

February 20, 2024

The Honorable Kay Granger, Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins, Vice
Senate Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs Granger and Murray, and Ranking Member DeLauro and Vice Chair Collins,

As stakeholders who are invested in supporting U.S. farmers and vibrant local and regional food systems, we write to oppose the inclusion of any language in the final FY2024 Agriculture Appropriations legislation that would hinder the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) ability to continue to deliver the Local Food Purchase Assistance program (LFPA).

LFPA strategically leverages federal investment to create economic opportunity for local producers and underserved farmers, address food insecurity for communities in need, and strengthen local food systems. Through cooperative agreements with states, Tribal governments, and territories, the LFPA has begun investing \$500 million to support the purchase of locally grown and raised products for distribution in food assistance programs at food pantries, schools, and other organizations that serve food insecure communities. Already, this model has proven incredibly popular - through LFPA, USDA has entered into agreements with 82 states, Tribal governments, and territories.

LFPA's flexible structure centers local voices, enabling states to be dynamic and responsive to the unique needs of their rural and urban communities. Consequently, state agencies have supported a diverse range of farmers, including those growing specialty crops and grains, producing meat, poultry, dairy, eggs, and fishing along our coasts. The result is millions of dollars reaching small and midsize farmers nationwide. In less than a year, \$79 million has been spent strengthening local and regional markets, including investments of:

- \$2,000,000 in Iowa distributed among 234 farmers.
- \$1,400,000 in Michigan distributed among 119 farmers and 10 farmer cooperatives.
- \$500,000 in Maryland distributed among 30 watermen.
- \$1,000,000 in Virginia distributed among 84 farmers.

During the months ahead, these and countless other economic opportunities prompted by LFPA will increasingly reverberate nationwide - among farmers and local supply chains. In total, estimates anticipate more than \$1.5 billion in local economic impact will be generated through LFPA purchases from local producers. Yet even so, with all projects in the midst of implementation, the stability and consistency of USDA's funding authority is paramount for effective program administration.

Given the program's success and the potential for future investments in farmers, communities, and supply chains, we strongly urge you to reject any language in the final FY2024 Agriculture Appropriations legislation that - through restriction of the Secretary of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation authority - would in any way hinder the continued effective administration of LFPA.

Sincerely,

Program Implementers

Asterisk () denotes an individual signer*

2020 Farmers Cooperative
4P Foods
Activate Food Arizona
Alisa Kelin*
Appalachian Sustainable Development
Arizona Food Bank Network
Beautiful Beginnings Child Care Center
Black Power Initiative
Bonnie Lass Consulting
Broad Street Presbyterian Church Food
Pantry
Common Market
Eastern Market Partnership
Farm Fresh Rhode Island
Food Bank of Eastern New Mexico
Fresh Approach
Freshlist
Hilltown Mobile Market
Jonathan Leal*
Kakeena Castro*
LEAP
Marbleseed
National Center for Frontier Communities
Nourish Colorado
O'Nealya Gronstal*
OKC Food Hub
Pinnacle Prevention
Renaissance Adult Day Health Center
Rosebird Farms
Shared Harvest Foodbank Inc.
Sprout MN
Sun Produce Cooperative
Swamp Rabbit Cafe and Grocery
The Food Depot
Thumb Food Policy Council

Tuscola Intermediate School District
Urban Agriculture Cooperative

Regional Producers

7 Seed Sowers, Co-op
Arrowrock Farm: An Urban Sanctuary
B.W. Four Farmkidz
Back Pocket Provisions
E-I-E-AYO Urban Farm
Eden's Harvest Inc.
Ellington Farms
Endigo's Herbs & Organics
Farm Right Natural Fruits & Vegetables
Finca Taina
Firsthand Foods
Firsthand Foods
Green Valley Organics
Greenfield Farms
Greenville Acres Farm
Guided By Mushrooms
Holton Livestock Company
Joshua Snedden, Farmer/Rancher, Illinois
Just Farmin'
Kenwood Corners Urban Farm
Kind & Sons Poultry Services
La Finquita
Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Monkey Hollow Honey
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers
Alliance
Open fArms Retreat
Piney's Family Farm
Quaintly Farm
Raising Our Own to Survive (ROOTS)

Ramblin' Sol Farm
Regenerative Farmer Collective
Shagbark Seed & Mill
Snowville Creamery
Swamp Veggies
Three Creeks Produce
Trilogy Beef Community
Troutman Farms
WIT Farm

Regional Stakeholder

Agriculture and Land Based Training
Association (ALBA)
Alden Services
Arizona Food Systems Network
Black Farmers & Ranchers New Mexico
Global
Bluestem Food Systems Group
Butte County Local Food Network
California Certified Organic Farmers
(CCOF)
California FarmLink
Catholic Rural Life
Center for Rural Affairs
Ceres Community Project
Chicago Food Policy Action Council
Clagett Farm
Community Alliance with Family Farmers
(CAFF)
Community Farm Alliance
Community Involved in Sustaining
Agriculture (CISA)
Cultivate Kansas City
Dakota Rural Action
Deming & Associates
Ecological Farming Association (EcoFarm)
Elder Tree
FACT (Food Animal Concerns Trust)
Farm to School Procurement Consulting
Farm to Table – New Mexico
Farmington Municipal Schools - Student
Nutrition Department
Florida Organic Growers

FoodCorps
Foodshed Alliance
Gonzales Strategy Group
Grassworks
Hall Hunger Initiative
Healthy Kids Healthy Communities San
Juan County
Hmong National Development, Inc.
Illinois Stewardship Alliance
Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy
Interfaith Hunger Coalition
Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative
Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA)
Just Serve
Kansas Rural Center
Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture
Land Stewardship Project
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
Michigan Food & Farming Systems
Michigan Organic Food & Farm Alliance
Mohawk Farm
Montana Organic Association
National Center for Appropriate
Technology
National Farm to School Network
National Hmong American Farmers Inc.
Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society
New Mexico Farmers Marketing
Association
New Mexico First
New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy
Council
NJ Food Democracy Collaborative
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers
Alliance
Northeast Organic Farming Association of
New Jersey
Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture
Society
Northwest Center for Alternatives to
Pesticides
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm
Association
Oregon Tilth

Organic Farming Research Foundation
Organic Seed Alliance
Pasa Sustainable Agriculture
Rural Advancement Foundation
International-USA
Savanna Institute
Seattle Good Business Network
Seed Change Strategies
Slow Food USA
Striving to Serve

Sunshine Creative
Susan Wilger Consulting
Sustainable Food Center
TCEDC
Union of Concerned Scientists – Food &
Environment Program
Virginia Association for Biological Farming
Wallace Center at Winrock International
Wild Farm Alliance
Women, Food and Agriculture Network

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, House Democratic Leader
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Republican Leader

cc: The Honorable Martin Heinrich, Chair, Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee
The Honorable John Hoeven, Ranking, Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee
The Honorable Andy Harris, Chairman, House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee
The Honorable Sanford Bishop, Ranking, House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee