

**SENATE  
STATE OF MINNESOTA  
NINETY-THIRD SESSION**

**S.F. No. 2200**

**(SENATE AUTHORS: PORT)**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>D-PG</b>	<b>OFFICIAL STATUS</b>
02/27/2023	1143	Introduction and first reading Referred to Jobs and Economic Development
03/01/2023	1207	Withdrawn and re-referred to Agriculture, Broadband, and Rural Development
03/20/2023		Comm report: To pass as amended and re-refer to Jobs and Economic Development

1.1 A bill for an act

1.2 relating to economic development; appropriating money to WomenVenture to

1.3 establish a business expansion program for women food entrepreneurs; requiring

1.4 a report.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. **APPROPRIATION; WOMENVENTURE, WOMEN FOOD**

1.7 **ENTREPRENEURS BUSINESS EXPANSION.**

1.8 (a) \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2025 are appropriated

1.9 from the general fund to the commissioner of employment and economic development for

1.10 a grant to WomenVenture to: support business expansion for women food entrepreneurs

1.11 throughout Minnesota's food supply chain to help stabilize and strengthen their business

1.12 operations; create distribution networks; offer technical assistance and support to beginning

1.13 women food entrepreneurs; develop business plans; develop a workforce; research expansion

1.14 strategies; and for other related activities. Eligible uses of funds include but are not limited

1.15 to:

- 1.16 (1) leasehold improvements;
- 1.17 (2) additions, alterations, remodeling, or renovations to rented space;
- 1.18 (3) inventory or supplies;
- 1.19 (4) machinery or equipment purchases;
- 1.20 (5) working capital; and
- 1.21 (6) debt refinancing.

2.1 Funds distributed to entrepreneurs may be loans, forgivable loans, and grants. Of this  
2.2 amount, up to ten percent may be used for the WomenVenture's technical assistance and  
2.3 administrative costs. This appropriation is onetime and available until June 30, 2026.

2.4 (b) \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2025 are appropriated  
2.5 from the general fund to the commissioner of agriculture for a grant to WomenVenture to:  
2.6 support business expansion for women food entrepreneurs throughout Minnesota to help  
2.7 stabilize and strengthen their business operations; create distribution networks; offer technical  
2.8 assistance and support to beginning women food entrepreneurs; develop business plans;  
2.9 develop a workforce; research expansion strategies to address food safety assessments and  
2.10 to meet applicable food safety regulations; and for other related activities. Eligible uses of  
2.11 funds include but are not limited to:

2.12 (1) leasehold improvements;

2.13 (2) additions, alterations, remodeling, or renovations to rented space;

2.14 (3) inventory or supplies;

2.15 (4) machinery or equipment purchases;

2.16 (5) working capital; and

2.17 (6) debt refinancing.

2.18 Funds distributed to entrepreneurs may be loans, forgivable loans, and grants. A minimum  
2.19 of 50 percent of this amount shall be distributed to producers registered as Cottage Foods  
2.20 Producers with the commissioner under Minnesota Statutes, section 28A.152, subdivision  
2.21 4. Of this amount, up to ten percent may be used for the WomenVenture's technical assistance  
2.22 and administrative costs. This appropriation is onetime and available until June 30, 2026.

2.23 (c) By December 15, 2026, WomenVenture must submit a report to the chairs and ranking  
2.24 members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over agriculture and employment  
2.25 and economic development. The report must include a summary of the uses of the  
2.26 appropriation, including the amount of the appropriation used for administration. The report  
2.27 must also provide a breakdown of the amount of funding used for loans, forgivable loans,  
2.28 and grants, information about the terms of the loans issued, a discussion of how funds from  
2.29 repaid loans will be used, the number of entrepreneurs assisted, and a breakdown of how  
2.30 many entrepreneurs received assistance in each county.