

132nd Legislature
Senate of
Maine
Senate District 30

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Testimony of Senator Stacy Brenner introducing
LD 2094, An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Support Maine's
Agricultural and Forestry Sectors
before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
January 20, 2026

Chair Rotundo, Chair Gattine, and members of the committee, my name is Senator Stacy Brenner, and I represent Senate District 30, which includes Gorham and much of Scarborough. I'm here today in strong support of **LD 2094**.

Last week, I had the privilege of hearing remarks by **Annie Watson**, a Maine dairy farmer and the recipient of the 2026 DACF Commissioner's Distinguished Service Award. As I listened, I thought of a Quaker phrase: "**Friend speaks my mind.**" It's used when someone else gives voice to a truth you already hold—often more clearly and powerfully than you could yourself.

That's how Annie's words landed for me.

Annie reminded us that when people picture farming, they imagine a peaceful barn and a quiet sunrise. But as she put it, that moment usually happens "*while you're also checking the weather, looking for the calf bottle you swear you just had, and realizing the 'quick chore' is now a full-blown crisis involving a wrench, a zip tie, and a prayer.*"

It's a line that makes us smile—but it also captures a deeper truth. Maine farming isn't romantic most days. It is constant responsibility, thin margins, and nonstop adaptation to weather, markets, and breakdowns. As Annie said simply, "*Dairy is heavy because it never stops.*" And yet, farmers keep showing up.

That is exactly why this bond matters. Because all farming is heavy, food production never stops.

We know the demand for investment in agricultural and forestry infrastructure far exceeds what we currently make available. During the **2022 funding cycle**, a comparable program received **more than 850 applications requesting between \$177 million and \$180 million in funding—against an available budget of roughly \$20 million.**

Only **64 farms were awarded grants**, and many of those farms have powerful stories of success—stories that show what happens when public investment helps unlock private effort, innovation, and resilience.

One example is **Buck Family Farm in Aroostook County**, which I had the opportunity to visit with other legislators during the annual Aroostook County farm tour sponsored by the AgComm. The Buck family spoke directly about how meaningful state investment has been to their success as a **multigenerational Aroostook farm**.

With that support, they are now producing a **malt product for Maine breweries**, made entirely from **Aroostook-grown grains**. That kind of investment does more than support a single farm—it helps **create and stabilize markets for raw agricultural products**, which is essential to rural economic development.

Grains play an extremely important role in a sustainable rotation with potatoes and broccoli—building soil health, managing pests, and improving long-term resilience. When those grains also have a viable market, they become not just a green cover crop, but a **cash crop**—strengthening farm businesses and keeping more economic value circulating in rural communities.

The success of those 64 farms shows us what works. The hundreds of unfunded applications remind us how much opportunity remains unmet.

Annie also reminded us what we lose when farms disappear: *“When farms disappear, we don’t just lose production. We lose pieces of rural Maine.”*

LD 2094 is not about nostalgia. It is about **right now**—and about whether Maine chooses to invest in the people who feed us, steward our forests, and hold rural communities together.

Because farms and forests don’t just produce food and fiber. They *“hold communities together,”* as Annie said. They keep land open and cared for, and they teach responsibility and stewardship in ways no policy memo ever could.

This bond is a practical, targeted investment in Maine’s future. I urge the committee to vote **Ought to Pass on LD 2094**.

Thank you for your time, and I’d be happy to answer any questions.

