



Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire

84 Silk Farm Road
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 224-5022
info@nofanh.org
www.nofanh.org

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April 29, 2020

Dear Stakeholder Advisory Board to GOFERR,

Thank you for asking NOFA-NH to give our perspective on the use of the \$1.25 billion in CARES act funding. NOFA-NH's mission is to help people build local, sustainable, healthy food systems by actively promoting regenerative, ecologically sound gardening, farming and land care practices for healthy communities. We are part of a regional alliance of organic farming associations and have more than 300 members here in New Hampshire. To answer your questions, we surveyed our members and more than 3,000 supporters and affiliates.

The survey confirmed our fears: New Hampshire farmers and consumers are already feeling the impacts of COVID-19 through the loss of restaurant demand, uncertainty for farmers markets, decreased access to outlets that carry local and organic food, nonexistent childcare, supply shortages, reduced access to on-farm labor, and other issues. At the same time, many of our farmers have seen sky-rocketing demand for their products but are unable provide them, due to processing constraints.

We believe agriculture has the potential to reboot the economy while also improving food security, creating jobs, preserving the environment, and creating community resiliency. Therefore, we have proposed several policy solutions that will help farmers and consumers but also the general public. They include: direct payments to farms that can show loss of revenue due to COVID-19, funding to ensure the safety of farmers markets, a pilot program to make farm stands the new gas station, funds for state contracts to purchase New Hampshire products first (before choosing out-of-state suppliers), allowing on-farm poultry processing, and matching funds to existing agricultural programs so that the money can reach small and mid-sized farmers.

Please see our enclosed testimony, and let us know if you have additional questions. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Laura Hartz
President, Board of Directors of NOFA-NH

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire (NOFA-NH) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to building a community of organic food activists and educated consumers to help support New Hampshire's local organic farming community.

(1) *Please identify your position and your organization.*

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire (NOFA-NH) is a nonprofit organization that represents local farmers and consumers. Our mission is to help people build local, sustainable, healthy food systems by actively promoting regenerative, ecologically sound gardening, farming and land care practices for healthy communities.

This testimony was written by Laura Hartz, President of the Board of Directors of NOFA-NH, Sarah Laeng-Gilliatt, the Chair of our Policy Committee, and Nikki Kolb, our Operations Manager. Our testimony is based on a survey of our members and affiliates as well as input from many of our volunteers and supporters.

To inform our response to GOFERR's questions, we surveyed our community of farmers and consumers to understand the impacts of COVID-19 on their lives. We received responses from 118 consumers of local and organic foods and 60 farmers and food producers. Both groups reported disruptions from COVID-19.

The surveyed farmers include organic and conventional. Most farmers (65%) sell vegetables, half sell fruits (52%), more than a third sell meat (37%), one-fifth sell syrup (23%), and 13% sell dairy. In 2019, the farmers' main outlets were: on farm retail (50%), farmers markets (43%), local retailers (37%), restaurants (28%), CSA (28%), local food hubs (21%), and wholesale/institutions (17%).

(2) *Please identify what economic sector your enterprise operates within.*

NOFA-NH operates primarily in the agriculture sector but has wide-ranging effects on community resiliency, economic development, tourism, public health, and the preservation of natural resources. Our members are farmers and consumers interested in supporting local agriculture. They include small to mid-size vegetable growers, poultry operations, diversified farms for meat and vegetables, dairy farmers, pick your own farms and orchards, maple syrup producers, cheese makers, wine makers, herbalists, homesteaders, and eaters. Our members produce food for farmers markets, farm stores, schools, food hubs, local restaurants, CSAs, food pantries, road-side stands, grocery chains, co-ops, and community markets.

(3) *Please describe how your enterprise and economic sector has been impacted by Covid-19.*

If there ever is a sector of the economy that is essential—critically important for peoples' well-being—it is the agriculture and food sector. COVID-19 has underscored the fragility and inefficiencies of the national agricultural system, as well as the much greater resilience, food security, and economic stimulus that a regional food system can provide. Local farms can bring food to us faster and safer through shorter supply chains that are less likely to be derailed by national or global market trends.

Even before COVID-19, New Hampshire's agricultural sector was in crisis: New Hampshire farms usually operate at a loss, needing off-farm income and struggling to make ends meet.

