

Adam Nordell  
Unity  
LD 1911

Dear members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Adam Nordell. I live in Unity where my wife and I run an organic vegetable and grain business. I testify today in favor of LD 1911 and LD 1875. Both bills are designed to close loopholes in the State's regulation of PFAS chemicals and prevent needless future contamination of Maine's precious water and agricultural resources. We cannot afford to risk the health of future generations of Mainers over a waste management expediency.

My wife and I purchased our land in 2014 after farming on leased land for 5 years. We bought land from another organic farmer who had recently been given a dire cancer diagnosis, and needed to spend his last months with his children. We learned the quirks of the land, developed markets for specialty crops, and scaled up our production. In 2018, Johanna gave birth to our son, who lives immersed in the farm and drives tiny toy tractors through the dust in our greenhouse. We built upon the established infrastructure here and worked to improve the property. In 2021 we drilled a new irrigation well, build a wash-pack shed and a new, hundred foot greenhouse. In normal times our products are on the shelves in five retail stores, in the refrigerators and pantries of 100 CSA members and another 100 or so direct retail customers. We have one employee. The growth of our family and business have been inextricably linked with this patch of ground.

Late this fall we learned from one of our customers that she had spotted our land on DEP's map of licensed sludge application sites. We were terrified. We hired a private soil scientists to test our well water, soil and vegetable plant tissue for PFAS chemicals. On December 23rd, all three samples came back positive for a combination of the 6 PFAS chemicals regulated by the state of Maine. Our well water reads 400 times over the State's safety thresh-hold. A localized soil sample read nearly 100 times over the state's screening standard. There are no safety thresh-holds for PFAS in vegetables.

We are working with MOFGA, DACF, DEP and Maine CDC to run additional tests on our water, soil and farm products. We have suspended our sales while we wait for the results. We struggle to see a path forward for our farmland, our business and for our family. Unfortunately, we are not alone. There are going to be more farms and rural Maine residents effected by this.

Based on our experience with historic PFAS contamination through land based spreading of sludge, we urge you to support both LD 1911 and LD 1975. No one can undo the historic contamination of our land. But we know enough now to turn off the tap.

Thank you  
Adam Nordell  
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