

Hello. My name is Helen Rortvedt and I am the Director of Programs for the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont.

**Please include \$252,203 in supplemental funding for emergency organic dairy farmer relief in the FY24 Budget Adjustment Act.**

Last year, organic dairy farmers found themselves in an unprecedented financial crisis due to national and global economic circumstances beyond their control. We are grateful to the Legislature for recognizing the significant economic, social, and environmental importance of the organic dairy sector in Vermont, and for supporting them with a one time appropriation of \$6.9 million in emergency relief.

The appropriated funds have been distributed directly to organic dairy farms throughout the state by the Agency of Agriculture, providing much needed relief at a critical time. It is our understanding that, due to a small miscalculation of the total amount of funding needed to support all qualifying organic dairy farms, the fund fell just \$252,203 short of the total expressed need.

**Please include \$252,203 in supplemental funding for emergency organic dairy farmer relief in the FY24 Budget Adjustment Act in order to ensure all qualifying organic dairy farms receive the support they need. Thank you.**