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May 29, 2018

Dr. Thomas Shanower  
Acting Director  
United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
305 - A Jaime L. Whitten Building  
Washington, DC. 20250

Dear Dr. Shanower:

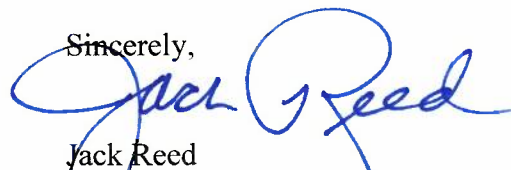
I write in support of Farm Fresh Rhode Island's application for funding through the USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Grant program. This funding will help create the New England Nutrition Incentive Collaborative (NENIC) which will expand the use of nutrition incentives across the New England states of Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.

Since 2004, Farm Fresh Rhode Island has been working successfully on growing and strengthening the local food system in Rhode Island. In 2009, Farm Fresh launched its local foods aggregation and distribution program, Market Mobile. The program increases sales and consumption of locally grown products; rebuilds a more efficient local food distribution system which provides a vital link between local farmers and buyers; and provides a platform for distribution of quality fresh foods into underserved Rhode Island communities.

The NENIC proposed in this application would create a large-scale FINI project utilizing similar agency resources and programs in partner states to continue and expand consumption of locally grown fruits and vegetables by SNAP consumers through farmers markets, farm stands, and small grocers across the region. In addition, NENIC would create and implement innovative direct-to-consumer marketing techniques and research regional data on the effect of incentives on the consumption of fruits and vegetables purchased by SNAP recipients.

I support Farm Fresh Rhode Island's proposal and ask your consideration of this application within all applicable rules and regulations. If I can be of assistance to you in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Christopher Albert in my Providence office at 401-528-5200. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jack Reed  
United States Senator