

Dear Administrator Strohmeier,

**I am writing in support of HF2102 Rep Lee's bill to create a state Local Food Purchase Assistance Program.**

I work at Sprout Food Hub in Little Falls. Sprout had the honor of being awarded an LFPA grant and serving our communities through this grant. Countless people were grateful for the food that we sourced from our farmers, growers and producers. We received many thanks, comments of appreciation. Many of our consumers were elderly, on budgets, and spoke of how receiving this food helped them "get by". They were also grateful that it was good food that they were receiving.

Comfortable education occurred, as many younger people had never seen certain vegetables, and didn't know what they were. People my age grew up gardening these vegetables, or eating them regularly. I was able to tell them what they were, give them simple methods for preparing and eating that vegetable they were asking about. I was also able to give tips for "child friendly" introductions to the vegetable. With those who were familiar with the produce, I was able to share different variations of cooking or eating many of the vegetables.

As shared tips or methods, other people also shared how they like to prepare it. This brought about a sense of community, while they were learning about the foods they weren't familiar with, as well as sharing with each other their favorite ways to eat. Diversity in age groups were present. The elderly and retired, young families, and I saw many more young adults than I anticipated seeing.

Please support Minnesota with HF 2102 so that we can support our local growers and producers, but also our people in need of food security.

- Farmers already navigate unpredictable challenges—weather, input costs, land values, disease pressure, and volatile markets. When they enter a contract with the government, they should be able to trust that commitment.
- LFPA keeps food dollars circulating locally by incentivizing organizations and businesses to procure food from farmers in their communities. That money will likely be re-invested back onto the farm, supporting the development of farming operations and our agricultural economy.
- Organizations statewide have relied on this funding to establish wholesale agreements with farmers, providing a stable market for beginning and underserved farmers.
  - Underserved producers have historically missed out on market development opportunities and other forms of support from the federal and state government.
  - One challenge for beginning farmers is securing reliable markets. LFPA partnerships provide a critical source of financial stability during the early, high-risk years of farming.
- This program improves access to fresh, healthy foods for underserved communities across Minnesota, particularly in rural areas where availability is often more limited.
- LFPA doesn't just increase access to local food—it connects people with where their food comes from, growing an understanding of regional agriculture in the state and appreciation for hard working farmers.

Gratefully,

Cynthia Johnson

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Cynthia Johnson (she/her)

Sprout MN

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March 18, 2025

Chairs Paul Anderson and Rick Hansen  
House Agriculture Committee  
Capitol, Room G3  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Support for Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) (HF2102)**

Dear Chairs Anderson and Hansen and members of the House Agriculture Committee:

We write to express our strong support for HF2102 and urge state lawmakers to honor the government's commitment to farmers who depend on the Local Food Purchasing Assistance program (LFPA). Organizations statewide have relied on this funding to establish wholesale agreements with farmers, providing a stable market for beginning and underserved farmers.

Farmers in Minnesota already navigate a range of unpredictable challenges—from weather events and fluctuating input costs to rising land values, disease pressures, and volatile markets. When farmers enter into agreements with the government, they should be able to trust that those commitments will be honored.

For many beginning and underserved producers, market development opportunities have historically been out of reach. This program addresses that gap by offering a stable market to farmers who are often overlooked by other federal and state programs. LFPA partnerships help fill that gap, providing a much-needed source of financial stability during the high-risk early years of farming.

In addition to supporting farmers, the program improves access to fresh, healthy foods for underserved communities across Minnesota. We urge you to prioritize this important program and ensure that Minnesota's farmers continue to receive the support they need.

