

Wild Blueberry Tax Bill

1 message

scott peasley >
To: david.bell@cherryfieldfoods.com

Tue, Mar 12, 2024 at 9:05 AM

Hi David:

See below for the input of Peasley Farms.

Peasley Farms (est. 1889)
Mason Bay Jonesport
March 13, 2024

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker, and esteemed members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. The following is my testimony in Support of LD 2256 An Act to Provide Emergency One-time Relief from the Wild Blueberry Tax for Growers in Maine.

My family has been raising blueberries in Jonesport for a very long time. My three sons who are all active in this endeavor will be the 5th generation of our family to do so. The blueberry harvest for us is a longstanding tradition. We take care of our own land as we always have done and all have other jobs so do not rely on the harvest individually to make a living. We are simply caretakers of a tradition with one goal - to move the land and way of life we have in this corner of the world to the next generation of Peasleys. Over the last several years we have seen an alarming number of small farmers exit the industry. At this point there are very few of us left, a sad and discouraging fact. Pressure from foreign competition and the lack of protection we receive from this pressure has put us in a state of crisis. The 2023 crop for us was the largest crop we have ever produced, and still we lost money.

The input cost to raise a blueberry crop has almost doubled in the last 5 years. Unfortunately, the price paid has in no way kept pace with that and has remained relatively flat over that same period.

Passage of this bill will provide some relief. I humbly ask for you to consider highly the passage of LD 2256.