

PROJECT SWEETIE PIE



Planting the Seeds of Change

May 6, 2022

Governor Tim Walz & Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan
130 State Capitol
75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
Senate President Jeremy Miller
3113 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman
463 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Torrey Westrom
Agriculture and Rural Development Finance
and Policy Committee
3201 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Mike Sundin
House Committee on Agriculture Finance
and Policy
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Minnesota decision makers:

Under the leadership of Michael Chaney, Executive Director and Catherine Fleming, CFO, Project Sweetie Pie has been at the forefront of not only Urban Agriculture but Agriculture overall and it is under that umbrella that we respectfully request that our appointed and anointed leaders in Minnesota, honor our agriculture heritage coupled with our future agriculture advancements and move this legislation forward immediately.

We are excited to see the many innovative projects that will be under consideration as you decide what to include in the final Agriculture Omnibus Bill. **PROJECT SWEETIE PIE urges leadership to give Agriculture a budget target that reflects the importance of agriculture to Minnesota's economy and supports farmers and communities.** A robust agriculture bill will

support a robust and resilient Minnesota food and agriculture system, and Minnesota's current budget surplus gives us room to invest in this support.

Within the last two Minnesota harvest seasons we have collectively experienced pandemic upheaval and the stress of major weather events that have exposed the fragility of our supply chains, and this has been especially hard in ADOS/BIPOC communities who already have food desert and lack of access to healthy food challenges. We have seen the ability of small and mid-sized farms to pivot to address food insecurity and fill market disruptions as well as the increased viability of Urban Farms to address some of the inner city needs. This has not come without considerable statewide collaborative efforts by farmers, food systems professionals and organizations, as well as local and state agencies. We applaud their efforts but more needs to be done now.

We cannot wait until the next session to continue these initiatives. This cannot happen efficiently or effectively without the support of our elected leaders and democratic institutions. We urge a bill this year that supports our farmers and enables everyone to put food on the table. Thank you for your work supporting our farm and food systems!

Sincerely,

Catherine Fleming, Project Sweetie Pie, CFO www.projectsweetiepie.org and www.BigGreenDAO.com

Michael Chaney, A member of the MinneAg Network - www.MinneAg.org

Cc:

Commissioner Thom Petersen, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Senator Draheim

Senator Dornink

Senator Pratt

Senator Dziejcz

Representative Hausman

Representative Howard

Representative Vang

Representative Theis