

April 15, 2025

The Honorable John Hoeven  
Chair  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug  
Administration, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug  
Administration, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Andy Harris, M.D.  
Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug  
Administration, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug  
Administration, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Hoeven, Ranking Member Shaheen, Chairman Harris, Ranking Member Bishop:

We, the undersigned food and agriculture organizations, thank you for all your work to promote thriving farm economies that provide nutritious foods in their communities. We particularly appreciate your ongoing support to ensure the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production receives funding in the annual appropriations process. Robust funding is essential to ensure full implementation with adequate staffing and to sufficiently meet the popular program demand.

**As you work to develop the FY2027 agriculture appropriations bill, we strongly support funding the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production and related activities at its authorized level of \$25 million, and the urban agriculture data collection initiative at \$5 million.**

Urban agriculture generally refers to the cultivation, processing, and distribution of agricultural products in urban, suburban, and municipal settings, while innovative production includes utilizing new technologies and growing methods like controlled environment agriculture. Urban agriculture and innovative production are longstanding practices that maximize production with less acreage and take many different forms across the country, including high-tech greenhouses, indoor vertical farms, community gardens, and rooftop farms, utilizing a variety of growing methods including hydroponics, aquaponics, aeroponics and soil-based systems. Ultimately, agriculture in these settings produces an array of economic and social benefits beyond urban city centers.

The Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP) offers programs and services that support the development of urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural methods in urban, suburban, and rural settings. Since FY2020, OUAIP has successfully invested in 199 grants and 146 cooperative agreements that increase the capacity of urban agriculture, innovative producers, and municipal composting initiatives in local communities across 43 states and Puerto Rico. Demand for OUAIP programs has steadily increased since 2020 with only roughly 15% of eligible proposals being funded. Any delay in deploying these funds only stands to increase unmet demand.

Fully funding OUAIP with \$25 million would better equip the Office to restore staffing to full levels and implement a larger round of awards that fund emerging projects in addition to those delayed. Communities and farmers alike are currently facing increased costs everyday. OUAIP can invest in a wide range of activities that will support healthy diets and farm revenue, such as community gardens, new or scaled high-tech indoor farming systems, or incubator farms that provide job training and education. Previously funded projects have increased food production in limited access areas, spurred new business development, and promoted city and local planning that integrates food production into communities.

Greater detail on the impacts of urban and innovative agricultural operations and their economic success has been hindered due to the stalled implementation of the Data Collection on Urban, Indoor, and Emerging Agricultural Production Initiative, which has yet to be funded since its authorization in the 2018 Farm Bill. It is critical to provide an additional \$5 million for the urban agriculture and innovative production data collection initiative that should be built with the input of producers and stakeholders.

We appreciate the opportunity to speak to the importance of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production. Thank you for taking time to consider this request, and we look forward to partnering with you in the future of thriving, resilient farming communities.

Sincerely,

### **National Organizations**

Association of State Public Health  
Nutritionists  
Farm Aid  
Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)  
FoodRecovery.org  
International Fresh Produce Association  
National Association of State Departments  
of Agriculture  
National Center for Appropriate Technology  
(NCAT)  
National Farm to School Network  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
NoVasta

Organic Farming Research Foundation  
Organic Seed Alliance  
Regenerative Agriculture Coalition  
Rural Advancement Foundation  
International (RAFI)  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Urban Agriculture Network  
The National Center for Frontier  
Communities  
Women, Food and Agriculture Network  
(WFAN)  
Xerces Society for Invertebrate  
Conservation  
Zero Food Waste Coalition (ZFWC)

## **State and Regional Organizations**

A Simple Gesture

Agricultural Commission, town of Pepperell

Agriculture and Land Based Training

Association (ALBA)

Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network

American Friends Service Committee

(AFSC)

Appetite For Change (AFC)

Arizona State University

BEN Initiative

Boston Area Gleaners

boysgrow

C.A.S.A. del Llano (Communities Assuring  
a Sustainable Agriculture)

California Certified Organic Farmers

California FarmLink

Catholic Rural Life (CRL)

Center for Rural Affairs (CFRA)

Chicago Food Policy Action Council

Common Grain Alliance

Community Alliance with Family Farmers

Community Involved in Sustaining

Agriculture (CISA)

Crop Swap LA

Cultivate Kansas City

Dakota Rural Action (DRA)

Dena Soil Project / Community Compound

Detroit Black Community Food Sovereignty

Network (DBCFSN)

Eat Drink Rhode Island

Ecological Farming Association (EcoFarm)

Farm School NYC (FSNYC)

Farm to Table - New Mexico

Farm2People

Florida Organic Growers (FOG)

Food as Health Care Coalition (FAHCC)

Food Finders Inc.