Awardee	County	Amount	Town	State Representative(s)	State Senator(s)
Blue Ox Malthouse	Androscoggin	\$500,000.00	Lisbon	Kilton M. Webb (D); Richard G. Mason (R)	Jeffrey L. Timberlake (R)
Caldwell Family Farm	Androscoggin	\$250,000.00	Turner	Joshua K. Morris (R)	Jeffrey L. Timberlake (R)
Ricker Hill Orchards	Androscoggin	\$250,000.00	Turner	Joshua K. Morris (R)	Jeffrey L. Timberlake (R)
Somali Bantu Community Association of Maine, DBA Liberation Farms	Androscoggin	\$223,476.00	Wales	Randall Adam Greenwood (R)	Jeffrey L. Timberlake (R)
Troy A Thibodeau, DBA Fleece, Feathers and Swine	Androscoggin	\$250,000.00	Greene	Stephen J. Wood (R)	Jeffrey L. Timberlake (R)
Ummah Enterprise, LLC	Androscoggin	\$175,152.99	Turner	Joshua K. Morris (R)	Jeffrey L. Timberlake (R)
Harvesting Good	Androscoggin/C	\$500,000.00	Auburn	Adam R. Lee (D); Laurel D. Libby (R); Quentin J. Chapman (R)	Bruce Bickford (R)
Aroostook Band of Micmacs	Aroostook	\$250,000.00	Presque Isle	Joseph F. Underwood (R)	Trey L. Stewart (R)
Aurora Mills & Farm, LLC	Aroostook	\$499,911.00	Linneus	Gregory Lewis Swallow (R)	Trey L. Stewart (R)
Buck Family Farms, LLC	Aroostook	\$500,000.00	Presque Isle	Joseph F. Underwood (R)	Trey L. Stewart (R)
Circle B Farms, LLC	Aroostook	\$250,000.00	Caribou	Timothy C. Guerrette (R)	Susan Bernard (R)
Fitzpatrick & Peabody Farms, LLC	Aroostook	\$250,000.00	Houlton	Gregory Lewis Swallow (R)	Trey L. Stewart (R)
Hatch's Custom Meat Cutting, LLC	Aroostook	\$381,789.40	Crystal	Tracy L. Quint (R)	Trey L. Stewart (R)
Houlton Farms Dairy, Inc.	Aroostook	\$497,550.00	Houlton	Gregory Lewis Swallow (R)	Trey L. Stewart (R)
McLaughlin Family Farms, LLC	Aroostook	\$250,000.00	Mars Hill	Donald J. Ardell (R)	Trey L. Stewart (R)
Nature's Circle Farm	Aroostook	\$250,000.00	New Limerick	Gregory Lewis Swallow (R)	Trey L. Stewart (R)
Baker Brook Farm Creamery	Cumberland	\$250,000.00	Windham	Barbara A. Bagshaw (R); Mark C. Cooper (R)	Timothy E. Nangle (D)
Blue Barn, LLC dba Bluet	Cumberland	\$178,000.00	Scarborough	Drew Gattine (D); Kelly Noonan Murphy (D); Sophia B. Warren (D)	Anne M. Carney (D); Stacy F. Brenner (D)
Crystal Spring Community Farm, LLC - DBA Crystal Spring Farm	Cumberland	\$133,514.90	Brunswick	Cheryl A. Golek (D); Daniel J. Ankeles (D); Poppy Arford (D)	Matthea E.L. Daughtry (D)
Frith Farm, LLC	Cumberland	\$247,775.00	Scarborough	Drew Gattine (D); Kelly Noonan Murphy (D); Sophia B. Warren (D)	Anne M. Carney (D); Stacy F. Brenner (D)
Maine Food Group	Cumberland	\$500,000.00	Brunswick	Cheryl A. Golek (D); Daniel J. Ankeles (D); Poppy Arford (D)	Matthea E.L. Daughtry (D)

Pachanga LLC dba Tortilleria Pachanga	Cumberland	\$308,104.48	Scarborough	Drew Gattine (D); Kelly Noonan Murphy (D); Sophia B. Warren (D)	Anne M. Carney (D); Stacy F. Brenner (D)
R A S Wines	Cumberland	\$443,500.00	Portland	Charles A. Skold (D); Dylan R. Pugh (D); Grayson B. Lookner (D); Matt Moonen (D); Michael F. Brennan (D); Samuel Lewis Zager (D); W. Edward Crockett (U); Yusuf M. Yusuf (D)	Jill C. Duson (D); Rachel Talbot Ross (D)
Southpaw Packing Company, Inc.	Cumberland	\$500,000.00	Windham	Barbara A. Bagshaw (R); Mark C. Cooper (R)	Timothy E. Nangle (D)
Winter Hill Farm, LLC	Cumberland	\$250,000.00	Freeport	Melanie F. Sachs (D)	Matthea E.L. Daughtry (D)
Black Acres Farm, LLC	Franklin	\$224,500.00	Wilton	Randall C. Hall (R)	Russell J. Black (R)
Blue Hill Berry Co.	Hancock	\$454,550.00	Penobscot	Steven M. Bishop (R)	Nicole C. Grohoski (D)
Blue Ox Blueberries	Hancock	\$127,650.00	Hancock	Billy Bob Faulkingham (R)	Marianne Moore (R)
Merrill Blueberry Farms, Inc.	Hancock	\$500,000.00	Hancock	Billy Bob Faulkingham (R)	Marianne Moore (R)
Rainbow Farm	Hancock	\$125,705.00	Orland	Steven M. Bishop (R)	Nicole C. Grohoski (D)
Seal Cove Farm	Hancock	\$67,742.00	Lamoine	Gary Friedmann (D)	Nicole C. Grohoski (D)
WR Allen, Inc	Hancock	\$465,317.89	Orland	Steven M. Bishop (R)	Nicole C. Grohoski (D)
Common Wealth Poultry Co	Kennebec	\$500,000.00	Gardiner	Karen L. Montell (D)	Craig V. Hickman (D)
Emery Farm	Kennebec	\$246,482.00	Wayne	Joshua K. Morris (R)	Craig V. Hickman (D)
Kennebec Cheesery at Koons Farm	Kennebec	\$47,730.00	Sidney	Alicia Collins (R); Robert W. Nutting (R)	Richard T. Bradstreet (R)
Maine Crisp Company, LLC	Kennebec	\$497,798.00	Winslow	Flavia M. DeBrito (D); Paul R. Flynn (R)	Scott W. Cyrway (R)
Michaud Farm	Kennebec	\$159,456.82			
Olde Haven Farm, LLC	Kennebec	\$250,000.00	Chelsea	Michael H. Lemelin (R)	Craig V. Hickman (D)
The Milkhouse	Kennebec	\$139,200.00	Monmouth	Randall Adam Greenwood (R)	Craig V. Hickman (D)
Weston's Meat and Poultry	Kennebec	\$500,000.00	West Gardiner	Daniel Joseph Shagoury (D)	Craig V. Hickman (D)
Brodie Blueberries	Knox	\$500,000.00	Hope	William D. Pluecker (I)	Pinny H. Beebe-Center (D)

