



# Inputs

## Capitol Update

The 2014 Legislature finally adjourned just three days before the May 19 Constitutional deadline. Governor Dayton's hope to have a legislative session in which they came in later than usual – February 25 – and would leave early was not realized. He termed the legislative session an “UnSession”. However, it was anything but that description. Rather than sending the \$1.4 billion projected surplus back to the voters as the Republicans had demanded and going home, the legislature stayed to the bitter end spending the surplus on increased budget reserves, gave back most of the business to business taxes they raised last year, and spent the rest. Some folks will get property tax relief from this spending including farmers. Of course, the Governor and House members were thinking of facing voters in the election this fall while the Senators weren't as worried as they are not scheduled for elections this fall. The state's hourly minimum wage was raised to \$9.50, phased in by 2016. The House prevailed on inflation indexing the minimum wages thereafter but didn't get a 40-hour work week for overtime and failed in their attempt to remove the agriculture exemption on over time. A large bonding bill was passed in the final hours also. Many controversial laws were debated and passed such as medical marijuana legislation and gay marriage. The push to pass a GMO labeling bill was defeated. Pollinators were on the agenda. A provision was included in the supplemental appropriations bill that will reimburse bee keepers out of the pesticide regulatory account if they can prove a pesticide killed the bees with claims up to \$20,000 maximum with a \$150,000 annual limit out of the pesticide regulatory account. Pesticide applicators are protected if they follow the pesticide label when applying the pesticide, but if they are not applying according to the label the applicator could be liable for the bee damages. All in all, MCP R members came out well with little of substance being pushed on us. This would be a good year to get involved with your House members running for office and to also pay attention to the Governor's race and U.S. Senate race for Senator Franklin's seat this fall.

*(continued on page 3)*

## 2014 CPM Short Course and MCP R Trade Show



### Inside this Issue

Capitol Update	1&3
Short Course Info	1
Executive Director's Report	2
News Notes	2-3
Reguletter	Insert
Brad's View	4

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend the **2014 CPM Short Course and MCP R Trade Show, December 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> 2014** at the Minneapolis Convention Center and Hilton Hotel.

Planning has already started to make the this years show bigger and better than last year.

Watch for further information regarding registration and program details coming this fall.

## Executive Director's Report

Hello MCPR members,

Recently a Board member called me about the frustration he is experiencing trying to work with the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners. Across the country I am learning everyone in trucking is struggling with access to these medical examiners... and our experience on how they understand the sleep apnea regulations currently seems to vary between examiners. I was interested to learn that the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) asserted that in May 2012, the FMCSA estimated that 40,000 physicians would be registered in the agency's National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners by the compliance date of May 21, 2014, however, as the regulation is now in place, only 10,000 physicians have registered. "It's a source of concern for us that there are so few examiners registered so far," said OOIDA Executive Vice President Todd Spencer. "And it also should be a source of serious concern for the agency." **Starting May 21, 2014**, all medical examiners who wish to perform driver physical exams must be trained and certified by the FMCSA and **drivers must visit an FMCSA-certified doctor for their physicals**. Currently, all CDL holders are required to have a valid medical certificate that is signed by their doctor. Prior to this rule, there was no required training program for medical examiners who conducted physical exams on CDL holders. The former rules required that any medical professional licensed by his or her state to conduct physical examinations could conduct driver medical certification exams. No specific knowledge of the Agency's physical qualification standards was required or verified by testing. The FMCSA feels that some of the medical professionals who were conducting the physical exams might have been unfamiliar with the FMCSA's physical qualification standards. OOIDA has filed a petition asking the FMCSA to extend the deadline and that drivers be permitted to obtain medical certifications from qualified physicians. Stay tuned, MCPR members.

The heavy hand of the federal government seems to be increasing each year. Whether it is reporting a reportable quantity of anhydrous ammonia release to the federal government or failing to file reports when due, we are seeing larger fines and consequences. These costs of doing business imposed by government regulation are large...but the risks to employees and the communities within which we live and work is also a large concern. The West, Texas explosion occurred a little over a year ago, but the consequences to our industry will go on for some time. I mention this to point out that the ResponsibleAg organization is developing rapidly to bring an effort lead by our industry to address the regulatory compliance needs of our fertilizer facilities. Congratulations to Pete Mutschler, CHS-Environment and Safety, who was appointed by TFI to the ResponsibleAg Board of Directors. Take a look below in *News Notes* at the progress they are making to firm up our leadership.

Until next time,



Bill Bond  
Executive Director

## News Notes

### **ResponsibleAg Board Meets, Elects Pirkle as Chair**

The ResponsibleAg Board of Directors have elected Billy Pirkle, senior director, environmental health and safety, Crop Production Services, as chairman of the board. Other officers elected were Pete Mutschler of the CHS Inc. Egan, MN office as secretary and Scott Rawlins of Wilbur-Ellis Company as treasurer. ResponsibleAg is a self-governing, not-for-profit corporation founded this year by the fertilizer industry for the purpose of enhancing product stewardship at every level within the distribution chain. Utilizing third-party audits, ResponsibleAg will assist fertilizer storage and handling facilities to achieve and maintain compliance with federal laws and regulations. Remaining ResponsibleAg board members are Rod Wells (GROWMARK), Dave Ito (Lyman-Tremont Group), Alicia Duke (J.R. Simplot), Rosemary O'Brien (CF Industries), Tim McArdle (Brandt Consolidated) and Justin Gough (El Dorado Chemical). The Fertilizer Institute President Chris Jahn and Agricultural Retailers Association President & CEO Daren Coppock will serve as non-voting ex officio board members. The board will now select a contractor to manage the ResponsibleAg program. A position description for the role was approved by the board and will be circulated by ARA and TFI, with a submission deadline of May 31. A subcommittee of the board will screen the applicants and conduct in-person interviews with the finalists. The board is also forming a technical committee to oversee the development of specific content of assessment questionnaires, pre-qualification requirements for prospective auditors, and other technical issues. This committee is expected to be named soon and will hold its first meeting in early June. The importance of communications to industry participants and regulators, and partnering with state agribusiness associations in outreach, was a theme woven through much of the discussion at the meeting. ResponsibleAg will be visible and will have designated representatives on site at industry gatherings including the Southwestern Fertilizer Conference, held July 19-23 in San Antonio, Texas, and the MAGIE show, scheduled for Aug. 20-21 in Bloomington, Ill. The next meeting of the ResponsibleAg Board is scheduled for Oct. 15. (R.A.)