Thank you for your consideration,

Climate Land Leaders (CLL)  
Land Stewardship Project (LSP)  
Minnesota Farmers Market Association (MFMA)  
Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU)  
Neighborhood Roots  
Prairie Rose Agricultural Institute for Research, Innovation & Education  
The Conservation Fund  
The Food Group  
The Good Acre (TGA)  
The Village Agricultural Cooperative  
Red Wing Farmers Market  
Renewing the Countryside (RTC)  
Sprout  
Sustainable Farming Association (SFA) of Minnesota

March 18, 2025

To: Peter Strohmeier, MN House

Re: HF 2102 by Representative Fue Lee and Senator Mary Kunesh

Dear Colleagues:

Please consider giving your support and voting in favor of this bill for Local Food Purchasing Assistance to be funded at the state level to continue the necessary work of providing markets for local farmers to feed the hungry. [HF 2102 Status in the House for the 94th Legislature \(2025 - 2026\)](#)

I am writing on behalf of Kilimo Minnesota, a non-profit organization incubator farm founded by African immigrant farmers for African immigrant farmers based in Cambridge, MN in 2020. Kilimo farmers grow vegetables on plots of an acre or less, bringing their agricultural knowledge to Minnesota. They grow culturally relevant greens to sell to the African community and a variety of vegetables to sell for food distribution.

As an incubator program, Kilimo Minnesota helps farmers to access markets. Growing vegetables for food distribution in the 2024-2025 LFPA, farmers were selling to two of our partners, Sanneh Foundation and Humanity Alliance who both provide meals for hungry families. Kilimo farmers were able to grow produce, build experience through selling, and contribute immensely to reducing hunger for thousands of families. This is a win for everyone involved.

Furthermore, we need to continue this kind of work. Farmers being able to grow for their local communities strengthens everyone. With farming of course comes challenges beyond one's control and some of the fields sat covered in water last June from heavy rains. While farmers lost the immediate crop planted in these spaces, our LFPA partners were flexible to be able to pivot to other vegetables as well as accept produce later in the growing season to help accommodate for weather in early summer.

The mileage, time and resources saved by growing vegetables locally, selling locally, and feeding locally cannot be underestimated in the return on investment with this program. We have seen time and again, how far the dollar reaches and this is simply one of the best investments in people, their food, and their livelihoods. This local circulation of funding is what has made LFPA strong in the past and will ensure that it continues to boost local economies. As farmers are planting their seed trays in the next weeks, please ensure that they will have a market to sell to.

Please vote yes for House File 2102 and a yes for lifting up local farmers, local food, and local communities.

Warmly,



Kathy Evenson-McDermott, Operations Manager, Kilimo Minnesota

Renewing the Countryside

[kathy@rtcinfo.org](mailto:kathy@rtcinfo.org)

March 18, 2025

Chairs Paul Anderson and Rick Hansen  
House Agriculture Committee  
Capitol, Room G3  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) (HF2102)

Dear Chairs Anderson and Hansen and members of the House Agriculture Committee:

We write to express our strong support for HF2102 and urge state lawmakers to honor the government's commitment to farmers who depend on the Local Food Purchasing Assistance program (LFPA). Organizations statewide have relied on this funding to establish wholesale agreements with farmers, providing a stable market for beginning and underserved farmers.

Farmers in Minnesota already navigate a range of unpredictable challenges—from weather events and fluctuating input costs to rising land values, disease pressures, and volatile markets. In NorthEastern Minnesota, our farmers wrestle with short growing seasons, difficult terrain and limited depth of soil, and growing concerns over water pollution with extractive industries. Our region has a rich agricultural history, and persevering families and farms are striving to bring back those traditions and feed their communities. We should support their important work. When farmers enter into agreements with the government, they should be able to trust that those commitments will be honored.

For many beginning and underserved producers, market development opportunities have historically been out of reach. This program addresses that gap by offering a stable market to farmers who are often overlooked by other federal and state programs. Our region of Eastern Lake County has minimal market access for farmers with few farmers market opportunities or local food cooperatives. Lack of market access is a limiting factor for farms keeping them from growing their capacity. LFPA partnerships help fill that gap, providing a much-needed source of financial stability during the high-risk early years of farming.

In our region of NorthEastern Minnesota, we have limited access to grocery stores and fresh, seasonal food. Our communities have aging populations, many of whom live on fixed incomes making purchasing food increasingly difficult with price fluctuations from global food systems an extreme burden. Our participation in the previous Local Food Purchase Assistance program has provided much needed diet staples including eggs, meat, potatoes, carrots, and fresh greens to families who otherwise could not afford such groceries.

