

Subject Farm to school and early care program

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Summary

This bill would appropriate an unspecified amount of money in fiscal year 2026 and 2027 from the general fund to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for the farm to school and early care program. Of the total appropriation, \$150,000 is set aside each year for a statewide coordinator. This appropriation would be under the agricultural growth, research, and innovation (AGRI) program.

The farm to school and early care program provides grants to schools and early childhood education settings who participate in the National School Lunch Program or the Adult Care Food Program. These organizations use the grant funds to purchase and serve locally produced food.

This program is in conjunction with federal cooperative agreements for purchasing Minnesota grown and raised foods for schools and childcare providers. This bill allows MDA to use an amount of this appropriation of up to 7.5% of the total federal funds awarded for this purpose to go towards the state administration of these cooperative agreements. This also requires MDA to expend federal funds before using state funds for these cooperative agreements.