(continued on page 3)

## Capitol Update/ continued from pg 1

Ever think about running for office? Fewer and fewer agricultural sympathetic legislators are in elected office. These are the House members who have announced they will not be seeking re-election:

- Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka)
- Rep. Michael Beard (R-Shakopee)
- Rep. Mike Benson (R-Rochester)
- Rep. John Benson (DFL-Minnetonka)
- Rep. Kathy Brynaert (DFL-Mankato)
- Rep. David FitzSimmons (R-Albertville)
- Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R-Lakeville)
- Rep. Thomas Huntley (DFL-Duluth)
- Rep. Andrea Kieffer (R-Woodbury)
- Rep. Ernie Leidiger (R-Mayer)
- Rep. Pam Myhra (R-Burnsville)
- Rep. Michael Paymar (DFL-St. Paul)
- Rep. Kelby Woodard (R-Belle Plaine)
- Rep. Kurt Zellers (R-Maple Grove)

Key 2014 election dates:

- May 20–June 3 — Candidate filing period. Candidates running for a partisan office need to file.
- June 27 — Absentee ballots will be available for the Aug. 12 primary election.
- July 22 — Pre-registration deadline for primary election. Voters may still register at their polling place on primary election day.
- Aug. 12 — Primary election day.
- Sept. 19 — Absentee ballots will be available for the Nov. 4 general election.
- Oct. 14 — Pre-registration deadline for the general election. Voters who miss this deadline may still register at their polling place on Election Day.
- Nov. 4 — Election Day. For more information, go to the Office of the Secretary of State's website.

## News Notes/ continued from pg 2

### **FarmLand**

Academy Award®-winning filmmaker James Moll's new feature length documentary, *FarmLand*, was released nationally May 1, 2014. The film is being distributed via D&E Entertainment in more than 60 major markets. Numerous national exhibitors will be carrying the film including: Regal Cinemas, Marcus Theatres, Carmike Cinemas, Landmark Theatres and many key independent theaters. *FarmLand* offers viewers an intimate and firsthand glimpse into the lives of six young farmers and ranchers across the U.S. chronicling their high-risk/high-reward jobs, and their passion for a way of life that has been passed down from generation to generation, yet continues to evolve. Visit [www.FarmlandFilm.com](http://www.FarmlandFilm.com) to locate a theatre near you where *FarmLand* will be screening, or contact your local theater, as well as additional information about the film and to watch the trailer. (MN Farm Bureau)

### **J. R. Simplot Company Announces Plans to Build**

The J. R. Simplot Company has announced plans to build a new fertilizer storage warehouse and blending operation in East Grand Forks, Minn scheduled to begin early this summer on the site of the Simplot Grower Solutions unit in East Grand Forks. The project should be completed during the spring of 2015. (Fluence)

### **N.Y. GMO Labeling Costs Consumers**

The Coalition for Safe Affordable Food said, that as food prices continue to rise for families across the country, a new study from Cornell University this week revealed that New York's proposed mandatory GMO labeling bill would cost families an average of \$500 per year at the checkout aisle. The study comes on the heels of similar studies in Washington state and California that showed mandatory GMO labels would result in similar increases in the cost of food. The study also found that families forced to buy organic food instead of conventional foods containing GMOs could see their food prices increase as much as \$1,556 per family per year. (Fluence Media)

### **Survey of Beekeepers Shows Fewer Colony Losses**

A yearly survey of beekeepers shows fewer colony losses occurred in the United States over the winter of 2013-2014 than in recent years, but beekeepers say losses remain higher than the level that they consider to be sustainable. According to survey results, total losses of managed honey bee colonies from all causes were 23.2 percent nationwide. That number is above the 18.9 percent level of loss that beekeepers say is acceptable for their economic sustainability, but is a marked improvement over the 30.5 percent loss reported for the winter of 2012-2013, and over the eight-year average loss of 29.6 percent. More than three-fourths of the world's flowering plants rely on pollinators, such as bees, to reproduce, meaning pollinators help produce one out of every three bites of food Americans eat. Enter: <http://1.usa.gov/1mB6bWS> SUMMARY: <http://bit.ly/1oXMN67> into your web browser to read more. (USDA)



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## Brad's View

**MCPR Members:**

The spring rush of activities, the many phone conversations, and the long hours are finally here. The products and services of our industry upon which Minnesota's producers depend is moving rapidly across the Minnesota landscape. Just as our work is increasing to full capacity, the legislative session has ground to a halt, adjourning in May. The session was as contentious as ever, but what is satisfying is to know that we have seasoned and respectful legislative representation. Better yet, they know how to work well with other trade associations which enhances our influence at the Capitol. Read the Capitol Update to see our summary report. Two favors I ask of you: 1) pencil December 9-11, 2014 in your calendars for the bigger and better CPM Short Course and MCPR Trade Show in Minneapolis, and 2) please be safe out there!

Brad Englund  
MCPR Board Chair