



December 15, 2017

Dear Governor Hogan:

The undersigned members of Maryland's agricultural community write to express our strong support for inclusion of funding for the Maryland Farms and Families Program in the 2019 state budget.

The Maryland Farms and Families Act, which passed unanimously through both houses during the 2017 legislative session and which you signed into law this May, created an unfunded grant program within the Maryland Department of Agriculture that would support "matching" programs at Maryland farmers markets. Farmers market matching programs provide a dollar-for-dollar match for purchases made using federal food assistance at participating farmers markets throughout Maryland, thereby connecting food-insecure Marylanders with quality, fresh foods produced by Maryland farmers.

Farmers market matching programs, which were first introduced in Maryland and have rapidly proliferated throughout the country, are a win-win: the same dollar simultaneously supports Maryland farmers and provides our state's most vulnerable households with critical access to nutritious foods.

A modest state investment of \$500,000 would provide tremendous benefit to farmers and families alike. These dollars would:

- **Generate revenue for farmers and agricultural producers**
 - Farmers market matching programs drive federal nutrition benefits spending to farmers and small agricultural businesses and broaden the market's customer base.
- **Channel federal dollars into the local Maryland economy**
 - As low-income Marylanders utilize their federal food assistance directly with local farmers, economically healthy farmers, in turn, strengthen the Maryland economy with spending and jobs.
- **Benefit farmers markets statewide, particularly in rural and food desert communities**
 - State funds would support capacity building for farmers markets that do not currently have infrastructure to operate matching programs, of particular benefit to markets in rural areas.
- **Provide critical nutrition assistance**



- Federal nutrition benefits allotments are insufficient for affording an adequate healthy diet. Matching programs increase the purchasing power of low-income households to access quality, nutritious food.

Moreover, state funding would lay the groundwork for a thriving public-private partnership. Since 2013, the non-profit Maryland Farmers Market Association has operated Maryland Market Money (MMM), a farmers market matching program in place at 24 markets spanning the state, almost entirely with private dollars. MDFMA has distributed more than \$460,000 in MMM matching dollars, generating over \$1.4 million in revenue for local producers. State investment would enable this and other farmers market matching programs to leverage private funding, supporting Maryland's hard-working farmers and our neighbors in need.

As farmers, ranchers, and other members of Maryland's agricultural community, we thank you for supporting the state's food producers by signing the Maryland Farms and Families Act. We hope to see you make this commitment to the agriculture community a reality by funding the bill in the 2018 state budget.

Sincerely,
The Undersigned

Business/ Organizational Signatories by Region

Green indicates farm/garden

Maryland:

Western Maryland

1. *Leaning Pine Farm & Cedar Rock Farm- Allegany County*
2. *Deep Creek Cellars- Garrett County*
3. *Garrett County Economic Development Corps.- Garrett County*
4. *Evensong Farm- Washington County*
5. *Stoner Family Farms LLC- Washington County*

Capital Region

1. *Community F.A.R.E- Frederick County*
2. *Doce Lume Farm- Frederick County*



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3. Full Cellar Farm- *Frederick County*
4. Groffs Content Farm- *Frederick County*
5. Banner Bee Company- *Montgomery County*
6. Central Farm Markets- *Montgomery County*
7. Crossroads Community Food Network- *Montgomery County*
8. Crossroads Farmers Market- *Montgomery County*
9. Daysprings Permaculture Garden- *Montgomery County*
10. Fair Farms- *Montgomery County*
11. FRESHFARM- *Montgomery County*
12. Moonflower Farm- *Montgomery County*
13. Passion to Seed Gardening- *Montgomery County*
14. Query Mill Farm- *Montgomery County*
15. Rockville Farmers Market- *Montgomery County*
16. Shady Grove Center Community Market- *Montgomery County*
17. Shady Grove Farmers Market- *Montgomery County*
18. Sugarloaf Organics- *Montgomery County*
19. Cabin Creek Heritage Farm- *Prince George's County*
20. Greenbelt Farmers Market - *Prince George's County*
21. Hyattsville Farmers Market- *Prince George's County*
22. Mystic Water Soap- *Prince George's County*
23. Owls Nest Farm- *Prince George's County*
24. Riverdale Farmers Market- *Prince George's County*
25. The WII Group LLC- *Prince George's County*
26. Washington Green Grocer- *Prince George's County*

Central Maryland

1. Hop Scratch Farm- *Anne Arundel County*
2. Maryland Farmers Market Association- *Anne Arundel County*
3. The Back 40- *Anne Arundel County*
4. Badass Bees Micro Farm- *Anne Arundel County*
5. 32nd Street Farmers Market- *Baltimore City*
6. Brooklyn Park Farmers Market- *Baltimore City*
7. Butterbee Farm- *Baltimore City*
8. Druid Hill Farmers Market- *Baltimore City*
9. Edmonson Village Farmers Market- *Baltimore City*

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10. No Kid Hungry MD- *Baltimore City*
11. Farm Alliance of Baltimore- *Baltimore City*
12. Govans Market- *Baltimore City*
13. Hidden Harvest Farm- *Baltimore City*
14. Indigo Love Potions- *Baltimore City*
15. Future Harvest- *Baltimore County*
16. Good Dog Farm- *Baltimore County*
17. Oak Spring Farm- *Baltimore County*
18. Two Boots Farm- *Carroll County*
19. Wee Bit Farm- *Carroll County*
20. Audia's Farm North- *Carroll County*
21. Black Rock Orchard- *Carroll County*
22. Cat's Paw Organic Farm- *Carroll County*
23. Kite Hill Farm- *Carroll County*
24. Richfield Farm- *Carroll County*
25. Hensings Hilltop Acres & Dairy- *Howard County*
26. Love Dove Farms- *Howard County*
27. TLV Tree Farm- *Howard County*

Southern Maryland

1. Alcoba Coffee- *Charles County*
2. Red Tree Farms- *Charles County*
3. Finch Family Farms- *St. Mary's County*
4. Flower of the Forest Farm- *St. Mary's County*
5. Russell Farms LLC- *St. Mary's County*

Eastern Shore

1. Anchor Nursery- *Kent County*
2. King's Mushrooms- *Queen Anne's County*
3. Schoolhouse Farmhouse- *Talbot County*
4. Stonehouse Farm- *Talbot County*
5. BladesPot Orchard- *Caroline County*
6. Luck and Love Homestead- *Caroline County*
7. Dorchester's Seafood- *Worcester County*

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Washington DC:

1. Public Health Impact LLC- *Washington DC*
2. Washington Youth Garden- *Washington DC*

Pennsylvania:

1. Tuckey's Mountain Grown- *Adam's County*
2. McLeaf's Orchard- *Adam's County*
3. Farmers Market Coalition- *Chester County*
4. Toigo Orchards- *Cumberland County*
5. Garden Path Farm- *Lancaster County*
6. Anam Cara Farm- *Montgomery County*

Virginia:

1. Dayspring Farm- *Loudoun County*
2. Potomac Vegetable Farm- *Loudoun County*
3. Barajas Produce- *Westmoreland County*
4. Penn Farm- *Westmoreland County*