

**Testimony of TINY ACRES FARM of MONTVILLE MAINE before the 132st Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry**

Dear members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry.

My name is David Ray Andrews, and I am a vegetable and mushroom farmer in Montville, Maine. I'm here today to tell you plainly: SNAP doesn't just feed people—it keeps farms alive. Without it, many of us wouldn't be here, and neither would the fresh, local food that Maine prides itself on.

Before I was a farmer, I was a student in Boulder, Colorado. I worked full-time, but like so many, I still couldn't afford rent and groceries at the same time. SNAP was the difference between eating and going hungry. But I didn't just use those benefits to get by—I used a portion to buy seed starts and mushroom supplies, utilizing my SNAP credits to invest in my future and subsistence. That first tiny garden, started with SNAP funds, grew into a passion and love for farming. Now Tiny Acres Farm feeds SNAP recipients year-round.

Here's the truth: Since the day we started selling at farmers markets, SNAP has been one of our most reliable revenue streams. And it becomes even more critical in the winter months, when the wealthy second-homeowners who spend big in the summer are long gone. When that seasonal money dries up, it's real, working-class Mainers—many of them SNAP recipients—who keep us going. Without them, we wouldn't survive.

LD 468 isn't just about making sure low-income families can buy fresh food—it's about making sure farmers can afford to keep growing it. Because here's the bottom line: No farmer is staying in business just for the tourists. If we want Maine's farms to survive, we need the year-round, working-class community to have access to local food. That means supporting SNAP.

Supporting LD 468 means keeping money in Maine, keeping farms in business, and keeping fresh food on tables. It means ensuring that the next generation of farmers has a reason to keep planting instead of selling off their land. It means understanding that SNAP isn't a handout—it's an economic driver that benefits both farmers and families.

Without SNAP customers, farms like mine would be struggling—or gone. Support LD 468, and support the future of Maine farming.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

David Ray Andrews  
Tiny Acres Farm