



Food for today. Change for tomorrow.

March 27, 2023

Dear Chair Putnam, Vice-Chair Kupec, and members of the committee,

As a founding partner of The Good Acre's LEAFF program, I'd like to thank you for including funding for the program in your omnibus amendment. Market access programs for farmers are one of the best investments that can be made in our state's agriculture budget. Those dollars directly support building greater strength and resilience in our agricultural economy.

With \$300,000 this and next year, and with additional support through an appropriation for emerging farmers for LEAFF, The Food Group be able to continue offering our food shelf partners healthy, locally grown, and culturally relevant foods this and the next growing season. With food shelf visits in Minnesota at an all-time high, we applaud this effort to make sure that Minnesota farmers are included in providing food for our neighbors in need.

When we invest in a food system that supports emerging farmers and makes sure that more food from here is for here, we take a step forward in enhancing the quality of life for all Minnesotans.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sophia Lenarz-Coy
Executive Director
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