Farms lose approximately \$8 million annually due to production costs that grow faster than farm revenue. In 2017, 68% of NH farms reported net losses.¹

Now, with the COVID crisis on top of the pre-existing farm crisis, the perils to the sector are daunting. As the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition writes, “without immediate mitigation, we may lose many small, socially disadvantaged, and beginning farms and the important markets they serve.” But, we cannot lose one more New Hampshire farm; on the contrary, we need a sizable, concerted, and coordinated effort to strengthen our community-based food system and increase the number and success of farms. Nevertheless, we are optimistic that with a coordinated response, we can emerge from this time all the more resilient, with a thriving local food economy and the far-reaching benefits that flow from it to our communities, environment, and the public health. We strongly believe that the regional agriculture sector is uniquely positioned to reboot the economy.

Impacts on Farmers

Since the stay at home order was issued on March 27, 2020, farmers reported catastrophic drop offs in outlets for their goods. Of those farmers surveyed, 90% reported decreased demand from restaurants, 80% reported decreased demand from farmers markets, 75% reported decreased demand from on-farm retail, 60% from retail/food hubs, and 50% from wholesale institutions. At the same time, 70% of farmer respondents report increased demand for their goods.

Surveyed farmers and producers are experiencing the following business disruptions due to the COVID-19 crisis: marketing channel disruptions (50%), cash flow issues (43%), labor shortages (38%), challenges with new channels of distribution (37%), loss of restaurant accounts (27%), inability to obtain the proper sanitation and protective equipment required to operate (27%), and transportation or shipping disruptions (20%).

43% of respondents said impact of COVID-19 on their farm or food business revenue is moderate, 26% said it was negative, 17% said it has been very negative. Only 8% said COVID-19 is positively impacting their business.

Of those farmers who are impacted by restaurant closures, 16% expect losses between \$1,000 and \$5,000; 7% expect losses between \$10,000 and \$15,000; 5% expect losses more than \$20,000; and 4% expect losses between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Farmers and food producers had the following immediate needs: financial assistance, workers, markets/outlets, supplies (masks, gloves, sanitizer, bags, soap), transitional assistance to respond to changing markets (such as pivoting from serving institutions to consumers), equipment, childcare, clear guidelines for worker and consumer safety across the spectrum (from on farm workers, to pick your own operations, to farmers markets), and COVID-19 testing.

Impacts on Consumers

Of the 118 consumers of local and organic foods surveyed, 86% obtained food from farmers markets, farm stands, and CSAs in 2019. The same percent of respondents—86%—reported that

¹ You can read the full report on the economics of New Hampshire's food and farm economy by viewing a presentation by Ken Meter on this website: <https://www.foodsolutionsforum.com>

obtaining food from the above sources has *decreased* since the stay at home order on March 27, 2020. Similarly, 79% of respondents said that since the stay at home order, they never order food from restaurants that clearly support NH local and/or organic farms. In 2019, 35% of respondents ate at restaurants that clearly support NH local and/or organic farms once or twice a month.

Consumers reported the following food shortages at grocery stores: meat (46%), eggs (47%), dairy (30%), fresh produce (30%), locally caught fish (23%). 82% of respondents also reported shortages in toilet paper, and 89% cited shortages in cleaning products. Respondents also noted that grains, flours and fresh local greens have been increasingly difficult to find. Since COVID-19, eaters experienced the following challenges in obtaining local and/or organic food: shortages, low supply, less variety, lack of access to farmers markets, increased prices, food access/security, including difficulty obtaining food from food pantries, and the need to travel farther away to obtain organic and local products.

In summary, NOFA-NH's community survey on the impact of COVID-19 revealed that farmers and consumers are negatively impacted by lack of access to farmers markets and farm stands, loss of local foods at retailers, and restaurant and institution closures. Disruptions to existing supply chains and challenges with new supply chains are additional stressors.

Farmers and food producers are increasingly concerned that they will incur serious financial losses that their businesses will suffer due to a lack of childcare, as well as a lack of workers. Concerns about worker and consumer safety right now, and when markets reopen was another source of anxiety. Farmers and producers remain worried about whether they will be able to meet the demand for food access throughout New Hampshire.

(4) Please provide an assessment of how you project your organization and economic sector will be impacted over the next 12 months by Covid-19.

National experts project that COVID-19 will cause regional markets, like New Hampshire's agricultural sector, to lose \$1.02 billion from March to December 2020.

