

CHAPTER 622—S.F.No. 1948

An act relating to agriculture; providing for cooperative farming agreements on certain lands; changing the law limiting corporate farming; changing liability of certain agricultural operations; creating corporate farming law task force and requiring legislative report; amending Minnesota Statutes 1992, sections 97A.135, subdivision 3; 500.24, subdivisions 2 and 3; and 561.19, subdivisions 1 and 2.

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

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 97A.135, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

Subd. 3. **COOPERATIVE FARMING AGREEMENTS.** On any public hunting, game refuge, ~~or~~ wildlife management area, or scientific and natural area lands, the commissioner may enter into written cooperative farming agreements ~~with nearby farmers~~ on a sharecrop basis, without competitive bidding, for the purpose of ~~establishing or maintaining wildlife food or cover for habitat purposes and plant management.~~ Cooperative farming agreements may also be used to allow pasturing of livestock. The agreements may provide for the bartering of a share of any crop, ~~not exceeding \$1,500 in value and produced from these lands, for services such as weed control, planting, cultivation, or other wildlife habitat practices or products that will enhance or benefit the management of state lands for plant and animal species.~~ Cooperative farming agreements pursuant to this section shall not be considered leases for tax purposes under section 272.01, subdivision 2, or 273.19.

Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 500.24, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **DEFINITIONS.** For the purposes of this section, the terms defined in this subdivision have the meanings here given them:

(a) "Farming" means the production of (1) agricultural products; (2) livestock or livestock products; (3) milk or milk products; or (4) fruit or other horticultural products. It does not include the processing, refining, or packaging of said products, nor the provision of spraying or harvesting services by a processor or distributor of farm products. It does not include the production of timber or forest products or the production of poultry or poultry products.

(b) "Family farm" means an unincorporated farming unit owned by one or more persons residing on the farm or actively engaging in farming.

(c) "Family farm corporation" means a corporation founded for the purpose of farming and the ownership of agricultural land in which the majority of the voting stock is held by and the majority of the stockholders are persons or the spouses of persons related to each other within the third degree of kindred according to the rules of the civil law, and at least one of said related persons is residing on or actively operating the farm, and none of whose stockholders are

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corporations; provided that a family farm corporation shall not cease to qualify as such hereunder by reason of any devise or bequest of shares of voting stock.

(d) "Authorized farm corporation" means a corporation meeting the following standards under clause (1) or (2):

(1)(i) its shareholders do not exceed five in number;

~~(2) (ii) all its shareholders, other than any estate are natural persons;~~

~~(3) (iii) it does not have more than one class of shares; and~~

(4) (iv) its revenues from rent, royalties, dividends, interest and annuities does not exceed 20 percent of its gross receipts; and

~~(5) (v) shareholders holding 51 percent or more of the interest in the corporation must be residing on the farm or actively engaging in farming;~~

~~(6) (vi) the authorized farm corporation, directly or indirectly, owns or otherwise has an interest, whether legal, beneficial, or otherwise, in any title to no more than 1,500 acres of real estate used for farming or capable of being used for farming in this state; and~~

~~(7) (vii) a shareholder of the authorized farm corporation is not a shareholder in other authorized farm corporations that directly or indirectly in combination with the authorized farm corporation own not more than 1,500 acres of real estate used for farming or capable of being used for farming in this state; or~~

(2)(i) the corporation is engaged in the production of livestock other than dairy cattle; and not engaged in farming activities otherwise prohibited under this section;

(ii) all its shareholders other than an estate, are natural persons or a family farm corporation;

(iii) it does not have more than one class of shares;

(iv) its revenue from rent, royalties, dividends, interest and annuities does not exceed 20 percent of its gross receipts;

(v) shareholders holding 75 percent or more of the control and financial investment in the corporation must be farmers residing in Minnesota and at least 51 percent of the required percentage of farmers must be actively engaged in livestock production;

(vi) the authorized farm corporation, directly or indirectly, owns or otherwise has an interest, whether legal, beneficial, or otherwise, in any title to no more than 1,500 acres of real estate used for farming or capable of being used for farming in this state;

(vii) a shareholder of the authorized farm corporation is not a shareholder

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in other authorized farm corporations that directly or indirectly in combination with the authorized farm corporation own not more than 1,500 acres of real estate used for farming or capable of being used for farming in this state; and

(viii) the corporation was formed for the production of livestock other than dairy cattle by natural persons or family farm corporations that provide 75 percent or more of the capital investment.

