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CDC Releases COVID-19 Guidance For Agriculture

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released specific guidance for agricultural workers and employers to assist in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and to help lower the disease's impact at agricultural worksites. The guidance can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-agricultural-workers.html>

Many states have released their own guidance for agriculture in recent weeks. It is generally recommended that you refer to your state guidance first, as it typically overrides federal guidance in these instances.

Challenges to decreasing the spread of COVID-19 at agricultural worksites include:

- Frequent close contact with coworkers in the field and indoors
- Sharing of tools, equipment, such as tractors, and other production or processing machinery
- Possible sharing of transportation such as ride-share vans, carpools, and public transportation
- Living in employer-provided housing, sharing living quarters, cooking and eating areas, bathrooms, and laundry facilities with fellow workers
- Frequent contact with fellow workers in community settings in areas where there is ongoing community spread of COVID-19

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Be Sure To Visit Our
COVID-19 Online Resource Center:
www.farmbureau.co/covid19_resourcecenter/



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Lessons From COVID-19

By: Zippy Duvall, AFBF President

It was such an honor for me to be appointed by President Trump in April to represent agriculture on the industry group focused on economic revival following the COVID-19 pandemic. It was recognition of agriculture's importance not only to our nation's economy but to our quality of life.

Since then, the American Farm Bureau has provided input for consideration as the Administration works on economic revitalization. Several recommendations, such as pursuing trade agreements and removing unnecessary regulations, make sense in normal times; now they matter even more to our economy and food security.

It has taken our nation years to recover from big economic disruptions of the past, such as the Great Depression in 1929 and the Great Recession in 2008. Policy decisions made today will have similarly long-lasting repercussions. It's important for us to learn from those past disruptions, as well as this one, and avoid policies that would stifle innovation and agricultural production.

We've recommended that the Administration's approach to restarting the economy be grounded in the principle that food security is domestic security,

and domestic and global food supply chains are necessary for agricultural production. That means farmers and ranchers need access to credit. It means USDA must have the authority and adequate funding to step in and stabilize the farm economy in the event of further or future disruption.

We already have learned important lessons from the past few months. We believe USDA should be the primary federal agency coordinating and overseeing all agricultural initiatives, and all other federal agencies (Labor Department, Federal Emergency Management Agency, State Department and Homeland Security, for example) should cooperate with USDA to leverage resources where appropriate to support agricultural production. We've also recommended that agriculture be a top priority for testing and distribution of personal protective equipment or PPEs for workers on farms and in meat plants and other food manufacturing facilities, as well as farmers and ranchers themselves.



Vincent "Zippy" Duvall, a poultry, cattle and hay producer from Georgia, is the 12th president of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

And speaking of meat plants, we must ensure the integrity and transparency of livestock markets to ensure that there is no price manipulation and that producers receive honest prices for their livestock.

Many produce growers who were already under stress from seasonal

imports in early spring saw that situation get even worse. We've recommended that USDA, the U.S. Trade Representative and the Commerce Department resume delayed field hearings into the challenges facing seasonal produce growers in Florida, Georgia and other parts of the country.

One of the best things our government can do to help kickstart the farm economy is commit to long-range policies. We've had enough uncertainty. It will take time to re-establish supply chains and markets. Farmers and food manufacturers shouldn't have to worry about the expiration of temporary regulatory suspensions. We need a clear, sustained focus on stimulating economic growth.

A positive outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic has been increased coordination between the federal and state governments, and we believe that's a great way to move forward. Continued dialog with states and their governors can ensure we build on what works for each state, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Through this health crisis, we've seen the importance of prioritizing the safety of agricultural workers and maximizing the flexibility of the H-2A visa program to ensure that food can be harvested and processed. Going forward, Congress must renew immigration reform efforts to provide legal status to current agricultural workers, who are part of our critical infrastructure because of their role in providing food security. They truly are essential.

We've been through a crisis the likes of which none of us has experienced before. We're still going through it, actually. We all want to see the economy reopen soon, but we also want to see things reopen in a way that's well thought out and keeps us on the path of lowering infections. If we learn the lessons that COVID-19 has presented to us, then we just might come out of this stronger than before.

Zippy Duvall
AFBF President

Digital Options For Farmers To Apply For CFAP

USDA's Farm Service Agency will now accept applications for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) through an online portal, expanding the options available to producers to apply for this program, which helps

complete their applications from home.

"We are doing everything we can to serve our customers and make sure agricultural producers impacted by the pandemic can

take applications through the farmers.gov portal, which saves producers and our staff time."

Through the portal, producers with secure USDA login credentials—known as eAuthentication—can certify eligible commodities online, digitally sign applications and submit directly to the local USDA Service Center. Producers who do not have an eAuthentication account can learn more and begin the enrollment process at farmers.gov/sign-in. Currently, the digital application is only available to sole proprietors or single-member business entities.

USDA Service Centers can also work with producers to complete and securely transmit digitally signed applications through two commercially available tools: Box and OneSpan. Producers who are interested in digitally signing their applications should notify their local service centers when calling to discuss the CFAP application process. You can learn more about these solutions at farmers.gov/mydocs.

