

March 11, 2024

Katrina Kessler, Commissioner  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
520 Lafayette Road  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Subject: Minnesota Department of Agriculture Support of the State Minnesota's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Single Entity Proposal for Climate-Smart Food Systems (Award Number EPA-R-OAR-CPRGI-23-07)

Dear Commissioner Kessler,

I write to affirm that we, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, plan to partner with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and other state agencies involved in the proposal, to implement the suite of climate-smart food systems programs in your agency's CPRG single entity implementation grant proposal.

Our agencies have been actively collaborating in an all-of-government approach to climate action through the Climate Change Subcabinet, launched by Executive Order 19-37, and the development and implementation of Minnesota's Climate Action Framework, released in 2022. The Framework establishes a vision for climate action that will make Minnesota carbon-neutral, resilient, and equitable. These three co-equal pillars of Minnesota's Framework guide our collaborative climate work. We have built strong partnerships among our agencies and are well-positioned to support and collaborate with MPCA in the implementation of this CPRG grant proposal.

We are excited to have this proposal moving forward as a collaboration across state agencies because we all have a role to play in making Minnesota a national leader in climate-smart approaches to our food system. Our agencies coming together allows us to take a systems approach and capture multiple benefits while achieving significant greenhouse gas emissions reductions and carbon sequestration across all aspects of our food system. As part of this proposal, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture will leverage innovative, successful programs at the Department, including the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program, Soil Health Financial Assistance Program, and Continuous Living Cover Market Development Grant, to amplify GHG emissions reductions and environmental and community co-benefits. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture will further partner with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to administer a new grant program to electrify agricultural equipment and the necessary infrastructure throughout Minnesota.

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is excited to partner in this climate-smart food systems work because it aligns with our mission: To enhance all Minnesotans' quality of life by equitably ensuring the integrity of our food supply, the health of our environment, and the strength and resilience of our

agricultural economy. In particular, our organization can bring the perspective of Minnesota's rural and agricultural community including individual producers, food and agriculture industry representatives, agriculture and natural resource conservation professionals, and emerging farmers via the Department's Emerging Farmers Working Group. This proposal builds upon the MDA's existing partnership with the University of Minnesota's Forever Green Initiative to accelerate commercialization and adoption of climate-smart continuous living cover crops.

We are enthusiastic about partnering with the MPCA to advance our shared climate goals and the goals of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's ambitious and vital CPRG program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thom Petersen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thom" and last name "Petersen" clearly distinguishable.

Thom Petersen  
Commissioner