(e) "Agricultural land" means land used for farming.

(f) "Pension or investment fund" means a pension or employee welfare benefit fund, however organized, a mutual fund, a life insurance company separate account, a common trust of a bank or other trustee established for the investment and reinvestment of money contributed to it, a real estate investment trust, or an investment company as defined in United States Code, title 15, section 80a-3. "Pension or investment fund" does not include a benevolent trust established by the owners of a family farm, authorized farm corporation or family farm corporation.

(g) "Farm homestead" means a house including adjoining buildings that has been used as part of a farming operation or is part of the agricultural land used for a farming operation.

(h) "Family farm partnership" means a limited partnership formed for the purpose of farming and the ownership of agricultural land in which the majority of the interests in the partnership is held by and the majority of the partners are persons or the spouses of persons related to each other within the third degree of kindred according to the rules of the civil law, and at least one of the related persons is residing on or actively operating the farm, and none of the partners are corporations. A family farm partnership does not cease to qualify as a family farm partnership because of a devise or bequest of interest in the partnership.

(i) "Authorized farm partnership" means a limited partnership meeting the following standards:

(1) it has been issued a certificate from the secretary of state or is registered with the county recorder and farming and ownership of agricultural land is stated as a purpose or character of the business;

(2) its partners do not exceed five in number;

(3) all its partners, other than an estate, are natural persons;

(4) its revenues from rent, royalties, dividends, interest, and annuities do not exceed 20 percent of its gross receipts;

(5) its general partners hold at least 51 percent of the interest in the land assets of the partnership and reside on the farm or are actively engaging in farming not more than 1,500 acres as a general partner in an authorized limited partnership;

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(6) its limited partners do not participate in the business of the limited partnership including operating, managing, or directing management of farming operations;

(7) the authorized farm partnership, directly or indirectly, does not own or otherwise have an interest, whether legal, beneficial, or otherwise, in a title to more than 1,500 acres of real estate used for farming or capable of being used for farming in this state; and

(8) a limited partner of the authorized farm partnership is not a limited partner in other authorized farm partnerships that directly or indirectly in combination with the authorized farm partnership own not more than 1,500 acres of real estate used for farming or capable of being used for farming in this state.

(j) "Farmer" means a person who regularly participates in physical labor or operations management in the farmer's farming operation and files "Schedule F" as part of the person's annual Form 1040 filing with the United States Internal Revenue Service.

(k) "Actively engaged in livestock production" means that a person performs day-to-day physical labor or day-to-day operations management that significantly contributes to livestock production and the functioning of a livestock operation.

Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 500.24, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

Subd. 3. **FARMING AND OWNERSHIP OF AGRICULTURAL LAND BY CORPORATIONS RESTRICTED.** No corporation, limited liability company, pension or investment fund, or limited partnership shall engage in farming; nor shall any corporation, limited liability company, pension or investment fund, or limited partnership, directly or indirectly, own, acquire, or otherwise obtain an interest, whether legal, beneficial or otherwise, in any title to real estate used for farming or capable of being used for farming in this state. Live-stock that are delivered for slaughter or processing may be fed and cared for by a corporation up to 20 days prior to slaughter or processing. Provided, however, that the restrictions in this subdivision do not apply to corporations or partnerships in clause (b) and do not apply to corporations, limited partnerships, and pension or investment funds that record its name and the particular exception under clauses (a) to (s) under which the agricultural land is owned or farmed, have a conservation plan prepared for the agricultural land, report as required under subdivision 4, and satisfy one of the following conditions under clauses (a) to (s):

