

**2/6 Snap Awareness Day Testimony**  
**Kayleigh Boyle**  
**Breadseed Farm**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Kayleigh Boyle, I am here as the co-owner of Breadseed Farm in Craftsbury, Vermont.

I am here to support NOFA-VT's request for \$500,000 in base funding to Strengthen Vermont Farm Viability and Address Food Security by sustaining two proven programs: Crop Cash (Plus) and Farm Share.

Crop Cash doubles 3SquaresVT (SNAP) benefits, dollar for dollar, for fruits and vegetables purchased at Vermont farmers markets.

The Farm Share Program has subsidized CSA shares for limited-income Vermonters for 30 years. The Farm Share Program pays for 25-75% of the CSA cost.

My farm has benefited greatly from both of these programs.

Breadseed Farm is moving into its fifth year of production, and is a one acre no-till farm that grows vegetables, flowers and herbs for direct markets in Northern Vermont. We currently sell full time at the Montpelier, Stowe, and Waitsfield markets along and offer Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) share closer to home in Craftsbury, Greensboro and Hardwick. I wanted to come and testify today to let you know how important both the crop cash and farm share program are for our small business' viability. Without these programs we could not have found the success we have at the farmers markets we attend, or have had the number of CSA share sign ups, two hugely important revenue streams for our small business. More importantly, crop cash and the farm share program allowed us to reach limited income members of our community who might otherwise not be able to access our food. It is important to myself and my partner that our organic produce is accessible to everyone in the community, and it is these programs that take the burden off the farm and provide a mutually beneficial solution to both the farmer and community member.

In the 2023 season, 20% of our sales at the Capital City farmers market were through crop cash purchases. With more limited funding in 2024, our crop cash sales accounted for 5% of our sales. In 2023, crop cash represented \$400 extra in sales per week. We are looking forward to crop cash being fully funded and doubling or even tripling customer's dollars again while shopping for fresh produce purchases at the

market. Through the extra income brought in from this program we have been able to reinvest money into our business and staffing to continue to improve our systems, so we can provide the highest quality vegetables to our customers.

The Farm Share Program has allowed us to provide our community with CSA shares for half the cost. Through Farm Share and Crop Cash we are able to feed a greater part of our community with our nutrient dense vegetable offerings.

I grew up in the Northeast Kingdom and if you were to tell an eighteen year old me that I would be back living in a rural area working in agriculture I would never have believed you. While I didn't grow up on a farm, I grew up with a big garden and surrounded by families who made a living from the land. It was after leaving Vermont and realizing how much I missed the landscape and access to quality local foods that I found my way into working in farm based education and food access on a non-profit farm outside of Boston. My partner Doug and I dreamed of having our own farm for years and after working and managing farms in Mass for over a decade, we began to look for land in Vermont to be closer to my family and found our home in Craftsbury. It was a leap to start a business and so much of what you read is how it is impossible to make a small farm business profitable. I think that the edge that our business was given these past four years was through the support of these NOFA-VT food access programs. The weekly extra income added a boost to our weekly farmers market income that would be hard to lose. If we want farm businesses to thrive in our state where agriculture is at the heart of communities, we need to continue to fund these food access programs.

As a farm business owner the most rewarding part of the job is connecting with and feeding my community. With the availability of crop cash and the farm share program my farm along with farms across the state will continue to help Vermonters feed Vermonters. That is why I am here to support NOFA-VT's request for \$500,000 in the state budget for our food access programs.

Thank you again for the opportunity.

Kayleigh Boyle  
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