Our survey reflected this danger. Our farmers are most concerned that financial losses will continue and worsen over the next 12 months. Lack of access to childcare, farm workers, markets and capital could result in severe financial losses to our small farms. Closures of and limited access to farmers markets, farm stands, restaurants and institutions are already disrupting cash flow for our economic sector. Farmers remain worried that if and when these outlets reopen, restricted access or public fear will hurt their businesses.

Our farmers and producers would most benefit from the following assistance over the next 12 months: emergency relief to dairy farmers, direct payments, cash assistance and aid for lost revenue, grants (for operations and equipment purchases), assistance with payroll and workers compensation, investment in small producers and the local food system value chain, and disaster relief for small businesses.

In addition to challenges facing producers and farmers, New Hampshire's consumers are concerned with food security. As of April 28, 2020, 8% of 118 survey respondents reported that

they already have or would need to access food assistance programs like SNAP for the first time. Job losses over the next 12 months could lead to a spike in this number, requiring additional social support services and access to subsidized food for a greater portion of New Hampshire residents.

(5) *Please explain whether your enterprise or economic sector has or is receiving, or may possibly receive in the future, any other governmental support (federal, state or local) or charitable funds specifically intended to help address Covid-19 impacts; and explain whether the identified need might be covered by other governmental or charitable sources of funding or support programs.*

Survey responses reflected that there is widespread sense that the majority of subsidies go to larger producers, rather than small- and mid-sized diversified farmers, and that this should change, with vastly increased funding to local production for local consumption. While USDA's distribution of federal direct payment funds for producers by commodity group (meat, dairy, specialty crops etc) are important, there is no funding set aside for these good produced locally.

Many small and mid-scale operations will not benefit from USDA's programs. This is not a new trend; research shows that the USDA administered Market Facilitation Program payments in 2019 disproportionately went to larger-scale farmers. Yet, small-scale operations are the most secure and resilient compared to major retail chains that have food shortages.

In addition, The Farmers Legal Action Group has produced a guide to the national COVID-19 resources available to farmers, and also highlights the gaps between federal programming and our farmers' needs.² For example, the Payroll Protection Plan loans that are available to small businesses and sole proprietors (most farms) require that the applicant have filed Form 1040 Schedule C. Although most farms are small business or sole proprietors, they do not file Form 1040 Schedule C because there is an IRS form that is specific to farms, and are therefore ineligible. Furthermore, the national programs do not distinguish between goods based on their location of production. The federal money will flow to states with the largest share of the market, not to states with a small share of the national market, even if that small share is critically important to the state's local economy and food security. A good example is apples: New Hampshire is not one of the top 10 producers of apples in the U.S., but the 24.5 million pounds of apples grown in New Hampshire in 2012 are an incredibly important aspect of our local agricultural economy, and are essential in New Hampshire's grocery stores, school cafeterias, and farmers markets, especially—when as now—long-distance supply chains are disrupted. Now, more than ever, New Hampshire's farms are critical to food security.

Therefore, we recommend that GOFERR funding be used to ensure support for family-scale producers and local food systems. The following programs could be used to support local and regional food systems, with legislative and administrative actions that could unlock already-appropriated funding: TEFAP, LAMP, SFMNP, and FMNP.³

² <http://www.flaginc.org/2020/04/farmers-guide-to-covid-19-relief-4-27-20-update/>

³ For details, please see the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalitions brief: https://www.chlpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/COVID_Support-for-Local-and-Regional-Food-Systems_FLPC_NSAC_final-1.pdf

Capitalizing regional food systems is in our minds by far **the most efficient way** to use every available dollar available to us for significant public welfare outcomes.

