

Ryan Busby
Alfred, ME

Hi,

I have worked on several organic farms over the last 7 years. This year I'm starting my own farm in Alfred, ME. Over the years I was always paid fairly and my wages were well above federal minimum wage. The farm businesses I worked for were not getting rich, but they figured out how to value employees well enough to keep us around, and keep there businesses profitable.

I studied economics at university and the historical data and case studies are pretty clear that minimum wage laws do not benefit societies as they are promised to or intended to. Many people believe that minimum wage will create a floor below which low wage workers cannot fall. In reality, it creates a hurdle over which less people can climb. If the intention is to help low wage workers in the farm sector, the unfortunate outcome is that some existing employees get a forced pay raise while other workers get their hours cut or not hires at all. For the perspective of the business owner, they now have fewer choices about how to run their business and inevitably have to hire less people and expect more from those they can hire. It turns into another squeeze on small farms.

Minimum wage is bad for farm workers, bad for farms and bad for Maine's iconic farm economy.