



March 29, 2022

Dear Chair Westrom
Vice-Chair Dahms
Members of the Committee,

I am writing to request your support for the Governor's Supplemental Ag Budget Recommendations Bill SF 4019. This bill includes funding for the Local Emergency Assistance Farmer Fund (LEAFF) run by The Good Acre. This program purchases produce *at fair prices* from emerging farmers, then 100% of the produce is donated to hunger relief partners serving the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota.

As a founding partner and funder of LEAFF, I have seen first-hand the essential support and positive impact this program has had in the emerging farmer community. Further investments into LEAFF will positively impact Minnesota's emerging farms with the training and technical assistance needed to successfully grow for wholesale channels. Funding will also help to bring culturally relevant produce to communities experiencing food insecurity.

LEAFF is a program that is responsive, accessible, and supportive to the unique needs of emerging farmers. It provided essential income to our market farmers in 2020 when their sales channels screeched to a halt. It has proven to be a path for sales diversification for emerging BIPOC farmers, helping them learn, grow, and expand their sales channels. The produce purchased supports all Minnesotans experiencing food insecurity. A win win for our local food community and especially our emerging BIPOC farmers.

Thank you for your consideration and for your support of policies that strengthen Minnesota farmers and our local food system

Sincerely,

Martha Archer
Executive Director
Mill City Farmers Market
Martha@MillCityFarmersMarket.org