USDA has several other options for producers to complete and submit their CFAP applications. These include:

1. Downloading the AD-3114 application form from farmers.gov/cfap and manually completing the form to submit to the local USDA Service Center by mail, electronically or by hand delivery to an office drop box. In some limited cases, the office may be open for in-person business by appointment. Visit farmers.gov/coronavirus/service-center-status to check the status of your local office.
2. Completing the application form using our CFAP Application Generator and Payment Calculator found at farmers.gov/cfap. This Excel workbook allows customers to input information specific to their operation to determine estimated payments and populate the application form, which can be printed, and then signed and submitted to their local USDA Service Center.



offset price declines and additional marketing costs because of the coronavirus pandemic. FSA is also leveraging commercial document storage and e-signature solutions to enable producers to work with local service center staff to

quickly and securely apply for this relief program," said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce. "In addition to working with FSA staff through the phone, email and scheduled in-person appointments, we can now also

Proposed SMART Regulations A Hindrance To On-Farm Solar Installations

By: Brad Mitchell, MFBF Deputy Executive Director

In April, the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) released draft changes to Solar Massachusetts renewable target (SMART) regulations, the regulations which govern solar installations which are eligible for state incentives.

The regulations caught many by surprise in that they:

1. Largely prohibit ground-based solar arrays on 90 percent of the land in the Commonwealth – including most farm and forest land;
2. Provide only limited “grandfathering” of projects in process under the existing regs.

Solar has been increasingly appealing to farmers and foresters to augment farm income. Solar is appealing in that it offers year-round, predictable income. Also, unlike other forms of development, properly constructed ground arrays are temporary and do not involve the removal or damage of soil. The equipment can be removed, and the land returned to agriculture. Unfortunately, as drafted, the regulations would close off such opportunities to farmers.

The regulations have been poorly received not only by the farming community, but by solar developers, renewable



Brad Mitchell is MFBF's deputy executive director.

energy advocates, and by federal and state legislators, both of whom sent joint letters to DOER protesting the restrictive nature of the regulations. Representative Hogan organized a letter from legislators. There was also a letter from legislators from the southeastern part of the state. Two members of the federal delegation also weighed in with a letter. The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) provided extensive comments on the proposed regulations and participated in a conference call with DOER staff to discuss our concerns.

While some might applaud the prohibition of solar arrays on farmland, several things should be kept in mind:

1. such arrays can be temporary, preserving the farmland beneath them;
2. putting solar on part of a farm can provide the income to keep the entire operation financially viable; and
3. prohibiting farmers from installing solar can push some into development options that are not temporary.

Effectively managed, ground-based solar can be a useful tool in long-term farmland protection.

While the final regulations have not been released, indications are that DOER and the administration remain intent on greatly restricting the installation of ground-based solar arrays. MFBF is working with other stakeholders to explore legislative fixes if this turns out to be the case.

Please stay alert for MFBF alerts on this topic. Your advocacy may be needed.

Brad Mitchell
MFBF Deputy Executive Director
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Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Virus Confirmed In MA

The eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) virus has been discovered in mosquitoes for the first time this year in Massachusetts, health officials said.

EEE was confirmed by the Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory in a mosquito sample collected July 1 in the town of Orange in Franklin County, officials said Friday. No human or animal cases of EEE have been detected so far this year, officials said.

The mosquito-borne disease is a rare but a potentially deadly disease. There were 12 human cases in Massachusetts in 2019 with six deaths. There were also nine cases in domestic animals.

Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel said the state has been preparing for a resurgence of EEE. Surveillance will help health officials determine how quickly the virus might emerge this year.

Baker-Polito Administration Invests \$56 Million to Combat Food Insecurity in Massachusetts

The Baker-Polito Administration announced \$56 million to combat urgent food insecurity for some Massachusetts families and individuals as a result of COVID-19. This funding is consistent with findings of the Food Security Task Force, which was convened by the Massachusetts COVID-19 Command Center in response to increased demands for food assistance. The task force is comprised of a broad group of public and private members charged with ensuring food insecurity and food supply needs are addressed during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

“These funds jump start some of the recommendations to address urgent needs and food supply chain issues due to the COVID-19 pandemic for communities across the Commonwealth,” said Governor

Charlie Baker. “While COVID-19 has had a statewide impact, some of our communities and residents who have historically experienced food insecurity have been even more disproportionately impacted.”

“Our Administration has always been focused on supporting residents and families dealing with food insecurity, especially now during the COVID-19 outbreak,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “We thank the Food Security Task Force for their work on these important issues, and are glad to make these crucial investments.”

The Administration will continue to utilize the Food Security Task Force and work with the Legislature to address food security issues going forward.

“Longstanding food assistance programs including the federal

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infant and Children’s Program (WIC) are experiencing significant increases in assistance applications. In addition, community-based food banks are seeing skyrocketing demand and local grocers and farmers are struggling to meet the needs of consumers,” said COVID-19 Command Center Director and Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders. “I am appreciative of the task force’s practical recommendations to meet immediate needs as well as the longer-term solutions.”

“We are pleased to provide new funding to a wide array of programs and initiatives in order to help ensure individuals and families have access to affordable, nutritious food during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said

Secretary of Administration and Finance Michael J. Heffernan. “This funding builds upon other critical COVID-19 resources which are being distributed by the Administration in partnership with the Legislature, including the \$502 million in federal Coronavirus Relief Funds which will support important municipal initiatives, such as food assistance, during this public health crisis.”

“Increasing food security is essential to protecting the health of Massachusetts residents, and the funding and recommendations made available through the Task Force will help meet greater demand for nutritional assistance among vulnerable populations and those struggling with the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs

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MFBF's mission is to strengthen a diverse agricultural community by supporting and advocating for Massachusetts farm families

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Share Your Farm's Adaptations To
COVID-19, Enter To Win \$200

Most farmers know how to fix just about anything. It's a daily requirement of the job. So when it comes to adhering to state and CDC interim guidance on COVID-19 prevention in agriculture, we believe many farms have likely come up with smart, practical solutions for getting their job done safely in the midst of an impractical situation.

white cotton face coverings, which New York State distributed free to farms, making the masks less apt to show dirt and more fun for staff to wear.

