



THE GOOD ACRE
FOOD + COMMUNITY

March 20, 2023

Dear Chair Vang, Vice-Chair Pursell, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nikki Warner, I am the Communication Director at The Good Acre, a nonprofit food hub located in Falcon Heights, district 66A. As the largest food hub in the state, we play a critical role in creating market access for local farmers and food makers. Since we opened our doors in 2015, we have increased support for farm and food entrepreneurs to strengthen the food system across our region. Last year was our most impactful year yet, with \$1.7 million dollars of local food purchased from local farmers and food makers through our food hub, including over \$1 million spent with emerging farmers.

I'm writing today to request support for an expansion of the Emerging Farmer Office (EFO) within the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. We know that people of color face many disparities in the agricultural sector, the EFO is working hard to address this. Their mission to connect emerging farmers with the resources that can help build successful, sustainable, and safe farm enterprises isn't just a worthy cause, but it's working. From food safety training, translation services, and support in making MDA grants more equitable for farmers of color, investing in the EFO is critical for making sure that Minnesota is meeting the unique needs of the emerging farmers so that our food system can flourish, but also be safe, equitable, and resilient.

Furthermore, I'd like to request the elimination of the sunset date for the EFO. It's clear that the services that this office is providing are in high demand. If Minnesota wants to be a leader in reducing disparities for people of color in this state, investing in EFO as a long term strategy is a common sense decision.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nikki Warner

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