Food in Neighborhoods (FIN)

Food Sector Systems LLC

Food Strong

FoodCorps

FoodCycle

Goddess Gathering Seed Library

GoFarm

GrassWorks

Groundwork Somerville (GWS)

Grow Food Northampton (GFN)

Grow Pittsburgh

Growing Roots

Illinois Stewardship Alliance (ISA)

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Interfaith Hunger Coalition

Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative

Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA)

Jefferson County Food Policy Council

Jump Ahead L3C

Kaizen Food Rescue

Kansas Black Farmers Association

Kansas Rural Center

Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture

LA Community Space Food Bank

Land Stewardship Project (LSP)

Local Enterprise Assistance Fund (LEAF)

Los Angeles Food Policy Council

Louisiana Small-Scale Agriculture Coalition

Marbleseed

Massachusetts Food System Collaborative

Material Institute

Michael Fields Agricultural Institute  
Michigan Farmers Market Association  
Michigan Food & Farming Systems  
Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance  
Mill City Grows  
Missouri Coalition for the Environment  
Montana Organic Association (MOA)  
Motor City Garden and Farm  
Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society  
New Connecticut Farmer Alliance (NCTFA)  
New Mexico Food and Agriculture Policy  
Council  
NJ Food Democracy Collaborative  
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of  
Connecticut (NOFA CT)  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of  
New Jersey (NOFA NJ )  
Northeast Organic Farming Association-  
Interstate Council  
Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture  
Society (NPSAS)  
Northwest Center for Alternatives to  
Pesticides (NCAP)  
Nourish Colorado  
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association  
Oregon Tilth  
Partnership for Growth LA  
Pasa Sustainable Agriculture  
Pesticide Action and Agroecology Network

### **Farmers and Businesses**

Agri-cultura Network  
Allandale Farm

Pinnacle Prevention  
Plant Futures at UCLA  
Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI)  
Renewing the Countryside  
Reunity Resources  
Rhode Island Food Policy Council (RIFPC)  
Root  
Root & Sprout Grant, Co.  
Santa Fe Farmers' Market Institute  
Santa Fe Food Policy Council  
Savanna Institute  
Shift Our Ways Collective  
Soulaani Environmental Alliance  
Southwest Food Coalition  
Sowing Seeds of Change  
Sprout  
Sun Valley Kitchen + Community Center  
Syracuse-Onondaga Food Systems Alliance  
Taos County Economic Development  
Corporation (TCEDC)  
The Center for Environmental  
Transformation  
The Food Project  
The Giving Grove  
The Lindsay Street Greenbelt Collective  
Transform Communities Network  
Tucson Organic Gardeners  
Virginia Association for Biological Farming  
Wild Farm Alliance (WFA)  
Wisconsin Farmers Union (WFU)

Alma Street Garden  
Anthony Youth Farm

Armijo Farm  
Avenue 33 Farm LLC  
Barcelo Gardens Fresh Market  
Bardenhagen Farms  
Belmar Farm  
Bidii Baby Foods  
Black Thumb Farm  
Botanical Bite & Provisions, LLC  
Brave Ground LLC  
Brian Tome Farms  
Brick Gardens  
Broadfork Farm, LLC  
Chingrownas  
City Green  
Clay Hill Produce and Flowers  
CMS Wellness  
ColorBlindWork | People. Plants. Purpose.  
CommonWealth Kitchen  
Croft Market  
Dorey Farmers Market, Inc.  
DRB Produce Services LLC  
El Tros Farm  
Enchanted Farms Mushrooms  
Farm worker  
Feed Our Soul  
Food Rev Kitchen  
Foundation 4 Future Foodies  
Fox Haven Farm & Learning Center  
Fresh Greens  
Fruit Fair  
Garcia Road Farm  
Gathings Gardens  
Granata Farms  
Green City Growers, Inc.  
Green Solution Roots  
Grow & Eat Inc.  
Growing Hope Gardens  
Healthy Hearts Institute  
Henosis LLC  
Hickory Hill Farm  
infinileaf LLC  
LA Neighborhood Gardens and Farms  
Lick Run Farm  
Little Broom Farm  
Longfellow Farm  
Mack Pack Farm  
Man of the Flower  
Midnight Disco Fungi  
Montclair Community Farms, MCF  
Moonwater Farm  
MudTown Farms  
Newton Community Farm  
Nightshade Farm & Flowers  
Nordica Street Community Farm  
Nova Market Garden  
Oakland Avenue Urban Farm  
Operation Grow Inc.  
Organic Planet LLC  
Petit Jardin  
Pico Union Project  
Prema's Permaculture & Composting  
Prevost Rutherford Urban Garden  
River Queen Greens  
Robertson's Royal Farmland  
Rooster Foot Farm  
Root Mass Farm  
Rude Becky Farm  
Rusty Top Farm  
Sanctuary Farms  
Sandalwood Farm and Sanctuary

Savage Acres, LLC  
Schmidt Family Farms, LLC  
SEED International, Inc.  
Seedfolx Farm  
Seven Springs farm  
Sulphur Creek Farm  
Sunshine farm  
Syggelekokle Farm LLC  
Three Feathers Farm  
Too Tall Farm & Nursery  
Toohnii Binaneest'a' Altaas'ei Alliance  
(ToohBAA)  
TREETOP Blends LLC  
Trouvaille Farm  
Turtle Barn Organic Farm  
UGAMI Farm  
VeggieHouse Farm  
Veggielution  
Weatherlow Farms  
WeEats  
WJP Urban Farms  
Wright-Locke Farm Conservancy  
Yardbirds Backyard Chickens  
Young Family Farm