

## New American Farming in Maine

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Over the course of the 2018-2019 academic year, Madeline King and I conducted a collaborative research project that incorporated elements of community outreach, field work, and policy research. With the guidance of our faculty advisor, Shana Starobin, we worked with various members of

The first phase of our project in the fall involved collecting background research and gathering as much field data as possible. We conducted our interviews as we worked alongside farmers, learning their stories and hearing their concerns. All of the farmers we spoke with were beginning farmers, and all of the New American farmers were involved with either Cultivating Community or the Somali-Bantu Community Association (SBCA). The Cultivating Community farmer training program aims to arm participants with the technical and business skills needed to one day own their own farms. SBCA is a community-run organization that aids Somali-Bantu refugees in navigating the various social services available to them. Additionally, the program operates a small subsistence and wholesale farm. During the winter and spring, we shifted our focus to meeting and speaking with service providers, policymakers, and other stakeholders in the Maine food scene. Maddy, Professor Starobin, and I met almost weekly throughout the year to touch base and discuss our findings, and by April we were ready to present separate memos to Congresswoman Chellie Pingree and the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA).

Over the course of our research, we concluded that while farmers across the country struggle with economic insecurity and land access issues, underlying racism and linguistic discrimination further

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