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Maine Crisp Company employs 28 FTEs in our Winslow, ME facility where we produce artisanal gluten-free crackers and crisps made from buckwheat, the majority of which is grown in Fort Kent, Maine. We were founded in 2014, and 2023 was our best year in business - we tripled revenue over 2022 levels and introduced a new product line. But on December 18, 2023, the Kennebec River crested its banks and flooded our facility with four feet of standing water for 10 hours.

The flood completely destroyed:

- 10+ pallets of finished goods valued at over \$70,000
- Thousands of dollars in corrugated materials for shipping and packaging
- \$35,000 battery-powered forklift completely destroyed
- \$150,000 in ingredients.

We also sustained varying degrees of damage to our baking equipment (e.g. ovens, cutters, extruders, washers), which forced us to purchase new electronic components, motors, and cables. Because of the flood, we were unable to produce product to fulfill \$70,000 in orders that were scheduled to be shipped in late December and \$225,000 planned in January.. Unfortunately, we were forced to lay off 24 employees for 4 weeks; our people are our first priority, and we were glad to bring everyone back to work on 1/22/24 but won't have money coming in from sales until early March as that is how the cycle works with selling to distributors who then sell to retailers.

We have worked diligently to secure reimbursement estimates from our insurer, but they are insufficient. The building owner's insurance is covering the facility clean-up. Maine Crisp Company's insurance is reimbursing \$30,000 for refrigerated ingredients, but none of our remaining costs.

As a small food manufacturing business, our cash flow is extremely tight and cannot withstand lengthy reimbursement periods or additional debt-financing. We only receive revenue once a product has left the grocery shelves, which can be months after we pay for the ingredients and labor to make it. This bill would be a lifeline for businesses like Maine Crisp, who pay workers fair wages and Maine farmers fair rates. We believe we have done all we can to protect our capital and our people, and get our facility back up and running. We would sincerely appreciate additional support from the State of Maine to help make us whole.