



September 14, 2020

Gretel Norgeot, Director
Orleans Farmers Market, Inc.
46 Tar Kiln Road
Orleans, MA 02653

Dear Gretel:

The Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative (Climate Collaborative) is writing in support of the proposal by the Orleans Farmer's Market for Food Security Infrastructure funding to expand their educational food-growing project at Nauset High School's Nauset Food and Research Garden. The Climate Collaborative strongly supports local food production because it reduces fossil fuel consumption for transport of goods between producer and consumer. An especially attractive aspect of this proposal is the emphasis on educating middle- and high school students about soil systems and land use through the growing and harvesting of edible plants.

Established in 2016, the mission of the Climate Collaborative is to reach carbon neutrality--or net zero--on Cape Cod and the Islands by enhancing communication, collaboration, and activism among organizations, programs and individuals committed to mitigating the climate crisis. We do this by uniting available knowledge, resources, talent and tools to mitigate climate change impacts on Cape Cod, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and work toward achieving "net zero"-based goals for the Cape and Islands. We seek to create conditions to foster innovative, feasible, cross-sector solutions to the climate crisis.

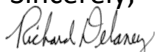
Cape Cod is a fragile peninsula more than 75 miles in length. Every delivery of produce on the Cape requires more fossil fuel than mainland destinations because of our 'out of the way' location. For this reason, the Climate Collaborative actively encourages and supports the establishment of farmers markets and community gardens to provide produce locally and sustainably.

Farmers and gardeners are a very important constituency in the fight to mitigate climate change. These stewards of the earth are already aware that the warming climate is creating unpredictable growing seasons, expanding the range of invasive species due to weakened ecosystems, altering the historic range of native plants, and disrupting the connections between pollinators and the plants they depend on. The Nauset Food and Research Garden at Nauset Regional High School and the Nauset Regional Middle School Greenhouse Learn Lab are ideal environments for linking plant life to earth health and the impacts of global warming. The Climate Collaborative is excited by the possibility that these efforts can be expanded with the assistance of a Food Security Infrastructure grant.

This application is especially timely because of the disruptions to indoor learning caused by the COVID pandemic. Outdoor learning, always vital for introducing students to the reciprocity at the heart of the relationship between humans and the earth, is an absolutely critical educational strategy for sustaining the learning process during the pandemic crisis while keeping both students and teachers safe.

We laud the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources for providing funding to bolster our food security infrastructure during this unprecedented social and educational crisis and urge the support of this very innovative Nauset Food and Research Garden proposal.

Sincerely,



Richard Delaney, President

Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative