

Mary Ellen Chadd  
Green Spark Farm, Cape Elizabeth, Maine  
LD 1925

Mary 13th, 2025

As an organic farmer renting all but a half acre of farmland for 17 years, the possibility that our farm and many others (!! ) who rent farmland could finally be eligible for this competitive farm business improvement grant of Maine Farms for the Future is moving. This grant program has a lasting reputation on farms who have been through it, and for good reason. The supports of business planning, future visioning, financial goal setting, and counseling assistance propel farms toward inspired financial growth and stability. Our farm is on 15 acres of leased land in Cumberland County, one of the areas in Maine with the highest land values, and some of the longest holding generational landowners. For us, farming in Cumberland County secures our proximity to good markets and provides us with a short commute to those markets, leaving more time for our family, and to farm. As a committed organic farmer, I have long been envious of farms who own land farther away and can improve their businesses with the incredible technical assistance from this grant. As a leasing farmer of 17 years on the same land, having access to the Farms for the Future grant as a lessee could provide us with assistance and resources to expand our vision of our farm for the future, increase connections with our customers, and level up our farm business to match ever more pressing financial goals of saving for college and retirement. As a leasing farm of so many years from a large multigenerational landowner, it is highly unlikely at this point in our career that we would ever relocate. Why not let us compete in this competitive program and try our hand at improving our farm's future?