NYCAMH and NEC have also released a series of practical tips for farm operations related to COVID-19 safety and prevention in the "additional resources" section of their COVID-19

The "Smart Solutions" contest is giving a \$200 credit card gift card to the farm owner or employee who shares the best tip on how they've adapted, changed or innovated to make their work, workers or workplace safer during the COVID-19 pandemic. The contest is sponsored by the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) and the Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety (NEC).

To enter, go to:
<https://www.nycamh.org/news.php?id=853>

Submissions are due by July 15.

Here are some examples of farm-related "smart solutions" to managing the challenges of COVID-19 at work:

- Free Bird Farm in Palatine Bridge, NY, color-coded shovels, harvesting knives, and cultivation hand tools with duct tape, to avoid workers sharing tools.
- Truck driver Ian Lake of New Hampshire sewed buttons onto the sides of his cap to hook face cover straps over so they no longer pull on his ears.
- Candella's Farm of Marcy, NY, tie-dyed cotton face coverings to keep their staff safe during strawberry you-pick season when interacting with the public. The farm tie-dyed dozens of



web pages (www.nycamh.org/covid-19 and www.necenter.org/covid-19/). The terms of the "Smart Solutions" contest are as follows:

Submissions will be accepted through July 15, 2020. One winner will be selected for the \$200 gift card.

- To be eligible, you must be 18 years of age or older and own or work for a commercial farm located in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland or West Virginia.
- You may submit more than one idea.
- By submitting an idea, you give permission to the Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety (NEC) and the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) to share your creative idea and photo via websites, newsletters, social media, or other communications channels. We will not share your contact information without your expressed consent.

Find news updates, videos, and a variety of COVID-19 resources for agricultural employers and employees at www.necenter.org/covid-19. If you would like more information about the contest, NYCAMH's and NEC's free virtual employee trainings, PPE sales or other services, please call 800-343-7527 or email info@nycamh.com.

State Agriculture Officials Urge Horse
Owners To Vaccinate Against Mosquito-
Borne Diseases

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) is urging horse owners to vaccinate their horses against the mosquito-borne viral diseases Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus.

Annual vaccinations should be given now to provide protection to animals prior to peak mosquito season which begins in late July, and to remain protective through the first hard frost.

"Mosquito-borne diseases such as EEE and West Nile Virus are a serious threat to the health of horses in Massachusetts, as infection can lead to death," said state



Department of Agricultural Resources Commissioner John Lebeaux. "We ask all horse owners to heed this call and get their animals vaccinated, as the timely use of vaccines ensures a safe and healthy equine population across the Commonwealth."

In 2019 there were eight equine deaths in Massachusetts, all in unvaccinated horses. Other species such as pheasants, emus, llamas, and alpacas can also be affected by mosquito-borne disease, especially EEE.

Although available vaccines are only licensed for use in horses, owners should consult with their veterinarian for recommendations regarding other animals.

Massachusetts Food Insecurity Grant

Continued From Page 3

Kathleen Theoharides. “The ongoing crisis has also highlighted the importance of reinforcing our local food supply chain, and this investment from the Baker-Polito Administration will provide needed capital to the farmers, fishermen, food banks, and distributors that are helping the Commonwealth respond to this unprecedented public health emergency.”

In less than a month, the Food Security Task Force, which was convened on April 22, synthesized and prioritized more than 80 recommendations into the following four key actionable categories:

- Develop and implement an emergency food program
- Fortify the food bank system
- Maximize federal resources for food and nutrition
- Reinforce and redeploy the food system infrastructure

As the task force continues its work going forward, today the Administration announces:

- A \$36 million COVID-19 Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program with a goal of ensuring that individuals and families have access to food. Eligible services

- include:
- Increasing capacity for food direct delivery;
 - Increasing capacity of food banks and food pantries;
 - Increasing capacity of local food distribution partners;
 - Innovative solutions to enable those receiving SNAP and WIC benefits to receive food more easily;
 - Innovative solutions for urban farming and
 - Farms, retailers, fisheries and other food system businesses to help them adapt to the disruptions and to allow them to provide greater access to local food.
- \$5 million increase for the Healthy Incentives Program to meet increased demand for local produce and to increase access points that process SNAP and HIP benefits.
 - \$12 million for the provision of 25,000 family food boxes per week through a regional food supply system. Each family food box contains 30 to 35 meals. Food boxes would be distributed throughout the state to food pantries.
 - \$3 million in funding as an immediate relief valve to food banks.

The work of the task force builds on Massachusetts’ initiatives to increase access to food, including establishing emergency food distribution sites and school meal sites for food distribution, implementing Pandemic EBT to provide food to 500,000 youth who usually receive free or reduced priced lunch, distributing additional SNAP benefits to households, requesting online EBT purchasing approval from the federal government, and streamlining food benefit program administration.

Additionally, the Commonwealth recently released funding from the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund to local cities and towns of up to \$502 million and highlighted food insecurity as an eligible program.

Reporting up to the COVID-19 Command Center and Secretary Sudders, the work of the Food Security Task Force will continue as a private-public partnership, chaired by Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides, Department of Transitional Assistance Commissioner Amy Kershaw and Jill Shah, President of the Shah Family Foundation.

USDA Food Box Program Reaches Milestone

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced on June 24 that the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Farmers to Families Food Box Program has distributed more than 20 million food boxes in support of American farmers and families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Over the past few weeks, the Farmers to Families Food Box Program has continued to pick up steam, getting food in the hands of more and more Americans while providing much needed support to our agricultural sector,” said Secretary Perdue. “This milestone is a testament that the program is accomplishing what we intended – supporting U.S. farmers and distributors and getting food to those who need it most. It’s a real trifecta, which is why we call it a win-win-win.” “The Farmers to Families Food Box Program has been an extraordinary success having already delivered 20 million large boxes of farm fresh food to those in need! This administration is proud of the collaborative efforts of farmers, distributors, food banks, non-profits and faith-based communities and their workforces in dispersing fresh produce, protein and dairy to those most in need across the United States,” said Advisor to the President, Ivanka Trump.

