has contended that his veto was legal and was done to bring legislators back to the bargaining table to discuss fiscal and policy differences that he feels could jeopardize Minnesota's future.

MDA pushes back comment deadline on Nitrogen Fertilizer Rule and announces additional listening session in Fairmont

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) announced that they were pushing back the deadline for comments on their proposed [Nitrogen Fertilizer Rule](#) from Friday, Aug. 11 to Friday, Aug. 25. In addition, they also announced an additional meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, July 25 at the Holiday Inn in Fairmont starting at 2 p.m. MDA recently hosted Cooperative Network and several other agriculture groups to explain that the purpose of the Rule is to minimize potential sources of nitrate pollution in the state's groundwater and to protect Minnesota's drinking water. MDA is expected to publish the final draft of the rule in the fall of 2017, with adoption scheduled to take place in the fall of 2018. Cooperative Network plans to submit comments and did so during the Rule's [first comment period](#) in the winter of 2016. If you have any thoughts or suggestions on comments, please let [Cooperative Network](#) know by Monday, Aug. 21 so that they can be considered by the Friday, Aug. 25 deadline.

Broadband grant deadline for pre-application notification to existing wireline providers July 31

The deadline for Border-to-Border Broadband grant applicants to notify existing wireline providers of their intentions to file a potential application is July 31. This requirement was created during the 2016 legislative session and must be done at least six weeks before a grant application is filed. There are templates in the grant application, as well as an interactive map that can help identify broadband providers in or near a proposed project area. Instructions for those wishing to submit an application for a grant can be found at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development's [website](#). For those who plan to file an application and don't know who to contact or who provides service in the area, questions can be directed to deed.broadband@state.mn.us. The application period for the 2017 grants program started on July 3, 2017 and will run through 4 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 11, 2017. During the 2017 legislative session, \$20 million was infused into the border-to-border broadband grant program. Cooperative Network was pleased to support this legislation on behalf of our membership.

MPCA plans amendments to water quality fee rules

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) recently announced that they are planning [amendments](#) to water quality fees that may increase permit application, annual and additional fees. MPCA contends the amendments will adjust fees to reflect fairer and more equitable distribution of permit costs among permittees. The MPCA will consider changes to include an inflation factor to enable fees to reflect increasing costs as well as a schedule for phasing in fee changes. Fees affected by the proposed amendments include feedlot permits, environmental review, municipal and industrial wastewater permits, non-contract cooling water permits, stormwater permits, septic systems, variances and laboratory certification. A stakeholder video conference on the rulemaking will be

held this afternoon from 2-4 p.m. and again from 6-8 p.m., at the MPCA St. Paul office and at regional offices in Brainerd, Detroit Lakes, Duluth, Mankato, Marshall, Rochester and Willmar. The purpose of the meeting is to share information about the rulemaking so that stakeholders are able to provide verbal input and written comments. The deadline for comments is Aug. 14, 2017 to the Office of Administration hearings Rulemaking e-Comments [webpage](#).

Cooperative Builder Awards



Applications due Sept. 1 for Cooperative Network's highest honor

Nominations are due Sept. 1 for Cooperative Network's [Cooperative Builder Award](#), our region's highest honor for individuals who have made outstanding contributions at the local, state, or national level to advance the cooperative philosophy and ideals. Honorees will be celebrated at our annual general meeting banquet, Nov. 14, at the InterContinental St. Paul Riverfront, St. Paul, Minn.

Nominees may be co-op members, employees, or supporters. [Previous winners](#) and current [Cooperative Network board members](#) are ineligible. Applications are kept in the selection pool for three years and may be updated with additional information.

Submit your nomination no later than Sept. 1, 2017. Please [contact us](#) with any questions.

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