

Rep. Vruwink: Pleased with announcement of historic investment in agriculture

Posted on Monday, Feb 8, 2021

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State Rep. Don Vruwink (D-Milton) applauded Gov. Tony Evers' announcement last week that he will include \$43 million for agriculture and rural initiatives in his 2021-2022 state budget proposal.

"I am pleased that Gov. Evers has listened to Democratic members on the Agriculture and Rural Development Committees, and rural folks around Wisconsin who are calling for these much-needed investments."

Gov. Evers' proposal includes:

- Setting up and funding the Wisconsin Initiative for Agricultural Exports to boost exports.
- \$1.2 million increase in funding for a grant program that invests in dairy processors.
- Spending \$20 million to connect Wisconsin food banks and pantries with farmers.
- Funding a grant program that supplies farm-fresh food to cafeterias at both schools and businesses.
- Setting up a grant program to help the meat-processor industry.
- Setting up and funding a value-added grant program to provide education and technical assistance related to value-added agricultural products.
- Setting up a variety of programs designed to address water issues.
- Setting up a new program to help increase farmers' access to mental-health services.
- Providing continued funding for the existing counseling service for farmers.

Rep. Vruwink serves as ranking member on the Rural Development Committee, and also serves on the Agriculture Committee.