Emma Wright
Ludlow, VT
info@ludlowmarket.org

Public Hearing on the Governor's Recommended Fiscal Year 2027 Budget
Re: Support $500,000 in ongoing funding for NOFA Vermont's Crop Cash (Plus) and Farm Share programs

As the primary organizer of Ludlow Farmers Market in Ludlow, VT, I am using my voice to ask that you support NOFA-VT's request for $500,000 in ongoing funding to strengthen Vermont farm viability and address food security by sustaining proven programs: Crop Cash (Plus) and Farm Share.

Our market's previous organizers had lost the operating capacity to facilitate 3SquaresVT for many years, but since the new iteration of Ludlow Farmers Market in 2024, we have brought back the program and made ourselves more centrally located in our community. In 2025, our vendors accepted over $5,000 in 3SquaresVT/SNAP benefits and associated transactions. From a community that previously had no opportunity for 3SquaresVT users to use their benefits with a farmers market, this number is hugely significant and underscores how vital this program is for Vermonters. To highlight this impact I'll share an interaction with one of our farmers, who told me that when Crop Cash funding ran out in 2023 and NOFA-VT had to pause coupon distribution, their weekly sales at other markets dropped by half. Not only does Crop Cash support our neighbors in purchasing fresh food grown in their region, but it directly contributes to the health and success of Vermont growers.

Your action now will make a significant impact in the lives of the Vermonters who depend on 3SquaresVT and programs like Crop Cash to live happy and fulfilling lives. I urge you to support NOFA-VT's request for $500,000 in FY27 for the Crop Cash, Crop Cash Plus, and Farm Share programs.

Thank you for your time.