



THE GOOD ACRE
FOOD + COMMUNITY

March 28, 2022

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

I'd like to express my strong support for funding the LEAFF program in SF 4019 and to also ask for your support for including it in your final package. Our Local Emergency Assistance Farmer Fund, LEAFF, is a program we run out of our food hub facility in Falcon Heights. During the growing season, funds from this program are used to purchase produce at fair prices from emerging farmers, 100% of it is then donated to hunger relief partners serving the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota.

The goal of LEAFF is to train emerging farmers in growing for wholesale by providing a wholesale outlet with minimal barriers. This is done through hands-on experience, not a webinar or a presentation, but by real-world skill-building because LEAFF is an actual market channel. This program has a proven track record of helping emerging farmers learn new skills and expand their wholesale markets beyond LEAFF. It is a program that is accessible, useful, and responsive to the unique needs of emerging farmers. It has the added benefit of bringing fresh produce to communities in need across the state with help from our partners like The Food Group and Loaves and Fishes.

Please see the attached fact sheet which includes some highlights of LEAFF's impact in its first two years as well as testimonials from program partners and farmers.

Including funding for LEAFF in the final SF 4019 package will be a big step forward in creating a stronger local food system. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
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