- (6) *Please provide comments on one or more ideas on how some portion of public relief funds could be provided to your enterprise and economic sector (including, if possible, an estimate of the amount of funds), and please comment on how these ideas would achieve the following important public goals:*

NOFA-NH proposes five solutions to address the immediate needs:

- (1) **\$30,000,000 in direct payments to farms that can show loss of revenue due to closure of local farmers markets, restaurants, schools, or other local food infrastructure (such as food hubs).** Prioritize producers who have historically been left out of or underserved by federal assistance programs (e.g. socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers, organic producers, and farmers implementing conservation practices.). Because dairy is a cornerstone of our local food infrastructure and provides the most powerful economic multiplier, and because dairy prices have been low for five years already, emergency payments should be made immediately to dairy producers of all sizes. These payments should buy excess production and provide it at extremely low cost to cheese producers or other processors so that the milk can be used instead of dumped.
- (2) **\$30,000,000 as matching funds or additional funding for the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion program (FMLFPP), the Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP), and the Local Agricultural Marketing Program (LAMP) for local farms and for local food system infrastructure.** This could include as community-based processing centers, small-scale independent slaughter facilities, independent food hubs, farmers markets, small-scale independent milk bottling plants, farms stands, etc. Funds could be used for a wide-range of on-farm improvements, including, but not limited to: land access, equipment purchases, operating costs, childcare for farmworkers, technical assistance with creating online platforms for marketing and distribution of products, payroll expenses for additional labor. Funds could also be used to help farmers transition to organic practices. This would include **\$500,000 to make farmers markets safe.** Early evidence suggests that farmers markets are safer than grocery stores because of the shorter supply chain, open air, and low volume of people. Even so, farmers and consumers remain concerned about safety at farmers markets. Therefore, we propose this influx of money to existing programming that could help pay for the development and implementation of a COVID-19 safety training programs for all of the farmers market directors and food hubs across the state so that farmers and consumers can be assured that adequate safety precautions are being followed. This money would further improve public health and safety for farmers markets and food hubs. This money would also pay for the distribution of protective equipment and supplies for farmers, workers, processors, deliverers, vendors, and customers.
- (3) **\$1,000,000 to make farm stands the new gas station.** Just like everyone in the neighborhood knows where the nearest gas station is, we need everyone to know who their local farmers is. Farm stands are the ideal socially-distanced transaction: Farmers

leave out product and consumers leave money. These old systems, in addition to more modern systems of online ordering and pick-up, can connect farmers' extra supply to consumers' increased demand for locally produced food.

- (4) **\$50,000,000 to contract for vegetables, meat, dairy, and other products directly from New Hampshire farmers for use in state procurement (prisons, hospitals, schools, etc.).** Because a dollar spent at a local farm ripples through the local economy and has longer lasting effects than any export-oriented purchase, all state institutional contracts must have a preference for in-state grown products. Where New Hampshire products are available, state-run institutions must be pushed to buy from New Hampshire farms, even if at a higher price point.
- (5) **Allow farms to process poultry on-farm while following best practices.** Lastly, a policy to allow farmers to process poultry on farm, while following best practices during the crisis would be important. Both USDA and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services program offer best practices on this issue.⁴ Current USDA requirements create a bottleneck of processors. Allowing more meat processing means more local product ready for New Hampshire tables.

(a) *The funds will serve a public use and provide a public benefit.*

Supporting New Hampshire's farms and food businesses create community resiliency and food security, fulfilling a basic human need and essential public benefit. By aiding many small operations, the government can help to ensure that fresh, nutritious food is available across the entire state, not just in urban pockets that have access to large grocery store chains. This pandemic has shown us the importance of local food system that can withstand supply shocks. If we build institutional demand for local farm products, farmers will grow to meet this demand, and New Hampshire will be able to draw on its own locally-grown food in times of need.

(b) *The funds will preserve or increase the social welfare or economic prosperity of the state, and will promote the general welfare of the state's citizens.*

Not only is it smart to support New Hampshire's farms from an economic perspective, but it also promotes the welfare of our citizens. By supporting our local food system, we have an opportunity to invest in a smart way, in efficient community-based food systems that have a broad range of benefits. Jobs would be created and unemployment benefits reduced.

If we produce more local food and make it affordable, we can improve the health outcomes of our residents. In 2009, almost three out of every four NH residents reported that they eat less than five servings of fruit and vegetables per day. As of 2017, 30% of New Hampshire resident ate less than one serving of fruit per day, and 14% ate less than one serving of vegetable per day. The rate of fruit and vegetable consumption is a key indicator for health: those who eat fewer fruits and vegetables have poorer health outcomes. Some healthcare providers are even prescribing fruit and vegetable consumption. These facts, combined with the fact that New

⁴ <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/fp/documents/meatpoultry-sales.pdf>; <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/> (search slaughter exemption 0406)

Hampshire can produce more food, highlight the importance of increasing our local production for our health, not just the economy.

