

Noami Brautigam
Second Frost Farm
LD 1006

Testimony of Noami Brautigam, Second Frost Farm, Monroe, ME
In SUPPORT of LD 1006,
"An Act to Ensure Access to Healthy Drinking Water from Household Wells in Rural
Maine
Before the Health and Human Services Committee
April 28th, 2023

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Noami Brautigam. I am a resident of Monroe. My partner, James Gagne, and I own and operate Second Frost Farm, where we grow diversified vegetables and have raised cattle for the past eight years. Please accept this testimony in support of LD 1006, which would help expand access to clean drinking water to low income Mainers.

Last year we watched many of our friends and farming peers reel from devastating news that their family, farm and the place they call home was contaminated with PFAS due to state supported spreading of sludge decades prior. We are also very aware this is still just the tip of the iceberg and that tragically more and more people around the state will likely be in their shoes soon as they discover PFAS contamination. The State of Maine do absolutely everything they can to ensure that all individuals, regardless of income, have access to healthy water immediately.

Though our farm is not on the DEP map of documented sludge sites, we still had questions about the impact of both historical farming practices before we moved here and also our farming practices during our 8 years prior of buying in Waldo County hay for our cattle, as well as straw and compost for our vegetable fields. We know that the State has no record of locations where drinking water wells might be at risk of contamination from sludge-based compost for example and that wells not on the DEP sludge maps continue to test high in PFAS due to unknown contamination. Because we are a farm, we received guidance and nearly \$1000 of funding through MOFGA to test our 3 wells. It has been greatly impactful for both our business and the health of our family (with now two children under age 3) to know that our irrigation water, our livestock water, our produce wash station water and our drinking water are not contaminated with PFAS.

As we understand more and more about the severe health implications of PFAS and many wells remain untested, the high cost of testing should not be a barrier to knowing whether water is safe to drink and/or produce food with. LD 1006 should become law to protect low income Mainers from further PFAS contamination by funding testing and therefor expanding access to vital water filtration systems.

I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1006.

Thank you for your time,

Noami Brautigam
Second Frost Farm
Monroe, ME