

AFREC Legislative Briefing

December 5, 2023

Grant Anderson Chairman---AFREC

Bruce Montgomery --AFREC Coordinator



AFREC: Agricultural Fertilizer Research and Education Council

This program was created by the MN Legislature to ensure that Minnesota farmers and ag professionals have access to high quality fertilizer recommendations and “state of the art” technology.

Since conception in 2009, AFREC has invested over \$13 Million into soil fertility research and education projects.



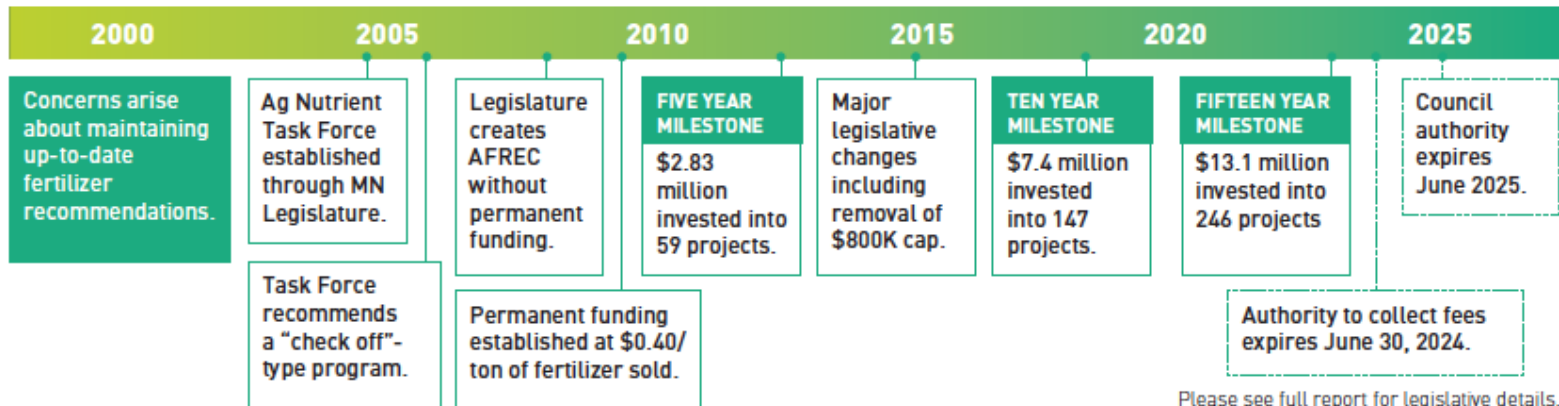
What Does AFREC Provide?

AFREC's mission is to improve fertilizer efficiency, farm profitability, and Minnesota's agricultural environment

AFREC provides leadership, long-term funding, leveraging, and coordination across farm organizations, industry, academics and state government

AFREC History

Timeline of Legislative Dates and Achievements



Please see full report for legislative details.

How is AFREC Funded?

- 40 cents per ton on all fertilizers sold
- Cost per Cropland Acre? Statewide average is roughly 6 to 8 cents per acre per year
- Vast majority (95%+) of the funds are provided by fertilizers used for agricultural production
- \$1.0 to \$1.2 Million is commonly available each year
- Competitive grants via Request for Proposals

AFREC Council Membership

COUNCIL MEMBERS



FORMAL MEMBERSHIP

- MN Crop Production Retailers;
- MN Corn Growers Association;
- MN Soybean Growers Association;
- Sugar Beet Growers Industry;
- MN Association of Wheat Growers;
- Potato Growers Industry;
- MN Farm Bureau;
- MN Farmers Union;
- MN Irrigators Association;
- MN Grain and Feed Association;
- MN Independent Crop Consultant Association or CCA

Ex Officios from UM, MDA, and Edible Beans

Factsheet for Legislators

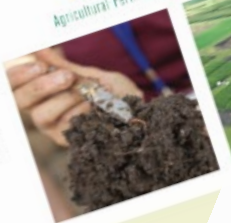
AFREC Factsheet For Legislators

What is AFREC?

AFREC stands for the Agricultural Fertilizer Research and Education Council. The program, which began in 2008, is tasked with improving fertilizer efficiency, farm profitability, and Minnesota's environment through soil fertility research, technology development, and education.

The council is made up of Minnesota farmers and crop advisors from each of the major agricultural groups in the state. The council's funding comes from a 40 cent per ton fee on fertilizer sales in Minnesota. Farmers in the state invest around five cents per cropland acre per year. This raises over \$1 million each year.

This program was conceived, designed, funded, and managed with the support of the agricultural community. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture serves as an important partner to AFREC by collecting and managing the tonnage fee, providing legal and technical guidance, and overseeing all associated contracts. While the economic payback on the \$13 million investment is impressive, the environmental benefits to Minnesota's water resources are undeniable. The agricultural community is unified in the continuation of the AFREC program.



AFREC at a Glance

~\$1,000,000 raised per year for soil fertility and water quality research, technology and education.

\$13 MILLION invested in soil fertility research and education in Minnesota since 2008.

40¢ per ton of fertilizer in Minnesota



Thom Petersen, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture



Purpose of This Document

The fertilizer tonnage fee that supports AFREC is scheduled to sunset June 30, 2024. In order to continue this important program, Minnesota legislators need to take urgent action.

The Minnesota agriculture community is unified in support of AFREC and that the fee and overall structure stay the same and the program be extended for another 10 years.

This factsheet and the companion detailed report are provided so legislators and other key decision makers have a clear understanding of the value of the AFREC program and can make an informed decision.

Learn more at: MNAsoilFertility.com/Legislative

"AFREC funding supports science-based research in Minnesota and is very valuable to the ag community. Program outcomes help farmers adopt the best soil fertility practices and keeps Minnesota agriculture strong and competitive."



AFREC FACTSHEET FOR LEGISLATORS

Agricultural Community Support for AFREC

Legislators and other key decisionmakers:

AFREC (Agricultural Fertilizer Research and Education Council) has had a rich and productive history since its establishment fifteen years ago in 2008. Over \$13 million has been carefully invested into soil fertility research and education programs. Unbiased scientific findings have reassured farmers and agricultural professionals that current fertilizer recommendations and associated management practices are highly relevant, and also provide cutting edge technology. These investments can yield huge gains in both farm economics and environmental protection.

AFREC is funded by a 40 cent/ton fee on fertilizer sales, which is collected by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MN Statutes 18C.425). This authority is scheduled to sunset June 30, 2024. Associated Council functions (established in MN Statutes 18C.70,71&80) are scheduled to sunset June 30, 2025.

It is imperative that soil fertility research continues to advance to keep pace with an ever-changing world. AFREC was conceived, developed, led, and funded by Minnesota's agricultural community. The organizations listed below enthusiastically support continuing this important program.

We are asking for a ten-year extension and keeping the supporting fee at 40 cents/ton.



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AFREC Accomplishments 2008 through 2023

- Development of unbiased and scientifically defensible Fertilizer Guidelines and associated 4Rs/BMPs
- Huge improvements in fertilizer outreach
- MDA has managed over 250 individual awards, most in partnership with the University of Minnesota
- Serves as the “cornerstone” for all fertility research across the various research councils

Agricultural Community Support for AFREC

- Legislative authority to collect the fees sunsets June 30, 2024;
- All 11 farm organizations strongly support the continuation of the AFREC program;
- Recommend keeping the fee at 40 cents per ton;
- Retain the existing program structure;
- Reauthorize for another 10 years (MN Statutes 18C.70, 18C.71, 18C.80, and 18C.425)

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Questions?

Thank You