- c) The funds will promote the orderly development of economic and social activities, create or preserve employment opportunities, or protect the physical environment.***

If any sector has the potential to reboot the economy, certainly regionalized agriculture does. Everyone needs food three times a day. Access to nutritious food could become a human right in this time of crisis and beyond. Society as a whole would benefit by food insecurity and malnutrition becoming a thing of the past—the healthier individuals are, the healthier our overall society, and the fewer dollars our state and country will spend on healthcare services.

By considering the economic crisis and the food system crisis together, we can see how smart agricultural relief efforts and smart economic development policies that fan dollars circulating NH's economy, providing jobs, food and food security, equity, community connection, stronger immune systems and mitigated diabetes levels, community cohesion, and even improved mental health outcomes. Agriculture impacts all of these areas of our lives, and thus provides a powerful solution-multiplier with wide-ranging benefits to our State.

NH is a leader in healthy soil practices, and organic and agroecological methods can be continually encouraged. This will build our resilience both in terms of droughts and floods, and can help our transportation infrastructure in times of flooding, saving taxpayer money.

- (e) The funds will contribute significantly to the continued operation, competitiveness and future success of the organization and the economic sector, and will enhance the resiliency of the organization to survive future economic or health challenges.***

As we see the fragility of our dominant food system, it is clear that we depend first and foremost on our local and regional providers, food workers, and the web that constitutes healthy community-based food systems. The global commodity market is vast and volatile and counter-productive to community resilience and food security. This pandemic highlights the importance of our small and mid-size producers, who are “too small to fail.” In times of crisis especially, but in all times, regions with a greater number of businesses, and more diverse businesses, do better.

Most of our farms are smaller scale than elsewhere – our average farm size is 103 acres, with 2,356 farms less than 50 acres. This means we are more agile and responsive to the needs of the current moment. Over these weeks, we have benefitted from the fact that our agricultural sector is made up largely of smaller and diversified farms that can be more agile and responsive in crises, and indeed farmers and retailers have responded quickly to change to many social distancing measures including on-line buying, curbside and farm stand pick-up, farmers markets implementing new best safe practices, including online clearinghouses of information for access to food, especially for food pantries to buy farmers. Our farmers have experienced increased local demand and interest for local food, with CSA shares often selling out more quickly than usual, while some farmers have suffered from loss of school and restaurant buyers.

- (f) The use of funds is not in conflict with local or regional development plans and policies, or any other provision of state or federal law.***

If the funds are used as we propose, they will be spent in furtherance of regional development plans and policies. Boosting agriculture means a boost to small businesses. It is also a way to preserve New Hampshire's landscape and heritage while improving public health. These goals are all consistent with most local and regional development plans. These suggested policies would complement—not conflict with—existing state and federal policy related to farms, farmland conservation, and preservation of the food supply.

- (g) The funds are structured in a way that will help the community and the State at large, and not just the particular private business or organization.***

Supporting the food system in New Hampshire benefits everyone in New Hampshire. This is because everyone eats and has an interest in having a secure, safe source for their next meal.

- (h) The use of funds is consistent with the one-time availability of the public relief funds and will not require future continuing operational support from the public sector in order to maintain success.***

The funds will be used to teach practices and systems, enhance community resiliency, and empower farmers to adapt to significant market disruptions. These skills and knowledge gained from the expenditure of these funds are transferable to any future disruption.

- (7) Please describe how the receipt and use of the public relief funds described in question 6 could be accounted for in your organization's financial statements.***

Funds directly to farmers market managers could be overseen by County Extension offices who could require reporting by the market managers. Money provided directly to the Department of Agriculture could be easily tracked using the Department's existing infrastructure. Direct payments to dairy farmers could be accounted for using simple grant agreements or payment reporting through the local Farm Service Agency office.

- (8) Please describe specific measures for public reporting on the receipt and use of the public relief funds, so that the State may satisfy any public reporting obligations that may be imposed with respect to such funds.***

There are a lot of ways to measure the success of the funding if provided as requested above. Possible measures include: number of farm businesses saved; pounds of food produced; pounds of food supplied to schools, food pantries, prisons, and other institutions; number of farm stands established and publicized; number of agricultural jobs created; and number of acres in production, for example.

- (9) Please identify other important organizations or functions in the State that have an important impact on your organization or economic sector, and, if possible, provide***

ideas of how those organizations and functions may be assisted by public relief funds in a manner that would help your organization or economic sector.