(a) a bona fide encumbrance taken for purposes of security;

(b) a family farm corporation, an authorized farm corporation, a family farm partnership, or an authorized farm partnership as defined in subdivision 2 or a general partnership;

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(c) agricultural land and land capable of being used for farming owned by a corporation as of May 20, 1973, or a pension or investment fund as of May 12, 1981, including the normal expansion of such ownership at a rate not to exceed 20 percent of the amount of land owned as of May 20, 1973, or, in the case of a pension or investment fund, as of May 12, 1981, measured in acres, in any five-year period, and including additional ownership reasonably necessary to meet the requirements of pollution control rules;

(d) agricultural land operated for research or experimental purposes with the approval of the commissioner of agriculture, provided that any commercial sales from the operation must be incidental to the research or experimental objectives of the corporation. A corporation, limited partnership, or pension or investment fund seeking to operate agricultural land for research or experimental purposes must submit to the commissioner a prospectus or proposal of the intended method of operation, containing information required by the commissioner including a copy of any operational contract with individual participants, prior to initial approval of an operation. A corporation, limited partnership, or pension or investment fund operating agricultural land for research or experimental purposes prior to May 1, 1988, must comply with all requirements of this clause except the requirement for initial approval of the project;

(e) agricultural land operated by a corporation or limited partnership for the purpose of raising breeding stock, including embryos, for resale to farmers or operated for the purpose of growing seed, wild rice, nursery plants or sod. An entity that is organized to raise livestock other than dairy cattle under this clause that does not meet the definition requirement for an authorized farm corporation must:

(1) sell all castrated animals to be fed out or finished to farming operations that are neither directly or indirectly owned by the business entity operating the breeding stock operation; and

(2) report its total production and sales annually to the commissioner of agriculture;

(f) agricultural land and land capable of being used for farming leased by a corporation or limited partnership in an amount, measured in acres, not to exceed the acreage under lease to such corporation as of May 20, 1973, or to the limited partnership as of May 1, 1988, and the additional acreage required for normal expansion at a rate not to exceed 20 percent of the amount of land leased as of May 20, 1973, for a corporation or May 1, 1988, for a limited partnership in any five-year period, and the additional acreage reasonably necessary to meet the requirements of pollution control rules;

(g) agricultural land when acquired as a gift (either by grant or a devise) by an educational, religious, or charitable nonprofit corporation or by a pension or investment fund or limited partnership; provided that all lands so acquired by a pension or investment fund, and all lands so acquired by a corporation or limited partnership which are not operated for research or experimental purposes,

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or are not operated for the purpose of raising breeding stock for resale to farmers or operated for the purpose of growing seed, wild rice, nursery plants or sod must be disposed of within ten years after acquiring title thereto;

(h) agricultural land acquired by a pension or investment fund or a corporation other than a family farm corporation or authorized farm corporation, as defined in subdivision 2, or a limited partnership other than a family farm partnership or authorized farm partnership as defined in subdivision 2, for which the corporation or limited partnership has documented plans to use and subsequently uses the land within six years from the date of purchase for a specific nonfarming purpose, or if the land is zoned nonagricultural, or if the land is located within an incorporated area. A pension or investment fund or a corporation or limited partnership may hold such agricultural land in such acreage as may be necessary to its nonfarm business operation; provided, however, that pending the development of agricultural land for nonfarm purposes, such land may not be used for farming except under lease to a family farm unit, a family farm corporation, an authorized farm corporation, a family farm partnership, or an authorized farm partnership, or except when controlled through ownership, options, leaseholds, or other agreements by a corporation which has entered into an agreement with the United States of America pursuant to the New Community Act of 1968 (Title IV of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, United States Code, title 42, sections 3901 to 3914) as amended, or a subsidiary or assign of such a corporation;

(i) agricultural lands acquired by a pension or investment fund or a corporation or limited partnership by process of law in the collection of debts, or by any procedure for the enforcement of a lien or claim thereon, whether created by mortgage or otherwise; provided, however, that all lands so acquired be disposed of within ten years after acquiring the title if acquired before May 1, 1988, and five years after acquiring the title if acquired on or after May 1, 1988, acquiring the title thereto, and further provided that the land so acquired shall not be used for farming during the ten-year or five-year period except under a lease to a family farm unit, a family farm corporation, an authorized farm corporation, a family farm partnership, or an authorized farm partnership. The aforementioned ten-year or five-year limitation period shall be deemed a covenant running with the title to the land against any grantee, assignee, or successor of the pension or investment fund, corporation, or limited partnership. Notwithstanding the five-year divestiture requirement under this clause, a financial institution may continue to own the agricultural land if the agricultural land is leased to the immediately preceding former owner, but must divest of the agricultural land within the ten-year period. Livestock acquired by a pension or investment fund, corporation, or limited partnership in the collection of debts, or by a procedure for the enforcement of lien or claim on the livestock whether created by security agreement or otherwise after the effective date of this act, must be sold or disposed of within one full production cycle for the type of livestock acquired or 18 months after the livestock is acquired, whichever is later;

(j) agricultural land acquired by a corporation regulated under the provi-

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sions of Minnesota Statutes 1974, chapter 216B, for purposes described in that chapter or by an electric generation or transmission cooperative for use in its business, provided, however, that such land may not be used for farming except under lease to a family farm unit, a family farm corporation, or a family farm partnership;

(k) agricultural land, either leased or owned, totaling no more than 2,700 acres, acquired after May 20, 1973, for the purpose of replacing or expanding asparagus growing operations, provided that such corporation had established 2,000 acres of asparagus production;

(l) all agricultural land or land capable of being used for farming which was owned or leased by an authorized farm corporation as defined in Minnesota Statutes 1974, section 500.24, subdivision 1, clause (d), but which does not qualify as an authorized farm corporation as defined in subdivision 2, clause (d);

(m) a corporation formed primarily for religious purposes whose sole income is derived from agriculture;

(n) agricultural land owned or leased by a corporation prior to August 1, 1975, which was exempted from the restriction of this subdivision under the provisions of Laws 1973, chapter 427, including normal expansion of such ownership or leasehold interest to be exercised at a rate not to exceed 20 percent of the amount of land owned or leased on August 1, 1975, in any five-year period and the additional ownership reasonably necessary to meet requirements of pollution control rules;

(o) agricultural land owned or leased by a corporation prior to August 1, 1978, including normal expansion of such ownership or leasehold interest, to be exercised at a rate not to exceed 20 percent of the amount of land owned or leased on August 1, 1978, and the additional ownership reasonably necessary to meet requirements of pollution control rules, provided that nothing herein shall reduce any exemption contained under the provisions of Laws 1975, chapter 324, section 1, subdivision 2;

(p) an interest in the title to agricultural land acquired by a pension fund or family trust established by the owners of a family farm, authorized farm corporation or family farm corporation, but limited to the farm on which one or more of those owners or shareholders have resided or have been actively engaged in farming as required by subdivision 2, clause (b), (c), or (d);

(q) agricultural land owned by a nursing home located in a city with a population, according to the state demographer's 1985 estimate, between 900 and 1,000, in a county with a population, according to the state demographer's 1985 estimate, between 18,000 and 19,000, if the land was given to the nursing home as a gift with the expectation that it would not be sold during the donor's lifetime. This exemption is available until July 1, 1995;

(r) the acreage of agricultural land and land capable of being used for farm-

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ing owned and recorded by an authorized farm corporation as defined in Minnesota Statutes 1986, section 500.24, subdivision 2, paragraph (d), or a limited partnership as of May 1, 1988, including the normal expansion of the ownership at a rate not to exceed 20 percent of the land owned and recorded as of May 1, 1988, measured in acres, in any five-year period, and including additional ownership reasonably necessary to meet the requirements of pollution control rules;

(s) agricultural land owned or leased as a necessary part of an aquatic farm as defined in section 17.47, subdivision 3.

Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 561.19, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **DEFINITIONS.** For the purposes of this section, the following terms have the meanings given them:

(a) "Agricultural operation" means a facility and its appurtenances for the production of crops, livestock, poultry, dairy products or poultry products, but not a facility primarily engaged in processing agricultural products.

(b) "Established date of operation" means the date on which the agricultural operation commenced. If the agricultural operation is subsequently expanded or significantly altered, the established date of operation for each expansion or alteration is deemed to be the date of commencement of the expanded or altered operation. As used in this paragraph, "expanded or significantly altered" means:

(1) an expansion by at least 25 percent in the amount of a particular crop grown or the number of a particular kind of animal or livestock located on an agricultural operation; or

(2) a distinct change in the kind of agricultural operation, as in changing from one kind of crop, livestock, animal, or product to another, but not merely a change from one generally accepted agricultural practice to another in producing the same crop or product.

(c) "Family farm" means an unincorporated farm unit owned by one or more persons or spouses of persons related to each other within the third degree of kindred according to the rules of the civil law at least one of whom is residing or actively engaged in farming on the farm unit, or a "family farm corporation," as that term is defined in section 500.24, subdivision 2.

Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 561.19, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **AGRICULTURAL OPERATION NOT A NUISANCE.** (a) An agricultural operation ~~which is a part of a family farm~~ is not and shall not become a private or public nuisance after ~~six~~ two years from its established date of operation if the operation was not a nuisance at its established date of operation.

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(b) An agricultural operation is operating according to generally accepted agricultural practices if it is located in an agriculturally zoned area and complies with the provisions of all applicable federal and state statutes and rules or any issued permits for the operation.

(c) The provisions of this subdivision do not apply:

(a) (1) to a condition or injury which results from the negligent or improper operation of an agricultural operation or from operations contrary to commonly accepted agricultural practices or to applicable state or local laws, ordinances, rules, or permits;

(b) (2) when an agricultural operation causes injury or direct threat of injury to the health or safety of any person;

(c) (3) to the pollution of, or change in the condition of, the waters of the state or the overflow of waters on the lands of any person;

(d) (4) to an animal feedlot facility with a swine capacity of 1,000 or more animal units as defined in the rules of the pollution control agency for control of pollution from animal feedlots, or a cattle capacity of 2,500 animals or more; or

(e) (5) to any prosecution for the crime of public nuisance as provided in section 609.74 or to an action by a public authority to abate a particular condition which is a public nuisance.

Sec. 6. CORPORATE FARMING LAW TASK FORCE.

Subdivision 1. PURPOSE. Current Minnesota law generally precludes corporations from owning farm land or operating a farming enterprise. Corporate farming law has been developed over a period of 14 decades, and the development has included numerous changes to accommodate shifting priorities in agriculture and a recognition that the economic and social climate of the state is not static. There is a concern whether current corporate farming law, especially as it relates to the breeding and raising of swine, represents the appropriate balance between protection of family farms and opportunity for creative new enterprise structures organized by multiple farmers. Farmers wish to support a corporate farming law that is in the overall best interest of production agriculture and preservation of the family farm unit as the main component of the agricultural economy in the state. The study, legislative report, and legislative recommendations authorized by this section will increase public and legislative understanding of the issues involved.

Subd. 2. CREATION; MEMBERSHIP. (a) There is hereby created a corporate farming law task force with ten members appointed as follows:

(1) the chairs of the agriculture policy committees of the Minnesota senate and house of representatives, or their designees;

(2) two members of the Minnesota house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house;

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(3) one member of the Minnesota house of representatives appointed by the minority leader of the house;

(4) two members of the Minnesota senate appointed by the senate committee on rules and administration;

(5) one member of the Minnesota senate appointed by the minority leader of the senate;

(6) one member with education and experience in the area of agricultural economics appointed by the governor of Minnesota; and

(7) one member who is the operator of a production agriculture farm in Minnesota appointed by the governor.

(b) Each of the appointing authorities must make their respective appointments not later than June 15, 1994.

(c) Citizen members of the task force may be reimbursed for expenses as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 15.059, subdivision 6.

