



Minnesota Crop Production Retailers

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# INPUTS

## Capitol Update

**The Minnesota Legislature reconvenes** February 11 for the second year of the biennium which is designated as a shorter policy-oriented session compared to the longer session last year. The idea is that once the biennial budget was passed last year effective July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021, no major monetary decisions need be debated. But, of course, money will be the major focus again this year. According to the state constitution, they can't meet later than May 18 ("the first Monday following the third Saturday in May").

What can we expect to be debated and decided this year? Well, the state budget is in balance. In addition, there is a projected surplus of \$1.3 billion and a rainy-day account at a record \$2.36 billion. The Legislature remains split between a GOP-controlled Senate and a DFL-controlled House. Likely little light but much heat will be developed as politics and elections will be the primary focus of this legislature. Expect a political session of folks trying out campaign themes, where both parties roll out their bills knowing they won't pass but being able to show their constituency groups that they're trying.



As of this writing only an emergency insulin act and a bonding bill have received public attention and may have a chance to become law, but even those issues could fall into debates with no decisions due to partisan politics. Looking at bonding: state budgetary guidelines say that a measure to borrow money for state and local construction projects can spend up to \$3.5 billion, and some legislative DFLers think that much is needed. Gov. Tim Walz has only said he wouldn't go that high. Senate GOP leaders, on the other hand, have suggested that something a bit north of \$1 billion might be as high as they are willing to go.

M CPR members can find the M CPR Policy Positions for 2020 approved at the 2019 M CPR Annual Meeting on the M CPR web page at [www.mcpr-cca.org](http://www.mcpr-cca.org)

But we need you to pay attention, M CPR members. On **February 25**, both the

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## Executive Director's Report

**Hello M CPR members,**  
A very successful CPM Short Course and M CPR Trade Show in December



capped off an extremely busy year. 2020 has already brought new challenges and opportunities as M CPR leaders strive to keep our members informed and represented through excellent leadership and service.

The 2020 M CPR Policy Positions were determined during the M CPR Annual Meeting as part of the trade show which are posted on the M CPR web site. Plan to attend next year to see why so many find it a "must attend meeting and trade show." The dates are December 8-10, 2020.

### M CPR Moves Ahead with the 4 R Certification Program

This last summer and fall, several Board members participated and evaluated the 4 R Certification program by testing the certification standards at their facilities.

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## Capitol Update

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GOP and DFL will hold more than 4000 **precinct caucuses** around the state. Please plan to attend your precinct caucus to defend agriculture during the debates. I can assure you that environmental activists will be at your precinct caucus. However, this year is different than the past in that unlike past presidential cycles, the caucuses won't be used to begin the process of selecting the two parties' delegates to national conventions for the political Presidential party endorsement.

Rather, this is the year that will be done on **March 3**, when **Minnesota joins Super Tuesday** — and modern American politics — with its first **presidential primary** since 1992. To avoid the chaos that both faced on caucus night, 2016, the party chairs agreed to abide by the results of an actual election, that is of course if they were allowed to decide most of the rules. To that end, voters must sign a pledge that they are adherents of the party and be willing to have their names, addresses and other contact information provided to all parties. Republicans will award all delegates to whichever candidate wins a majority of votes at the primary. And since Donald Trump will be the only name on the GOP ballot, he will get 39 delegates. Democrats have proportional distribution, though a candidate must get at least 15 percent of the primary vote to get any of the state's 92 delegates. However, because voters must publicly state their party preference to receive a ballot at the polling station, a number of voters are not willing to place their political affiliations in the public marketplace. As a result, many voters plan to not participate in the presidential primary March 3.

The choice of date will either prove to be a great idea or a bad idea, depending on how much national attention — from candidates and news media — it can wrestle from bigger Super Tuesday states like California, Massachusetts and Texas. Only four states will have held delegate selection events before Super Tuesday, but 15 primaries will be held on that day. By the end of March, more than 50 percent of delegates will be spoken for.

Which Minnesotans get to serve as delegates will be decided by the parties, culminating for the Republicans on **May 15-16** at the **Republican State Convention** in Rochester. Given that the Trump campaign considers Minnesota a swing state that he came close to claiming for the GOP for the first time since 1972, expect a lot of national GOP stars to be at the Mayo Civic Center for the event. The party will also decide endorsements for the U.S. Senate race against U.S. Sen. Tina Smith.

The **State DFL Convention** will also be in Rochester when it convenes on **May 30-31**. Like the GOP, it will consider platforms and resolutions but won't have much in the way of endorsement fights. They will, however, select the actual delegates who will represent the state in the **Democratic National Convention** in Milwaukee. While there is no real contest for the Republican Presidential Nominee being President Trump, Democrats could still be deciding which candidate to nominate at that late date.