Our state has a range of good assets, most importantly a culture that embraces rural life, local farmers, foresters, and fishermen, local food hubs and aggregators, a strong farm to school program, hospitals committed to increasing local procurement, and eaters committed to buying locally. There are many nonprofit institutions, branches of the university system, and entrepreneurs all contributing to fertile ground for a local response during this trying time, and for working together cooperatively over the years ahead to be prepared for future needs. These partners include: UNH agronomists, Cooperative Extension, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the NH Food Alliance, Food Solutions New England, the Organization for Immigrant and Refugee Success, the Farm Bureau, Land for Good, Agrarian Trust, a state chapter of American Farmland Trust, Small and Beginning Farmers of NH, Savory Hub at Stonewall Farm, representatives from the Union of Concerned Scientists, a statewide Soil Health Working Group, and agricultural commissions and food policy councils. Many of the efforts of these organizations will be enhanced if public relief funds are provided to the agriculture sector.

(10) What would your business, agency, organization, sector do with the funds that cannot be done currently?

In our view, the state's most potent and significant focus for overall public welfare would be through strengthening our community-based food system to complement what is being done on the federal level. Local production for local consumption will boost the economy most effectively and lead to the greatest resilience in this crisis and in the years ahead. The impact would strengthen public health, community fabric, and environmental health.

(11) We consistently hear different stories of what is occurring and what is needed; given the opportunity, please comment on what do you think should be said or considered that hasn't received much attention?

Our community of farmers and eaters voiced many concerns and solutions in our survey. We have provided an abbreviated list below and would be delighted to expand on these concepts if given the opportunity.

Concerns

- Very few off-farm outlets for my products.
- Mills are not open to process wool into yarn and roving, farmer is unable to move forward with selling it.
- A shortage of agricultural labor, including WOOFers
- Our product depends on spring seasonal delivery. We will need to donate our live product at no cost in order to keep the fish alive. We run out of room, and the warmer weather makes it impossible for the fish that were supposed to be stocked to survive.
- I am concerned about the upcoming Farmers Market season. Having gatherings of people limited to less than 10 people will present a definite challenge for Market organizers and market goers. I also have concerns about social distancing and how that will impact market attendance.

- Our most important concern is having funds available to put a better fence around our crops that were destroyed by deer last year. We are concerned that we won't have a market for our garlic, vegetables and flowers if people can't go to farmers markets.
- Need for seeds.
- I have stock that requires feed and care that I can't sell for what they're worth and I have groups of working goats that aren't getting hired because potential clients are short on cash.
- Several of the small businesses in town sell local honey, dairy, jam, etc. but with the small business closures, I don't have access to these items.
- Food pantries having very limited supplies and even less organic.
- Resounding concern that people feel unsafe shopping for food and that there are not clear and firm guidelines about protection in public.
- Resounding request for more COVID-19 testing.

Solutions

- Overwhelming interest in aid to local and organic farmers, not big out-of-state producers.
- Open farmers market statewide, as soon as possible.
- Government institutions purchasing local food.
- Greater access to produce safety for COVID-19, for example, guidelines about packaging and processing for public safety, guidance for pick-your-own operations.
- Mail directory of local food/farm stands/markets across NH to help connect local producers with local residents – this could be a joint initiative of DAMF and NOFA
- DAMF and NOFA-NH working together to help local producers file GAP certifications and surmount other hurdles necessary to get their food into NH's grocery stores, from Co-ops to Market Basket.
- Price parity for organic dairy production, resources to scale up crop, poultry production.
- Local government running agricultural programs, certifications, and support services.
- New grant opportunities for farmers to learn to sell online.
- Funds to invest in land improvements.
- Government should strongly encourage supermarkets to implement initiatives such as online ordering, home delivery, and/ or pickup so seniors can get the food they need with low to no risk.
- I would like to see more of a promotion/spotlight on items at the local grocery store that are grown locally. Many consumers have no idea of where their food comes from or what foods are available locally and when is their 'in season'.
- Keep farmers markets open as essential service and provide them with extra support so they have resources to continue providing food safely to the community.
- Provide monetary support to assist local farms and food producers with growing food, making food, and fulfilling the goods needs in their local communities, making us less dependent on more remote sources.