HIP Expansion Opens up Opportunities For Farms

As part of the response to COVID 19, the Commonwealth is both increasing the amount of funding for the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) as well as allowing more farmers to participate. HIP is a nutrition program that allows SNAP recipients to receive an extra dollar of support for every dollar they spend on fresh fruits and vegetables. See [https://www.mass.gov/service-details/healthy-](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/healthy-incentives-program-hip-for-clients)

[incentives-program-hip-for-clients](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/healthy-incentives-program-hip-for-clients) Vendors need to be approved by the State and approvals have in the past been frozen due to limited availability of funds. With food access concerns the state is looking to expand access to HIP. In order to become a HIP vendor, you must:

1. Become a SNAP vendor. Go to <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply-to-accept> for more information;

2. Apply to be a HIP vendor. Go to <https://www.mass.gov/healthy-incentives-program-hip-notice-of-opportunity-noo>

Note that acceptance is not automatic nor guaranteed. The state is looking for vendors which are particularly effective in getting fresh produce to people and families in need and/or bringing fresh produce to areas where there is a need.

CDC Guidance For Ag

Continued From Page 1

The guidance outlines policies and procedures relevant to the industry that farm owners and operators can use to ensure the safety of their workers and to facilitate their compliance with COVID-specific OSHA regulations.

“Recent stories in both national and local news have shown how COVID-19 has the potential to severely impact workers and farm productivity,” said Dr. Julie Sorensen, Director of the Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety in Farming, Commercial

Fishing and Forestry (NEC). Sorensen noted that COVID-19 impacts have been severe in some cases, with operations either being completely shut down or creating labor shortages that have required euthanizing livestock or loss of product.

“Prevention of COVID-19 will be key to managing the crisis and this guidance provides specific information for agriculture—and essential industry,” said Sorensen.

The NEC, as well as another ten Centers for Agricultural Safety and Health designated by the National Institutes of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), collaborated with the CDC in developing the guidance.

Farm operations vary widely. For this reason, the NEC encourages agricultural business owners or managers feeling overwhelmed or uncertain about COVID-19 prevention practices to call and speak to one of its agricultural safety specialists. They provide

free technical assistance to all farm types, from Maine to West Virginia.

For technical assistance with an agricultural safety specialist or an industrial hygienist at NEC, call: 800-343-7527

The NEC also provides free virtual safety trainings for employees, offered in English or in Spanish. The trainings can cover COVID-19 topics or a spectrum of other farm safety topics of concern related to a business’ specific operation.

Important Reminders for Federal Crop Insurance Policyholders & Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance (NAP) Participants

Acreage Reporting: The deadline for filing acreage reports for Spring-seeded crops for both Federal Crop Insurance and NAP is Wednesday, July 15, 2020. If you have questions, contact your Federal Crop Insurance agent or your local FSA Office.



Loss Reporting: 2020 has presented farmers with challenging weather conditions and producers covered by a Federal Crop Insurance policy are reminded to monitor their crops for insurable damage throughout the growing season. If you notice damage, contact your crop insurance agent within 72 hours of discovery, 15 days before harvesting begins and within 15 days after harvesting is completed on the insurance unit. Three other

- important reminders:
- Check with your Federal Crop Insurance agent to review any prevented planting options.
 - Direct marketed crops must have a yield appraisal before harvest, is a loss is anticipated.
 - **Do not destroy any** crop evidence needed to support your claim without clear direction

in writing from the insurance adjuster.

Producers having NAP coverage have similar loss reporting requirements and should contact their local FSA Office to report losses and review any prevented planting options.

Remember, if ever in doubt about filing a notice of loss, **always contact your agent or FSA!**

Losses on Crops Not Insured under Federal Crop Insurance nor Covered under NAP or Physical Losses:

Even if you suffer losses on noninsured crops or crops not covered by NAP or physical losses such as building, equipment, etc., you should still notify your local

FSA Office about the loss(es). FSA is responsible for monitoring crop conditions for disaster designation purposes and also may have other programs that could provide assistance.

This is material is based upon work supported by USDA/NIFA under Award Number 2018-70027-28588. UMass Extension works in partnership with the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Northeast Extension Risk Management Education Center to educate Massachusetts producers about Federal Crop Insurance and USDA Disaster Assistance Programs. For more information, please contact UMass Risk Management Specialists Paul Russell at pmrussell@umass.edu or Tom Smiarowski at tsmiarowski@umass.edu.

Remembering Farm Bureau Members Who Have Passed

- **Harold Roberts** of Plainfield, Massachusetts, passed away on May 23, 2020. He was 95. For full obituary, please visit: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/recorder/obituary.aspx?n=harold-a-roberts-pete&pid=196280114&fhid=25298>
- **Lee H. "Peter" Gibney** of Danvers, Massachusetts, passed way on July 3, 2020. He was 77. For full obituary, please visit: <https://www.odonnellfuneralservice.com/obituary/LeeHPeter-Gibney>

FSA County Committee Nominations Open June 15

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) began accepting nominations for county committee members on Monday, June 15, 2020. Elections will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA) for these members who make important decisions about how federal farm programs are administered locally. All nomination forms for the 2020 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 1, 2020.

"I encourage America's farmers, ranchers and forest stewards to nominate candidates to lead, serve and represent their community

on their county committee," FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce said. "There's an increasing need for diverse representation, including underserved producers, which includes beginning, women and minority farmers and ranchers."

