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## FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

### GOVERNORS' FLOOD RECOVERY ADVISORY BOARD — AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP

**Meeting.** The Agriculture Working Group of the Governor's Flood Recovery Advisory Board met on May 13, 2019, in Des Moines. The Agriculture Working Group is one of the six working groups created by the Board and is being supported by the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (DALs).

**Members.** The members of the Agriculture Working Group include:

- Mike Naig, Secretary of Agriculture.
- Dr. John Lawrence, Iowa State University.
- David Lueth, farmer.
- Jeff Jorgensen, farmer.
- Lyle and Alice Hodde, farmers.
- Michael Stenzel, farmer.
- Steve Kenkel, Shelby County Supervisor.
- Senator Mark Costello.
- Senator Tom Shipley.
- Duane Voy, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- Amanda De Jong, USDA, Farm Services Agency.
- Kurt Simon, USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Services.

**Farming Issues.** Members from the farm community discussed issues that are impacting their operations. Examples of these include:

- Flooded roads restrict farmers' access to their property.
- Grain bins experience major water damage, leading to major grain loss.
- Sand and other debris on farmland make it impossible to farm.

**Other Issues.** Group members had a general discussion on the following:

Land Issues:

- Debris such as trees, sand, and rocks must be removed. On farmland located closer to towns, other types of debris may require special equipment for removal.
- Farmers will want to be present when representatives from government agencies review their farms to document the flood damage.
- Equipment will be needed to remove debris but the inability to drive on roads prevents the equipment from being transferred to the property.
- The levees need to be repaired properly to prevent future flooding.
- Cover crops could be planted in the spring season to repair the soil.

Grain Issues:

- Removing grain from the bins can be dangerous to farmers, as pressure may have built inside the bins.
- Access to the grain bins has been limited due to road flooding.
- There are portions of land that could be farmed, but road flooding will limit the movement of equipment.

Financial and Communication Issues:

- Finding a way to organize and optimize funding available from federal and State programs.
- Finding ways to communicate funding options available to farmers.
- Having enough staff on hand at the local offices to assist farmers who need information.

**Additional Information.** The following websites have additional information related to Iowa's flood and disaster recovery:

- [2019 Iowa Floods](#) has flood-related information, including flood recovery and road closures.
- [Emergency Watershed Protection Program](#) includes federal information on disaster assistance programs.
- [USDA Recover](#) has information on crops, livestock, conservation, and other programs.
- [Emergency Conservation Program](#) aids by repairing farmland damage caused by natural disasters.
- [Rebuild Iowa Office](#) has archived information from the flood event in 2008.

**Next Meeting.** The next meeting of the Agriculture Working Group will be held on May 17, 2019, in Malvern, Iowa. The next meeting of the Advisory Board is scheduled for Friday, May 24, 2019, in Malvern, Iowa.

LSA Staff Contact: Deb Kozel (515.281.6767) [deb.kozel@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:deb.kozel@legis.iowa.gov)  
Rodrigo Acevedo (515.281.6764) [rodrigo.acevedo@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:rodrigo.acevedo@legis.iowa.gov)

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