



**THE GOOD ACRE**  
FOOD + COMMUNITY

March 18, 2022

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

I'd like to request your support for Rep. Lippert's Bill (HF 4120) which includes increased funding for AGRI farm to school (F2S) grants. As an employee of The Good Acre, a food hub that aggregates local food from local farmers and producers in Minnesota and sells it to many school districts in the Twin Cities, we know that local growers have the capacity to grow for F2S buyers. The difficulty lies in whether schools can afford to buy it and if they have equipment and staff needed to process the local foods into menu items that kids will like.

Right now, there is greater demand for AGRI F2S grant funding than there are funds available. For schools with proposals left unfunded, it's an uphill battle to implement F2S. Getting the equipment needed to prepare scratch made meals with whole unprocessed produce is a huge barrier – items like combi ovens, steam kettles, and robot coups can set you back thousands, if not tens of thousands of dollars. The other barrier to implementing F2S is the cost of procuring local produce, grain, dairy, and meat. Limited food budgets are at odds with the fact that farmers deserve fair prices for the food they produce. Pair that with the supply chain issues our schools are dealing with and it just makes sense to support them in making inroads with reliable local food producers. This is why local food purchase reimbursements are so important to include in AGRI F2S grants.

Investments into feeding children local foods shouldn't just be limited to K-12 schools, early child care providers also deserve access to grants that can help them procure local items. HF 4120 lays a framework that will help strengthen the local food system and ensure that even more children in our state have access to the bounty of Minnesota's abundant edible harvests.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Nikki Warner  
Communications Director  
[nikki@thegoodacre.org](mailto:nikki@thegoodacre.org)  
612-787-5969