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program, and reside in the LAA that is up for election this year, may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others, and organizations, including those representing beginning, women and minority producers, also may nominate candidates.

Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster programs, as well as conservation, commodity and price support programs, county office employment and other agricultural issues.

Nationwide, more than 7,700 dedicated members of the agricultural community serve on FSA county committees. The committees are made of three to 11 members and typically meet once a month. Members serve three-year terms. Producers serving on FSA county committees play a critical role in the day-to-day

operations of the agency.

Producers should contact their local FSA office today to find out how to get involved in their county's election. Check with your local USDA service center to see if your LAA is up for election this year. To be considered, a producer must sign an FSA-669A nomination form. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 2, 2020.

MFBF's Mission & Vision Statement

Mission Statement: Strengthen a diverse agricultural community by supporting and advocating for Massachusetts farm families.

Vision Statement: Massachusetts Farm Bureau envisions a world with plentiful high-quality agricultural products, productive open land, and a robust and prosperous farming community. We are committed to working with like-minded groups to achieve these goals.

Attention farmers

New solar program allows for continued use of your grazing land along with a large scale solar project. Guaranteed income for 20 years

Call 978.895.0519 to determine eligibility

Continue your farming or grazing under a solar array. Also looking for property with high transmission lines running through it.

Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee Happenings

Learn more about YF&R at www.MFBF.net!
Or follow us on social media -
Facebook: @MAFarmBureauYFR & Instagram: @MAFBYoungFarmers.



Free Temporary/
Seasonal Job
Listings for
Farmers

Farms Are “Necessary” Again... So What Are You Doing About It?

By: Heidi Cooper, YF&R Committee Chair

American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) recently shared in a poll, 84 percent of Americans said they trust our nation’s farmers. That’s shockingly high, in my opinion, given the shortages grocery stores have seen amidst this pandemic, many of which were wrongfully blamed on farmers instead of the “middleman” infrastructure that takes food from the farm to the plates of American consumers. Here in New England things are a bit different than the rest of the nation since we have a more direct relationship with many consumers.

Buying local has been ‘trendy’ for years, but during recent years we have all seen the appeal of the CSA (community supported agriculture) drop and farmers markets becoming less lucrative as they have become over saturated. Even here where direct market sales account for 21.1 percent of our state’s total ag product sales (the highest proportion in the country), we all know that trends like this can’t last forever.

Enter: COVID-19. And with it, a surge in people buying local when the national food supply was hitting a wall. For many of us in direct consumer sales, this has been a whirlwind we couldn’t have possibly prepared for. Speaking to other farmers in Worcester County, some have seen their CSA signups multiply tenfold and regular sales for early spring time quadruple.

What an opportunity this provides; how many of these folks have never thought to support local farmers before?

Of course, this all related directly to a farms ability to adjust to these uncertain times. Being able to shift to online sales, arranging curbside pickup, offering home delivery, and even setting up pre-order for market or pickup locations are all things that have helped many succeed. We’ve seen the largest surge of support for local farms during this pandemic (in my opinion), but it’s not too late to make sure you’re making the most of this if you’re in direct-to-consumer sales.

For many, even retaining 10-15 percent of these new customers as casual return buyers would make a lasting impression on their businesses. Being able to capture their information and reach them in the future, to remind them that you’re there for them, is imperative. So here I am, as a ‘young farmer,’ telling you that the use of technology is more important now than ever before.

So what can you do? There’s a lot that you’re probably already doing to make sure your customers have a great experience and want to return to purchase your products and that’s the most important. Having their information to send out newsletters with farm updates can be a great help too, if they will

provide their contact information to you. A challenge to emails is that folks get so many they really do have to be eye catching and relevant, but with good photos and short and sweet content, it’s a great way to reach people.

I think most importantly, a strong presence on social media (Instagram and Facebook) remind people of your importance. We’re living in an era where people spend more time scrolling through pictures on Instagram than they do having actual conversations with those around them. Yes, they do want to see an image of that perfectly ripe strawberry you are now selling. And definitely yes, they want to see pictures (daily) of that new litter of piglets. They are stuck in their homes wanting to be a part of something: let that something be your farm. One of my personal favorite pages to follow on Facebook recently is Bemis Farms Nursery; please check them out. They are wonderful at frequent posting of different topics, and Tina is excellent at sharing her personality in her posts. Being yourself, the farmer, in your posts will serve you well.

If you have any questions on any of this, please feel free to reach out to me. If you’re not sure where to start I’m happy to help! We’re all in this together.

Heidi Cooper
YF&R Chair
cooper.heidi.jo@gmail.com

During these challenging times, AgCareers.com wanted to share a resource we are offering that would be helpful for farmers, producers and ranchers – free temporary/seasonal labor job postings. Please use the promo code TEMPJOBSc19.

You may or may not be familiar with AgCareers.com, but they are the leading talent solutions provider for the agriculture industry. They are the largest online job board offering careers in agriculture for more than 20 years. They have been working diligently to provide support to agricultural employers across North America throughout this time of need. They wanted to share these efforts with you as a way to spread the word and let farmers know this resource is available to them.

AgCareers.com has been collecting data around the COVID-19 pandemic and employment within the agriculture industry. The initial results are on their website. Please find updated information as well as other helpful tools on the AgCareers.com COVID-19 page. They have collected and are offering many valuable resources, such as free webinars on-demand, managing remote worker tips, up-to-date insights from employers and job seekers and much more.