Grace Pond Farm, LLC	Knox	\$247,957.80	Thomaston	Ann Higgins Matlack (D)	Pinny H. Beebe-Center (D)
Heiwa Tofu Inc	Knox	\$456,791.00	Rockport	Victoria W. Doudera (D)	Pinny H. Beebe-Center (D)
Goranson Farm	Lincoln	\$41,669.00	Dresden	Michael H. Lemelin (R)	Denise Tepler (D)
Greener Days Farm	Lincoln	\$249,947.68	Waldoboro	Abden S. Simmons (R)	Cameron D. Reny (D)
Pumpkin Vine Family Farm, LLC	Lincoln	\$250,000.00	Somerville	Katrina J. Smith (R)	Cameron D. Reny (D)
Spear Farms, Inc.	Lincoln	\$250,000.00	Nobleboro	Lydia V. Crafts (D)	Cameron D. Reny (D)
Thirty Acre Farm Rules	Lincoln	\$250,000.00	Bremen	Abden S. Simmons (R)	Cameron D. Reny (D)
The Margolin Family Farm and Processing	Oxford	\$221,610.69	Norway	Peter Conley Wood (R)	Richard A. Bennett (I)
Maple Lane Farms, LLC	Penobscot	\$500,000.00	Charleston	Steven D. Foster (R)	Stacey K. Guerin (R)
Thomas Farms	Penobscot	\$249,420.00	Corinth	Gary A. Drinkwater (R)	Stacey K. Guerin (R)
Herring Brothers Meats	Piscataquis	\$498,000.00	Guilford	James Lee White (R)	Stacey K. Guerin (R)
Rusted Rooster Farm	Piscataquis	\$250,000.00	Parkman	James Lee White (R)	Stacey K. Guerin (R)
Apple Creek Farm	Sagadahoc	\$250,000.00	Bowdoinham	Sally Jeane Cluchey (D)	Denise Tepler (D)
Six River Farm, LLC	Sagadahoc	\$250,000.00	Bowdoinham	Sally Jeane Cluchey (D)	Denise Tepler (D)
Bigelow Brewing Company	Somerset	\$500,000.00	Skowhegan	Jennifer L. Poirier (R)	Bradlee T. Farrin (R)
Crooked Face Creamery	Somerset	\$66,019.00	Skowhegan	Jennifer L. Poirier (R)	Bradlee T. Farrin (R)
Maine Grains, Inc.	Somerset	\$500,000.00	Skowhegan	Jennifer L. Poirier (R)	Bradlee T. Farrin (R)
Five Pillars Butchery House of Meat, LLC	Waldo	\$250,000.00	Unity	Benjamin C. Hymes (R)	Chip Curry (D)
Springdale Jerseys, Inc.	Waldo	\$153,622.00	Waldo	Benjamin C. Hymes (R)	Chip Curry (D)
Blue Barrens Farm	Washington	\$120,347.45	Cherryfield	Mathew David McIntyre (R)	Marianne Moore (R)
Tide Mill Organic Farm, LLC	Washington	\$497,569.50	Edmunds	William R. Tuell (R)	Marianne Moore (R)
Roux's Farm, LLC	York	\$80,000.00	Lebanon	Jeffrey Sean Adams (R)	Matthew A. Harrington (R)
Two Farmers Farm, LLC	Cumberland	\$250,000.00	Scarborough	Drew Gattine (D); Kelly Noonan Murphy (D); Sophia B. Warren (D)	Anne M. Carney (D); Stacy F. Brenner (D)