

## Support for Relief for Farmers Hit with PFAS Act

“Maine Farmland Trust (MFT) is thrilled to see the introduction of the *Relief for Farmers Hit with PFAS Act*,” **said Ellen Stern Griswold, Vice President & Deputy Director, Maine Farmland Trust.** “MFT has been working for months with a broad range of Maine stakeholders to channel urgent funding and resources to impacted farmers. But more must be done. Other states are beginning to recognize the reality that Maine already has - that PFAS contamination endangers farm families, the agricultural sector, and our food system. It is imperative that we enact a strong federal safety net of support and research to ensure that farmers in Maine and across the country continue to thrive. This bill is a critical piece of that work.”

“Maine farmers, residents and policymakers are in the painful position of leading the country on mitigating the horrible impacts of PFAS,” **said Sarah Alexander, executive director of the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA).** “Maine has created essential policies to help farmers who have suffered consequences of forever chemicals through no fault of their own. Senator Collins’ bill signals an opportunity for the federal government to coordinate a response so that farmers across the country will have the support they need to address PFAS contamination.”

"This spring, organic farmers voted to support efforts by state and federal agencies to help farms cope with contamination of soil and water by per-and poly-fluoroalkyl (PFAS) chemicals, including assistance with soil and water testing, technical assistance for determining whether farm operations can safely continue, and compensation for lost production and lost farm value due to contamination," **said Kate Mendenhall, Executive Director of Organic Farmers Association.** "We applaud Senator Collins for her bill to provide affected states with funds to help farmers finding PFAS contamination on their farms. Many of these farms were not responsible for applying the contamination and didn't know it had been applied to their land prior to farm purchase-it has been devastating and we hope they can get support quickly."

“The *Relief for Farmers Hit with PFAS Act* takes a positive step towards providing resources for farmers to address these challenges so they can continue to feed America’s families,” **said Courtney Briggs, Senior Director Government Affairs at the American Farm Bureau Federation.** “We appreciate Sen. Collins for recognizing that farmers do not manufacture or knowingly spread PFAS on their farms and should not be asked to bear the financial burden of clean-up.”

"Farmers and other impacted communities should not bear the brunt of the cost of the PFAS contamination crisis. Maine has been a leader in working to combat PFAS contamination and help those most impacted, including setting aside \$60 million dollars to help PFAS-impacted farmers. However, Maine cannot do it alone. We need the Congress to step up and help states provide resources to those who need it", **said Sarah Woodbury, Director of Advocacy for the Maine-based non-profit Defend Our Health.** "Following Maine's lead, this legislation introduced by Senator Collins will allow states that are dealing with PFAS contamination to apply for funding

to help provide resources to those that are hardest hit by this contamination. This will provide a vital lifeline to farmers who are at the frontlines of this PFAS contamination crisis. Senator Collins has been steadfast in pushing for policies to help limit sources of PFAS and to provide resources to farmers and other impacted communities most impacted by PFAS contamination. We are grateful to her for her leadership on this issue."