Confused yet? How about this - on **August 11** Minnesota will hold its **primary election for all the rest of**

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## Executive Director's Report

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Ultimately, these Board members advised the MCPR Board that this program was a workable program for Minnesota Ag Retailers to adopt. The 4 R program was developed by The Fertilizer Institute.

At the recent 2020 January Board meeting the MCPR Board approved the endorsement of the 4 R Nutrient Certification Program and decided to provide leadership and administrative guidance to promote the program in Minnesota. Subsequently, in a more recent meeting, the MN 4R Certification Advisory Committee reviewed 32 draft Minnesota Certification standards and also approved MCPR's leadership and administration of this program.

As you know, the 4R nutrient stewardship principles are the same globally, but how they are used locally varies depending on field and site-specific characteristics such as soil, cropping system, management techniques and climate. The scientific principles of the 4R framework include:

**RIGHT SOURCE** – Ensure a balanced supply of essential nutrients, considering both naturally available sources and the characteristics of specific products, in plant available forms.

**RIGHT RATE** – Assess and make decisions based on soil nutrient supply and plant demand.

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## Executive Director's Report

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**RIGHT TIME** – Assess and make decisions based on the dynamics of crop uptake, soil supply, nutrient loss risks, and field operation logistics.

**RIGHT PLACE** – Address root-soil dynamics and nutrient movement and manage spatial variability within the field to meet site-specific crop needs and limit potential losses from the field.

### **But Why Now – Why this 4Rs Certification of Nutrient Stewardship?**

This is an industry created solution to address the public questions about what is being done in agriculture to help solve the problem of excess nutrients in our waters. The **4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program** was created by the agricultural industry, state agri-business associations, The Nature Conservancy, The Ohio State University, Michigan State University, state farm bureaus, state agencies and others, to encourage agricultural nutrient service providers to adopt proven best practices through the 4Rs - the **Right Source of Nutrients** at the **Right Rate** and **Right Time** in the **Right Place**. This is a voluntary program which provides a consistent, recognized standard for nutrient service providers in Indiana, Michigan and Ohio where surrounding waters drain into Lake Erie. And now, in Minnesota.

The 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program is currently evaluating 36 criteria to be implemented and staggered over a 3-year period in each certified ag retail outlet. Each criterion will be re-evaluated each year by a private, third party auditor, via an in-person or desk audit, to maintain certification.

### **Governance**

On a national level, the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program is governed and guided by the 11-member **Nutrient Stewardship Council**, a diverse set of stakeholders from business, government, university and the non-governmental sectors. Here in Minnesota MCPR has identified several MCPR Board members who will provide guidance to the Minnesota Nutrient Stewardship Council and their staff. Expect to learn more about this program as it is developed.

In Minnesota, water nutrient issues are more focused on nitrates, but the stakes over the next few years are no less serious to our freedom to farm than the issues being addressed in places like Lake Erie, the Chesapeake Bay, Lake Winnipeg, the Gulf Hypoxia issues, and the Mississippi and Minnesota River issues. Expect to learn much more about this program as it develops under MCPR guidance and

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## Dale's View

**Hello MCPR Members,**

We had a tremendous and very successful CPM Short Course and MCPR Trade Show. I heard many compliments and some suggestions on improvements we can make for the 2020 Trade Show which will be held December 8-10, 2020 at the Mpls Convention Center and Mpls Hilton Hotel. During the MCPR Annual Meeting in December all current Board members running for reelection were elected. You may also remember the Board of Directors developed an idea to add advisors to our board team for increased communication and representation throughout Minnesota. At the January Board meeting the MCPR Board exercised the MCPR Bylaws authority to reappoint two Honorary Advisory Board members who will serve two-year terms on the Board without vote, K. C. (Kevin) Graner, Pine Island, CFS, and Jeff Moon, Sauk Rapids, who works for Corteva. In addition, the Board has decided to add one more Advisory Board member, David Voller, BASF, for a two-year term. On a final note, the MPCPR Board endorsed the 4R Certification program, details of which you can find in the Executive Director report in this newsletter. We will be sharing much more about this development as the year progresses.

*Dale Johnson*

MCPR Board Chair,  
Dale Johnson



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## Capitol Update

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**the Minnesota election contests as the Presidential Primary will have been held in March.** Of course, don't forget that on **August 24-27**, the **Republican National Convention** will be held.

The election will build to a climax on **November 3** when America will hold its **General Election** for president, 33 U.S. senators, 435 members of the House, lots of governors and hundreds of state lawmakers.

MCPR members can expect the politics to be fast and furious this year with little certainty until the elections are over in November. Strap on your seatbelts – it may be a rough ride. ✨

## Executive Director's Report

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leadership and the efforts of the National and International Councils which are bringing this discipline to agriculture across the planet. ✨

Until next time,

*Bill Bond*

Bill Bond