Apply For MFBF’s Gregory Finn Scholarship

The Gregory Finn Scholarship was established in loving memory of a good friend to agriculture, Gregory L. Finn. Finn was Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation’s (MFBF’s) Information & Public Relations Director, a religious and devoted family man, who died of a heart attack in 1983 at the age of 55.



Though not a farmer himself, Finn possessed a unique ability to bridge the gap between agriculture and suburbia. He was a natural at interpreting and conveying the problems facing farmers in a way that non-agricultural communities could

understand. Finn was aware that a whole generation had grown up without exposure to perhaps the single most vital industry in the Commonwealth....Agriculture. This scholarship is awarded in Finn’s memory to foster an understanding and perhaps help to close the gap between the farm community and suburban Massachusetts. Applicants must be a child or legal dependent of a MFBF regular member in good standing. Applicants must be at least in their junior year of college when

the scholarship is awarded. Applicants must be majoring in communications, journalism, music or an agriculturally related field. Application must be submitted to “The Greg Finn Scholarship Fund” by Aug. 31. Application must be accompanied by a sealed official copy of the applicant’s college transcript; and a 250 word statement on why the applicant has chosen this particular field of study and projected career goals. To request an application please contact MFBF at info@mfbf.net or 508-481-4766.

Congress Votes to
Extend Paycheck
Protection
Program into
August

Both chambers of Congress have voted to extend the application period for the federal Paycheck Protection Program. RJ Karney, director of congressional relations at AFBF, explained why program is important for farmers in a recent Newsline from AFBF.

“Even as the economy gradually begins to reopen, farmers and ranchers continue to encounter enormous volatility within the markets,” Karney said. “The supply chains are rapidly reacting to the impact of the pandemic, and the Paycheck Protection Program is a guaranteed loan program which includes \$670 billion for small businesses” including agricultural enterprises. The program helps businesses keep employees on the payroll.

A meager 1.5 percent of approved funding for the program has gone to the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting sectors combined. AFBF is working with Congress and the administration on changes that will allow more farmers and ranchers to participate, especially since \$130 billion remains in the program.

Entrepreneurs Needed To Rise To The
Challenge

The Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge is a national business competition that showcases U.S. startups developing innovative solutions that address challenges facing America’s farmers, ranchers and rural communities. Launched in 2015, The Challenge was the first national business competition of its kind focused exclusively on rural entrepreneurs.

Now in their seventh year, the American Farm Bureau Federation in partnership with Farm Credit, are looking to identify the top entrepreneurs who are addressing

both traditional challenges farmers face on their operation, such as access to labor, optimizing yield

Farm Bureau will award \$145,000 in startup funds to ten businesses, culminating at a live pitch

competition and networking event at the AFBF Annual Convention in January 2021 in San Diego, CA. The Farm Bureau Entrepreneurs of the Year will be awarded \$50,000 in startup funds provided by sponsors Bayer Crop Science, Country Financial, Farm Bureau Bank, Farm Bureau Financial Services, Farm Credit and John Deere.

and reducing operating costs, to entrepreneurs who are addressing new challenges facing farmers and rural communities in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Entries are due July 31. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.fb.org/land/ag-innovation-challenge-2021>.



Nutrition's Role in Sustainable Livestock Production Practices 2020
Summer 2020 Virtual Field Workshop and Online
Programming

Webinar, Tuesday, August 18, 2020, 9 - 11 am

A Virtual Field Workshop -- Silvopasturing at UMass

A tour of the silvopasture work at the UMass Agricultural Learning Center in Amherst, MA. With Nikki Burton of UMass Extension, we will have an online tour of their silvopasture, which includes sheep within a chestnut grove, and follow that with questions and discussion.

If you have questions that you would like to send in advance that Nikki can address, please email rachel.bespuda@uconn.edu. You can also submit your questions at our registration page.

Register for the workshop at <https://forms.gle/Q6MuG7xyvUH9y98x9> or by emailing jean.king@uconn.edu. You will receive an email with the link to join the webinar.

Our SARE programming this summer has changed as we respond to the challenges of learning together during the Covid pandemic. Our June 10 virtual workshop at Stone Hill Farm in Plainfield CT offered great information on 100% grass-fed pasture raised beef and rotational grazing. The recording and videos from that workshop will be on our website next week. We have cancelled the July Field Workshop. Below are some suggested other workshop opportunities that relate to the topics we have addressed this year.

Other Summer Learning Opportunities

UMASS Webinar Series on grazing and forage season extension
<https://ag.umass.edu/crops-dairy-livestock-equine/events/webinar-series-announcement-grazing-forage-season-extension>

NOFAMass is offering several online programs with information related to our learning experiences. Connect here to those opportunities: www.nofamass.org/events

These workshops are part of a 2017-2020 USDA/NESARE Professional Development Program Grant, a joint project among the Universities of CT, MA and RI.

Project Director: Rachel Bispuda, UConn rachel.bispuda@uconn.edu
www.meatsystems.uconn.edu

**Padula Brothers**

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Member Discount

**\$500 off 5000 series and up**

**\$250 off 1-4 series Compact Utility Tractor**

**\$50 off D100 - X700 Riding Lawn Equipment**

Padula Brothers is pleased to offer an exclusive discount on equipment purchases to MFBF members. Just show a current membership card to receive your discount of \$50-\$500 dollars off your purchase of a new John Deere!

Lancaster.....978-537-3345
Raynham.....508-824-4494
Greenfield....413-475-3801

WWW.PADULABROTHERS.COM

Farm Bureau Farm Dog of the Year Nominations Accepted Until Aug. 20

Farmers are invited to submit nominations for the 2021 Farm Bureau Farm Dog of the Year contest, with support from Purina. This is the third year of the contest, which celebrates farm dogs that work alongside farmers and ranchers to produce nutritious food for families and their pets across America.

