

115 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT 05633
TEL: (802) 828-2228
FAX: (802) 828-2424



STATE OF VERMONT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
AND FOREST PRODUCTS

REP. CAROLYN W. PARTRIDGE, CHAIR
REP. RICHARD LAWRENCE, VICE CHAIR
REP. JOHN L. BARTHOLOMEW, RANKING
MEMBER
REP. DANIEL CONNOR
REP. ALYSON EASTMAN
REP. RODNEY GRAHAM
REP. JOEY PURVIS
REP. MARJORIE RYERSON
REP. HARVEY SMITH
REP. DONALD TURNER
REP. TEO ZAGAR

MEMORANDUM

To: Rep. Johnson
From: Rep. Partridge
Date: March 12, 2015
Subject: Agriculture Funding Priorities

The House Agriculture and Forest Products Committee has reviewed provisions relating to agriculture in the Governor's Proposed FY 2016 budget. The committee strongly recommends full support for critical agricultural programs that have been underfunded or eliminated in that budget. Specifically, Working Lands should receive \$1.5 million, which was the Governor's recommend for FY 2015; Farm to School should receive \$140,000; Agricultural Fair Stipends should be restored to \$175,000; and the 2+2 program should receive \$60,000.

These programs are critical to supporting Vermont's agricultural renaissance and maintaining the character of our state. The programs provide both revenue and positive health benefits for Vermonters. Our committee will submit to the Appropriations Committee findings on which we have based these priorities.

We urge the Appropriations Committee to allocate the funds requested. If current revenue projections cannot provide funding for these important programs, we urge that these priorities be at the top of the list if an improved economy brings in additional money.

Our Committee is committed to providing sustainable funding for these critically important programs. In support of this commitment we are working on a bill that will provide additional revenues to help meet this goal through a dedicated fund.