

April 11, 2020

The Honorable Sue Allor, Chair  
House MDARD Subcommittee  
428 Capitol Building  
Lansing, MI 48909

The Honorable Roger Victory  
Senate MDARD Subcommittee  
201 Townsend Street  
Suite #4100  
Lansing, MI 48933

Chair and Committee Members:

As organizations dedicated to supporting specialty crop growers and food retailers, we are excited to support Double Up Food Bucks' work to bridge the common goals shared by Michigan agriculture and our food insecure families.

**Due to the recent increase in nutritional food insecurity, Double Up has supported a more than 100% increase in 2020, including empowering 412,000 families to double their fresh fruit and vegetable purchases.** Double Up benefits Michigan fruit and vegetable growers, shippers, packers, and retailers by expanding local markets for their products, as well as ensuring that Michigan families in need have access to affordable fruit and vegetable nutrition for their families. With the closure of schools, hungry kids are also able to access the Double Up nutrition incentive.

We agree this MDARD investment provides unparalleled benefits to Michigan families for the following reasons:

- Double Up Food Bucks is a proven success and remains strongly committed to Michigan farmers by requiring retailers to increase purchases of Michigan-grown produce in order to participate.
- If funded at the requested \$2m, Fair Food Network will grow Double Up Food Bucks to every Michigan county by 2023, reaching over 500,000 Michigan residents.
- Each \$1 from MDARD will be matched with \$2 of USDA grant and private sector investment to support healthier eating for additional Michigan families, boost business for local farmers, and support retailers selling Michigan-grown produce.

For these reasons, we respectfully request your thoughtful consideration of investing the requested \$2m in Double Up Food Bucks in the FY21 MDARD Budget.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

*Kelly Turner*

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Kelly Turner, Executive Director



*Gregory Bird*

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Greg Bird, Executive Director



*Amanda Shreeve*

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Amanda Shreeve, Executive Director



*Diane Smith*

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Diane Smith, Executive Director