The grand prize winner – Farm Bureau Farm Dog of the Year – will win a year’s worth of Purina dog food and \$5,000 in prize money. The winner will be recognized at a Farm Dog of the Year award ceremony at the American Farm Bureau Federation Convention in January. Up to four regional runners-up* will win \$1,000 each in prize money.

“We’re pleased to continue this award, which provides a great point of connection for the general public to get a glimpse into farm life,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “It’s especially appropriate after a year of unprecedented challenges in agriculture to recognize the dual role farm dogs often play as both working dogs and companions to farm families.”

According to scientific research insights provided by our partner

Purina, living with pets can provide marked health benefits. For example, spending just 30 minutes with a dog has been proven to boost human levels of oxytocin, which has been found to reduce stress, fight depression and create feelings of trust.

“Even in these uncertain times, farm and ranch work doesn’t stop, and farmers count on farm dogs to be right there to face these challenges together,” Duvall said.

Desired attributes in the Farm Dog of the Year include helpfulness to the farmer and his/her family, playfulness and obedience. The 2021 Farm Dog of the Year will also be featured in a video. The profile of 2020 Farm Dog of the Year Flint can be viewed here.

“Purina is proud to support the American Farm Bureau Federation’s Farm Dog of the Year contest,” said Jack Scott, VP of sustainability at Purina. “We understand the positive impacts pets have on people’s lives as companions and contributors to farmers’ and

ranchers’ operations. All of the fantastic submissions we receive truly help demonstrate that people and pets are better together, and we look forward to hearing and seeing many more stories in this year’s contest.”

Farm dog owners must be Farm Bureau members to enter their dogs in the competition. Applicants who are not Farm Bureau members can visit fb.org to join to learn about becoming a member.

Eligibility guidelines and submission requirements are available at <https://fb.org/2021farmdog>. Farm Dog of the Year nominations, which include written responses to questions, still photos and a video clip (optional), must be received by Aug. 20, 2020, for consideration. The Farm Bureau Farm Dog of the Year contest is sponsored by the American Farm Bureau Federation.

People’s Choice Pup was a popular element of the 2020 contest. More than 100,000 social media followers voted, commented, shared or liked their favorite dog. People’s Choice Pup will return for the 2021 contest, with profiles of the top 10 dogs shared starting in October, with the public invited to vote. Bragging rights and a \$50 cash prize will be awarded to the People’s Choice Pup.



The UMass Plant Diagnostic Laboratory Has Reopened!

The UMass Plant Diagnostic Laboratory has reopened for plant disease, insect pest and invasive plant/weed samples.

At this time, only accepting mail-in samples; walk-in samples cannot be accepted.

Please refer to this website for instructions on sample submission and to access the submission form:<https://ag.umass.edu/services/plant-diagnostics-laboratory>

Mail delivery services and staffing have been altered due to the pandemic, so please allow for some additional time for samples to arrive at the lab and undergo the diagnostic process. We look forward to resuming activities and diagnosing your plant problems!

NOTE: The UMass Extension Soil and Plant Nutrient Testing Lab will announce its re-opening plans soon.

American Farm Bureau Federation Intends To Host Fall Womens’ Communications Bootcamp

The American Farm Bureau Federation intends to host the Fall Session of Women’s Communications Boot Camp in Washington, D.C., Oct. 13-16, 2020. The application period is now open and will close Aug. 15, 2020.



AFBF is closely monitoring the state of the pandemic in the United States and will make a decision as to whether to hold Communications Boot Camp by August

31. Individuals that apply should save their application to apply to either of the 2021 Women’s Communications Boot Camp sessions in the case of a cancellation.

<https://20fallbootcamp.questionpro.com/>

We Need You!

Consider Serving On One Of Our Advisory Committees!

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation has a number of committees that provide leadership and staff with guidance and assistance throughout the year. Many of these committees meet on an as-needed basis, however, some meet more.

These committees include:

- Apiary • Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) • Cannabis
- Equine • Fruit and Vegetables • Livestock • Membership
- Promotion and Education • Resolutions • Young Farmers and Ranchers

Are you interested in serving on one of these committees? Please get in touch with your county Farm Bureau president to see if there is an opening. Call MFBF’s office at 508-481-4766 for your president’s contact information.

Allied Business Directory

Adams Farm

854 Bearsden Rd
Athol, MA 01331
978-249-9441
Products & Services: Full Service Slaughterhouse For Farmers & Mid-Sized Companies.

Blood Farm

94 West Main Street
West Groton, MA 01472
978-448-6669
Products & Services: We are a 7 generation, family run, slaughter and processing facility.

Cape Ann Tree Ser

Ten Fernwood Lake Ave.
Gloucester MA 01930
978-768-7700
capeanntree.com
capeanntree@gmail.com
Products & Services: We improve the outdoor living spaces of our clients- from tree work, to lawn care, masonry to landscape design and installation... we can do it all.

Chickadee Hill Farm Services

Jeffrey Head
366 Central St
Rowley, MA 01969
chickadeehillfarmservices@hotmail.com
978-948-8620
chickadeehillfarmservices.com
Products & Services: firewood, screened loam and compost, mulch, wood chips, lawn mowing and landscaping, pumpkins, Christmas trees and vegetables.

Eastern Solar

Ken Nelson
P.O. Box 60
Wayland, MA 01778
508-882-0102
easternsolarservice.com
easternsolarservices@hotmail.com
Products & Services: Serving the solar industry for 40 years. Service, maintenance, training and repair of existing solar systems.

