

Katherine Thompson
Wiscasset, Maine
LD 2013

Dear Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee,

I hope that you will seriously consider supporting LD 2013 to provide economic relief to farmers who have discovered that their land is contaminated with high levels of PFAS.

Just before Christmas, my dear friends on Songbird Farm learned that their water, the land, their produce, and their bodies are contaminated with industrial levels of these 'forever chemicals'. They have worked very hard to grow organic produce for the community for ~7 years now and raised their 4 year old boy on the farm. It has been devastating for them to learn that sludge spread on the land 30 years ago contaminated the land beyond amelioration. They are faced with the very difficult decision of whether to stay in their home and give up farming that land or to leave everything they have worked so hard to build behind them and move on. Staying would be stressful, even with a water filtration system in place, because they suspect that even the dust is toxic. They can not prevent dust from entering their home and they can not wear masks to keep from breathing it every time they step outside.

Sadly, other farms in the area are having a similar experience. Misty Brook Farm in Albion recently learned that their milk had toxic levels of PFAS and were also forced to pull their products from store shelves.

As I'm sure you know, the Fairfield area was heavily spread with sludge from the same source (KVST) and many residents are learning that their wells are contaminated.

As the state continues to test Tier 1 sites, many other farmers and residents will be learning this bad news and will be forced to make the same horrible decision as Adam and Johanna: whether to desert their home or not.

MOFGA and Maine Farmland Trust mobilized quickly to organize a PFAS Emergency Relief Fund and I've been actively spreading the word for friends to donate to it. However, this is not enough to support these farmers to the level that they need, especially when it comes to relocation (whether that means renting or buying a new property, when the chances of selling their old contaminated property are extremely low).

I'm writing to humbly ask you to support this bill. Hopefully it will be pushed through quickly so that these folks can get the help that they desperately need in time.

Sincerely,
Katherine Thompson