

Roots Return Heritage Farm LLC



Carver, MN

E-Mail: rootsreturn@gmail.com

Date: March 3, 2023

**To: Minnesota State Senators, Agriculture, Broadband, Rural Development Committee Members,
Chair Putnam, Vice-Chair Kupec**

RE: Support for SF 2158, SF 1727, SF 2016 (Gustafson)

Greetings Senators:

Thank you for supporting Agriculture across Minnesota by your authorship and support of these bills. These initiatives together provide much needed provisions and safety for families, communities, economies, equity, and our future of healthy food security.

Our farm is comprised of natural and organic practices allowing biodiversity, soil health, and measured water quality for our environment and surrounding community. The roughly 4,000 food producers like me across MN and the communities they serve will all benefit from your positive votes to pass these bills.

We need to encourage schools and educational institutions to procure from local producers wherever possible. The strength in education to where food is derived, how its grown, who produces it, and how to make foods is an essential and basic life skill. They in turn may produce foods or food business within their respective communities. These are economic and climate-friendly drivers that enable local economies to thrive. These robust systems can be urban, suburban, or rural. Food access is happening where it is happening.

New and emerging direct to market food farmers need Minnesota's help to understand the need for them is immediate, the markets are there and ready for them to begin or grow their operations, the results are positive, and the future looks bright by directly investing in local food systems. Too many substitutes and foodstuffs have done nothing for human health outcomes. The data is clear. When we have healthy children enabled by solid, basic nutrition, and a healthy environment to grow up in, we have healthy adults for a lifetime. That healthy future relies on producers who will provide for us and with us locally, for years to come.

Your yes vote will help ensure Minnesota's direct market investment into agricultural for the health of local economies. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

**Lori D. Cox, Owner
Roots Return Heritage Farm LLC**