(d) The first meeting of the task force must be called and convened by the chairs of the agriculture policy committees of the senate and the house of representatives. Task force members must then elect a permanent chair from among the task force members.

Subd. 3. CHARGE. The task force must examine current and projected impacts of corporate, partnership, and limited liability company farming enterprises on the economic, social, and environmental conditions and structures of rural Minnesota. The study should consider probable impacts on both agriculture related and nonagricultural businesses in rural communities. Issues of non-point source pollution and other environmental issues must also be considered. The task force shall also examine the issue of responsibility for potential pollution damage.

Subd. 4. RESOURCES; STAFF SUPPORT; CONTRACT SERVICES. The commissioner of agriculture shall provide necessary resources and staff support for the meetings, hearings, activities, and report of the task force. To the extent the task force determines it appropriate to contract with nonstate providers for research or analytical services, the commissioner shall serve as the fiscal agent for the task force.

Subd. 5. PUBLIC HEARINGS. The task force shall hold at least four public hearings on the issue of corporate farming law and the impacts of other potential legal structures of farming operations, with specific emphasis on appropriate regulation of business structures involved in swine breeding and raising. At least three of the hearings must be held in greater Minnesota.

Subd. 6. REPORT. Not later than February 15, 1995, the corporate farming law task force shall report to the legislature on the findings of its study. The

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report must include recommendations for improvements in Minnesota Statutes that are in the best interests of production agriculture in the state and the economic, environmental, and social environment and preservation of the family farm.

Subd. 7. EXPIRATION. The corporate farming law task force expires 45 days after its report and recommendations are delivered to the legislature or on May 15, 1995, whichever date is earlier.

Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Section 6 is effective the day following final enactment.

Presented to the governor May 6, 1994

Signed by the governor May 10, 1994, 3:54 p.m.

CHAPTER 623—S.F.No. 2429

An act relating to the use of public services and resources; modifying the list of protected game birds; authorizing nonresident multiple zone antlered deer licenses; exemptions from pest control licensing; purchase of archery deer licenses after the firearms season opens; limiting the authority of the commissioner of natural resources to regulate archery; administration of contraceptive chemicals to wild animals; possession of firearms in muzzle-loader only deer zones; modifying restrictions on operation of snowmobiles by minors; providing for free small game licenses for disabled veterans; undesirable exotic aquatic plants and wild animals; Eurasian wild pigs; clarifying the requirement to wear blaze orange clothing during deer season; allowing local road authorities to remove beaver dams and lodges near public roads; exemptions from fur buying and selling licensure; extending hours for tending traps; allowing released game birds to be recaptured without a license; allowing use of retractable broadhead arrows in taking big game; authorizing the commissioner of natural resources to allow use of certain mechanical devices for hooking fish; allowing nonresidents to take rough fish by harpooning; requiring the department of natural resources to share in the expense of partition fences; allowing the taking of two deer in designated counties during the 1994 and 1995 hunting seasons; abolishing the nonresident bear guide license; clarifying restrictions on importation of fish imported from Ontario; temporarily modifying provisions relating to raccoon and red fox; requiring reports; consolidating and recodifying statutes providing limitations on private personal injury liability; providing immunity for certain volunteer athletic physicians and trainers; limiting liability for certain injuries arising out of nonprofit livestock activities; modifying provisions dealing with recreational land use liability; providing limitations on liability of officers, directors, and agents of economic development authorities; amending Minnesota Statutes 1992, sections 18.317, subdivisions 1, 1a, 2, 3, 4, and 5; 84.966, subdivision 1; 84.967; 84.968, subdivision 2; 84.9691; 86B.401, subdivision 11; 97A.015, subdivisions 24 and 52; 97A.115, subdivision 2; 97A.441, by adding a subdivision; 97A.475, subdivision 3; 97A.485, subdivision 9; 97A.501, by adding a subdivision; 97B.035, by adding a subdivision; 97B.075; 97B.211, subdivision 2; 97B.701, by adding a subdivision;

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