



April 26, 2021

Agriculture Conference Committee
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Conference Committee Members,

We are writing today to urge you to adopt the House language that includes funding for the Healthy Eating Here at Home program, otherwise known as Market Bucks, in the Omnibus Agriculture Bill.

All Minnesotans deserve access to fresh, affordable, local foods. Market Bucks makes these foods accessible to low-income Minnesotans by matching SNAP spending at farmers markets. During the summer of 2020 SNAP customers spent \$276,920 in SNAP/EBT and \$184,365 in Market Bucks creating \$691,927 in additional economic activity in communities throughout the state. The increase in use highlights the fact that the Market Bucks program was a staple to many low-income Minnesotans and farmers during the economic downturn.

Market Bucks are a win-win-win for Minnesota:

- Customers win by being able to stretch their buying power at farmers markets, making fresh, local food more affordable for low-income residents.
- Farmers win by bringing in new customers. This year 12,978 new customers used Market Bucks to purchase food from farmers markets.
- Communities win with increased local economic activity, a stronger sense of community, and healthier people.

Eliminating funding for Market Bucks would remove the ability of low-income individuals to buy healthy, local foods at farmers markets and force them to purchase and eat less-healthy food and rely more on food shelves for help making their food budget work. As it stands, food shelves are pushed to capacity serving a record 3.8 million visits annually. Food shelves also do not always have access to the quantity of fresh and local foods like farmers markets.

Individuals using Market Bucks have come to count on the program to help them afford the fresh, healthy food that they want to be able to eat for their own health and the health of their families. Losing this benefit in the midst of unprecedented levels of food insecurity would be devastating.

We urge you to preserve the funding for Healthy Eating Here at Home in your final budget bill to ensure the Market Bucks program continues to make a critical impact around Minnesota.

Please contact Leah Gardner lgardner@hungersolutions.org or 651-789-9850 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Aitkin Farmers' Market
Albert Lea Farmers Market
Alexandria Farmers Market
Alternative Roots Farm
Ambuehl Farm
Annandale Farmers Market
Appetite For Change, Inc.
Auntie Wendy's Kettle Corn
Bagley Area Farmers Market
Beans Coffee Co
Becker Farmers Market
Big Lake Farmers Market
Big Woods Orchard
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota
Boondock, Enterprises
Bread in the Meadow
Brilliance, LLC
California Street Farm
Cannon Valley Farmers' Market, Faribault
Catholic Charities Social Concerns
Cedar Crate Farm
Central MN Vegetable Growers Association
Chengwatana Community Farm
City of Little Falls
City of Minneapolis
Claire Nelson Farmers Market
Clover Valley Farms, LLC
Community Action Duluth
Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES)
Cuyuna Range Farmers Market
D & S Gardens
Dante's Cookies
Dave Nelson Greenhouse, LLC
Dream of Wild Health
Drifted Stone Homestead

Duluth Community School Collaborative
Duluth Farmers Market
East Isles Farmers Market
Empowered by Nature Wellness Center LLC
Essentia Health
Eyota Farmers Market
Fairhaven Farm
Farmers Market Place LLC
Farmers Market producer, grillinmeats
Ferments and More
Finland Farmers Market/Friends of the Finland Community
Fireside Orchard & Gardens
First Foods Farm & Seeds
First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead
Floodwood River farm
Forks in the Dirt
Four Sisters Farmers Market
Fulton Farmers Market
Get Fit Itasca
Go Boy Breads
Goodhue Farmers Market
Goodview Farmers Market
Grand Rapids Farmers' Market
Great River Vineyard
Guldan Family Farm
GVY Produce
Hartshorn Farm
Healthy Northland
Heather's Home Goods
Hibbing Farmers Market
Holistic Health Farms
Hopkins Farmers Market
Hunger Solutions Minnesota
Hutchinson Farmers Market
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Iron Range Partnership for
Sustainability/MN Farmers Union St. Louis
Co
Jewish Family and Children's Service of
Minneapolis
Johnson Family Pastures
Keystone Community Services
Kingfield Farmers Market
Lake City Food Shelf
Lake City Market by the Lake
Legal Services Advocacy Project
Leuer Gardens, LLC.
Lincoln County Farmers Market
Little Chili Farm
Little Falls Farmers Market
Luverne Farmer's Market
Mankato Farmers' Market
Maple Grove Farmers Market
Marshall Farmers' Market
Mary Dirty Face Farm
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Midtown Farmers Market
Mill City Farmers Market
Minnesota Farmers Union
Minnesota Farmers' Market Association
Minnesota Fresh Farm
Monticello Farmers' Market
Morris Area Farmers Market
Musser Produce
Neighborhood House
Neighborhood Roots
Nokomis Farmers Market
North Node Consulting, LLC
Northeast Farmers Market
Northland Allies
Open Arms of Minnesota
Otisco Valley Growers
Out on a Limb Orchard and Gardens
Park Rapids Farmers Market
Pillsbury United Communities
Pipestone Farmers Market
Prairie Horizons Farm LLC
Prana Kombucha
PRISM

Purple Carrot Market
Rebel Rooster Farm
RebelSoil
Red Wing Farmers Market
Renewing the Countryside
Richfield Farmers Market
Riverside Farmers Market
Rochester Farmers Market
Rockwood Maple Farm
Ruhland's Strudel Haus
Rutabaga Project
SAFE in Virginia MN
Second Harvest Heartland
Shared Grounds Farmers Cooperative
Sharing Our Roots
Sheepy Hollow @ Native Oaks Farm
Smoke Signals
Sogn Valley Farm
Sonnek Potatoes
Sprout MN
St Cloud Area Farmers Market
St Paul Farmers Market
St. Luke's Farmers' Market
St. Mary's Regional Health Center
St. Peter Farmers' Market
Staples Area Farmers Market
Stearns County Public Health
Stevens Square Farmers Market
Stone Hearth Farm & Garden
Stone's Throw Farm
The Aliveness Project
The Food Group
The Good Acre
The Little Market That Could
Thorson's Farm Fresh Produce
Tower Farmers Market
Twin Cities Green Farm, LLC
Twin Ports Helping Handx
Two Harbors Farmers Market
Ullands Timeless Gardens
Under the Sun Herbs
University of Minnesota Extension
University of MN Snap Ed
Urban Roots

Virginia Market Square
Wabasha County Social Services Income
Maintenance Dept
Wabasha Downtown Farmers Market
Wadena Farmers Market
Welcome Water Protectors
Wendt Family Greens
West Side Farmers Market
Whitewater Gardens Farm
Willswood Apiary and Farm
Winona Farmers Market
Worthington Farmers Market