



**DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE**

Lessons in Resilience: What State Produce Programs Learned from Funding Cuts – Minnesota's Perspective

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What Happened?

- Minnesota \$230K cut
 - About 40% reduction
 - Majority = salaries – this meant cutting people
 - Requested additional funding from FDA – no time to wait for FDA response
- Plan for layoffs or find alternate options, before we knew if funding would come



What that Cut Actually Meant

- Decision 1: Who do we cut?
 - Outreach/admin roles - .2 FTE
 - Education contract
 - Supervisor/Program Manager – most expensive/ but critical
- Decision 2: What do we stop doing?
 - No events/outreach
 - Travel limited to inspections only
 - Training already reduced



What did we do?



Before:

- Dedicated Produce Safety Program Team with Manager

After:

- Merge into our Manufactured Foods Program
- Diversified funding – Inspectors and Supervisor
 - .5 FTE for Supervisor now
- FFSD Legislative Proposal – Licensing modernization

Lessons We Learned

- **Plan for uncertainty—even when numbers look firm**
 - Takeaway: Build best / mid / worst case plans *before* you need them.
- **Prioritization defines your program**
 - Takeaway: Identify your non-negotiables and what can scale back.
- **Flexibility in staff and partnerships is critical**
 - Takeaway: Cross-train staff and build partnerships *ahead of a* crisis.
- **Constraints force clarity**
 - Takeaway: Use disruptions to reassess structure, scope, and long-term sustainability.

How We are Preparing for the Next Uncertainty



Diversify staff → Cross-train staff before you need it



Leverage other resources → Track funding opportunities continuously, not reactively



Read the tea leaves → Watch policy signals early (standards, incentives, etc.)

Thank You!

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