



August 29, 2022

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

I am writing to convey my sincere gratitude for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's recent efforts to support a food and farming system that protects the interests of small and mid-sized farms, rural communities, and consumers, all while confronting a history of systemic racism.

We are particularly enthusiastic about the Department's commitments to programs that align with recommendations from our [Roadmap for the Biden Administration to Build Back Better](#), which also support the administration's goals to promote equity and resilience within our food and farm system:

- \$300 million for the New Organic Transition Initiative
- \$300 million for Increasing Land, Capital and Market Access projects
- \$250 million for the From Learning to Leading: Cultivating the Next Generation of Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals Program
- Heirs' Property Relending Program
- Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program and the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program
- Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops
- \$500 million investment in domestic fertilizer production

The above programs will deliver tremendous benefits to local economies, address the needs of underserved and underrepresented communities, protect our environment and natural resources, and enhance fairness and competition. We sincerely hope that Congress funds these beneficial programs in the 2023 Farm Bill.

Thank you for your efforts to build a healthy and resilient food and farming system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Maxwell".

Joe Maxwell
Farm Action