

Meghan Vigeant
Hope
LD 2013

Dear Maine Legislators,

I am writing to urge you to support LD 2013 in support of farmers and the communities they feed. I was deeply distressed to learn that friends of mine, Johanna Davis and Adam Nordell of Songbird Farm in Unity, Maine, who grow organic vegetables and grains, are now navigating the uncertainties and health-risks of PFAS on their farmland. Twenty-four years before they purchased their land, bio-solid sludge was applied to the soil, leaving a legacy of concentrated forever chemicals that continue to pollute the water, crops, and humans and animals who live there, as well as potentially affecting the health of their loyal customers. PFAS do not break down in the body or environment; they are carcinogenic, immunotoxic, and have endocrine-disrupting properties; they are linked to obesity and diabetes; and recent studies are showing how higher levels of PFAS exacerbate covid symptoms and lead to more deaths. Though Adam and Johanna are not certain yet if PFAS are concentrating at unsafe levels in their grains, Songbird Farm has made a tough decision and responsibly asked stores to remove their products from the shelves for now; they've reached out to their customer base to inform them of the situation. They've put the community's health in front of their own financial solvency and I admire their honesty and integrity. But I am concerned for their health, family, livelihoods, and the future of food in Maine. LD 2013 is a step in the right direction. It will provide financial assistance to farmers facing the challenges of PFAS, monitor their health, establish new pathways and options for these farmers, and continue the much-needed research on soil and water remediation. I hope the Maine legislature will stand by farmers such as Johanna and Adam by supporting LD 2013.