



June 1, 2017

Chairman Dallas Tonsager
Farm Credit Administration
1501 Farm Credit Drive
McLean, VA 22102

Dear Chairman Tonsager,

Ref: Farm Credit System Support for Farmers Markets

We recently learned of the innovative funding support that a number of banks in the Farm Credit System have been providing to farmers markets in multiple states and regions (New England, Texas, Arkansas, Georgia and South Carolina). We are writing to you and your colleagues at the Farm Credit Administration to express the gratitude of the Farmers Market Coalition, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Wholesome Wave, Sustainable Food Center, and the Massachusetts Farmers Market Association for these timely initiatives.

Congress is holding a series of hearings on SNAP and the role that nutrition incentives are playing in increasing farmer incomes. SNAP nutrition benefit doubling is taking place at many of the markets supported by Farm Credit banks, with these annual grants (some made in conjunction with state departments of agriculture) proving to be instrumental in building a market's capacity to successfully implement a SNAP nutrition program.

We have included documentation on this Farm Credit System support (attached).

Our member farmers markets are grateful for this recurring support—funding enables markets to build their management capacity, outreach and promotion and skills in improving nutrition for WIC, Seniors, SNAP, Veterans and increasingly VeggieR/x fruit and vegetable programs.

We estimate nationally that the \$63 million in estimated revenues from these nutrition incentive programs improved incomes of some 21,000 fruit and vegetable farmers—revenues that allow a number of Farm Credit borrowers, especially minority and new and beginning farmers, improve their creditworthiness for Farm Credit lending.

Gratefully,

Farmers Market Coalition
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
Wholesome Wave
Massachusetts Federation of Farmers Markets
Sustainable Food Center