



HMONG AMERICAN FARMERS ASSOCIATION

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Dear Minnesota Senate Agriculture Committee,

My name is Janssen Hang and I am the Executive Director and Co-founder of the Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA). It is my pleasure to write this letter in support for the Women's Environmental Institute (WEI) request for appropriation of funds to construct and expand the incubator farm and support immigrant, minority and beginning farmers with adequate infrastructure to enhance good agricultural best practices to comply with Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and create financially sustainable farming operation.

The Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA) is a membership based non-profit organization, started in 2011 to address the injustice faced by Hmong farmers with lack of access to land, market, credit and capital, training and research. Our mission is to advance the economic, social and cultural prosperity of Hmong farmers in MN through capacity building, cooperative endeavor and advocacy to spur intergenerational and community wealth. As such, HAFA work with over 100 Hmong farmers and manages a 155 acre farm located in Dakota County that provides land tenure and model sustainable practices. HAFA also provides a bicultural bilingual training on various topic such as: soil health and soil fertility, farm business management and good agricultural practices; and also aggregate produce from our farmer members through the HAFA Food Hub to increase farmer's revenue stream and sustain their farming operation.

Very much like HAFA, WEI is supporting and creating equitable opportunity through its incubator farm for immigrant, minority, BIPOC and emerging farmers, to grow their capacity and maintain a financial viable farming operation. Over the course of the years, I have had the opportunity to attend WEI's farm training sessions, which is truly educating, enlightening and innovative that allow me to share, challenge and grow our farmer member's capacity with resources obtained from WEI. As such, the construction of the new facility will continue this tradition and support and build the next generation of farmers in Minnesota.

In sum, I encourage your support to appropriate funding to WEI for the construction of a wash, rinse and cold storage facility on the WEI Farm that will support farmers to comply to Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) standards, extend the shelf life of produce, and sustain immigrant, minority, BIPOC and emerging farmers farming operation to enrich our community with locally grown produce.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Janssen Hang
Executive Director