

**Testimony for the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in  
Support of LD 468 An Act to Address Food Insecurity by Helping Maine Residents  
Access Locally Produced Food.**

Sponsored by Senator Henry Ingwersen

March 6, 2025

Katuka Family, Owners  
OK Community Farm  
Wales, ME

Honorable members of the Joint Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry and  
Committee Chairs Senator Rachel Talbot-Ross and Representative Bill Pluecker,

Thank you for this chance to talk about the value of SNAP benefits for small Maine farmers.

My name is Omasombo Katuka and am here to ask you to support support of LD 468. I am originally from the Congo and I have lived and farmed in Maine for the last 15 years. I recently graduated from Cultivating Community's farmer training program in Lisbon, ME where I developed a successful marketing program where I sell vegetables, especially African crops, to my community, the majority of customers paying with SNAP and WIC nutrition benefits.

Last year, I sold \$175,000 in vegetables to WIC and SNAP customers, all sales matched with support from the State's Nutrition Incentive fund. As a farmer, this match program not only allows me to distribute food to families who need it, but also allowed me to save enough money to purchase my own farmland in Wales, ME, in 2024, a dream I have had since I first came to Maine.

Please vote yes on this bill so farmers like me can continue to run a successful farm business, getting fresh, organically grown vegetables into the hands of families who need them.

Thank you.