In addition to supporting farmers, the program improves access to fresh, healthy foods for underserved communities across Minnesota. We urge you to prioritize this important program and ensure that Minnesota's farmers continue to receive the support they need.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dan Cahill Mathews  
Finland Food Chain  
[dan.c@friendsoffinland.org](mailto:dan.c@friendsoffinland.org)



March 18, 2025

To: Peter Strohmeier, MN House

Re: HF 2102 by Representative Fue Lee and Senator Mary Kunesh

Dear Colleagues:

Please consider giving your support and voting in favor of this bill for Local Food Purchasing Assistance to be funded at the state level to continue the necessary work of providing markets for local farmers to feed the hungry. [HF 2102 Status in the House for the 94th Legislature \(2025 - 2026\)](#)

The Sanneh Foundation invested over \$100,000 to local farmers last year, distributing it to thousands of families across the metro area. We relied on the remaining budget for this year, already communicating to local farmers like Kilimo Minnesota and Tree Range Farms to purchase additional items in 2025 about what items to grow that are culturally significant to hungry neighbors but also accessible for the farmers to produce.

Furthermore, we need to continue this kind of work. Farmers being able to grow for their local communities strengthens everyone. LFPA partners like The Sanneh Foundation are flexible to be able to pivot to other vegetables as well as accept produce later in the growing season to help accommodate for weather in early summer. We have more farmers asking if we want to purchase eggs or other hard to source items but serving over 78,000 households in 2024, our dollar needs to stretch and the LFPA budget we have is still dramatically below what we need.

The mileage, time and resources saved by growing vegetables locally, selling locally, and feeding locally cannot be underestimated in the return on investment with this program. We have seen time and again, how far the dollar reaches and this is simply one of the best investments in people, their food, and their livelihoods. This local circulation of funding is what has made LFPA strong in the past and will ensure that it continues to boost local economies. As farmers are planting their seed trays in the next weeks, please ensure that they will have a market to sell to.

Please vote yes for House File 2102 and a yes for lifting up local farmers, local food, and local communities.

Warmly,

Tony Sanneh

Chief Executive Officer

The Sanneh Foundation



March 19, 2025

Chairs Paul Anderson and Rick Hansen  
House Agriculture Committee  
Capitol, Room G3  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Support for Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) (HF2102)

Dear Chairs Anderson and Hansen and members of the House Agriculture Committee:

We write to express our strong support for HF2102 and urge state lawmakers to honor the government's commitment to farmers who depend on the Local Food Purchasing Assistance program (LFPA). Organizations statewide have relied on this funding to establish wholesale agreements with farmers, providing a stable market for beginning and underserved farmers. When farmers enter into agreements with the government, they should be able to trust that those commitments will be honored.

Farmers in Minnesota already navigate a range of unpredictable challenges—from weather events and fluctuating input costs to rising land values, disease pressures, and volatile markets. In NorthEastern Minnesota, we as farmers navigate the lack of access to local fertility inputs like compost and carbon based mulches like straw. Due to lower wages in rural communities, consumers are not able to afford the true cost of locally grown food, so farmers often sell their food for less than it's worth in an effort to support the health of their communities, which then drives down wages further for farmers.

For many beginning and underserved producers, market development opportunities have historically been out of reach. This program addresses that gap by offering a stable market to farmers who are often overlooked by other federal and state programs. LFPA partnerships help fill that gap, providing a much-needed source of financial stability during the high-risk early years of farming.

In our region of NorthEastern Minnesota, we have limited access to grocery stores and fresh, seasonal food. Our communities have aging populations, many of whom live on fixed incomes making purchasing food increasingly difficult with price fluctuations from global food systems an extreme burden. Our participation in the previous Local Food Purchase Assistance program has provided much needed diet staples including eggs, meat, potatoes, carrots, and fresh greens to families who otherwise could not afford such groceries.

In addition to supporting farmers, the program improves access to fresh, healthy foods for underserved communities across Minnesota. We urge you to prioritize this important program and ensure that Minnesota's farmers continue to receive the support they need.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sarah Mayer  
Farm Manager/Director  
Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center