Franklin Agway

157 Cottage Street
Franklin, MA 02038
508-528-1333
franklinagway.com
franklinurbanfarmstore@gmail.com
Products & Services: Feed/ supplies for livestock and pets. Garden supplies, tools, seeds, plants, fertilizer & chemicals for organic gardening. Homebrew, cheese-making, canning and beekeeping supplies.

Harness / Horseman's Association of New England

POB 1811
Plainville, MA 02762
508-918-8852
www.hhane.com
president@hhane.com
Products & Services: We are a non-profit membership association for harness horsemen and women.

We promote harness racing both in Massachusetts and nationally.

Heritage Hemp

99 Industrial Dr
Northampton, MA 01060-2359
(800) 674-3671
jgoodyear@heritagecbd.com
www.heritagecbd.com
Products & Services: Industrial hemp CBD genetics including premium seeds, clones and seedlings; hemp CBD processing, drying, extraction and lab testing services.

Hyperion Systems, LLC

100 University Drive
Amherst, MA 01002
413-549-2900
www.HyperionSystemsLLC.com
Products & Services: Dual-use agricultural solar project development and research company. Funded by NREL and in collaboration with UMass Amherst.

M5 Landworks

1 Mathewson St
Plainville, MA 02762
508-510-2004
M5Landworks1@gmail.com
Products & Services: We specialize in undergrowth brush clearing and mowing.

Major Landscaping

626 Lindsey Street
Attleboro, MA 02703
508-431-4336
majorlandscaping508@gmail.com
Products & Services: Landscaping & construction

Massachusetts Nursery & Landscape Association

P.O. Box 387
Conway, MA 01341
413-369-4731
http://www.mnla.com/
mnlaoffice@aol.com
Products & Services: MNLA is a statewide association dedicated to advancing the interests of "green industry" professionals.

Meatworks

287 State Rd
Westport, MA 02790
774-319-5616
Products & Services: An animal-welfare focused slaughter & processing facility for Southern New England

Mulch By The Yard

Stoughton and Cape Cod MA
781-341-2275
jphorigan@me.com
Products & Services: Kiln dried bagged shavings trailer loads US made. 60 days free storage on trailer.

Otis Poultry Farm

1570 North Main Rd
Otis, MA 01253
413-269-4438
www.otispoultryfarm.com
Products & Services: Selections of chicken & turkey pies with & without vegetables in assorted

sizes. They have a large selection of sheepskin slippers & sugarfree candy.

Osprey Development Partners

21 Stanwich Lane
Greenwich, CT 06830
203-585-0225
jorum@ospreydevelopmentpartners.com
ospreydevelopmentpartners.com
Products & Services: Agricultural and non-agricultural land and building solar development

Paul Massad Landscaping

338 Turnpike Road,
Westborough, MA 01581
508-869-6977
www.paulmassadlandscaping.com
info@paulmassadlandscaping.com
Products & Services: We are a full service design-build landscape and nursery company, who supplies specialty trees, shrubs, boulders and granite pieces.

Pope Energy

Doug Pope
42 8th Street, #4413B
Boston, MA 02129
617-337-0199
doug.pope@popeenergy.com
Products & Services: ag solar development

Progressive Grower Inc.

81 Charlotte Furnace Road
West Wareham, MA 02576
508-273-7358
www.progressivegrower.com
Info@ProgressiveGrower.com
Products & Services: The company carries a full line of chemicals and fertilizers at competitive prices and an extensive stock of farm equipment, tools and clothing.

Structures of New England

155 Millenium Cir
Lakeville, MA 02347-1248
(508) 946-5555
gwatka@rsofne.com
www.rsofne.com
Product & Services: RSNE custom fabricates and installs energy efficient, high quality walk-in coolers and freezers and insulated doors.

Resource Management, Inc.

1171 NH RT 175
Holderness, NH 03245
605-536-8900
www.rmirecycles.com
RMI@RMIrecycles.com
Product & Services: We provide responsive, innovative and high quality organic residuals and recycling services to address our customer interests and needs.

Rice Fruit Farms

757 Main St
Wilbraham, MA 01095
413-596-4002
www.ricefruitfarm.com
info@ricefruitfarm.com

Products & Services: bakery, fruits and vegetables, coffee, homemade ice cream, milk, eggs, local products, honey and olive oil.

Rusty's Tree Service

539 Hudson Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
978-621-4939
kbent1@verizon.net
Products & Services: Rusty's Tree Service is a Sudbury-based landscaping firm offering tree surgery, maintenance and removal services.

SEMAP, Inc.

P.O. Box 80625
South Dartmouth, MA 02748
508-524-2601
www.semaponline.org
kschwalbe@semaponline.org
Products & Services: local food promotion, sustainable farming education and healthy food initiatives.

Sirum Equipment

310 Federal Street
Montague, MA 01351
413-367-2481
sirumequipment.com
Admindept@sirumequipment.com
Product/Brands Sirum

Equipment carries: LS Tractors, Ferris, Simplicity, Snapper, Stihl, Patz, Kuhn, Woods, Landpride, Ariens, Gravely

Soares Flower Garden Nursery

1021 Sandwich Rd
East Falmouth, MA 02536
508-548-5288
www.soaresflowergardennursery.com
soaresfgn@gmail.com
Products & Services: retail greenhouse featuring locally grown annuals, perennials, vegetables and herbs and shrubs, as well as a landscape design, build and maintenance firm.

SouthCoast Ag Consulting LLC

South Dartmouth, MA
774-269-6062
southcoastagconsulting.com
Products & Services: Certified Crop Adviser and Technical Services Provider/NRCS. Providing complete and comprehensive nutrient management and crop consulting for all agronomic crops.

The Big E

1305 Memorial Ave.
West Springfield, MA 01089
413-205-5011
www.thebige.com/p/agriculture
info@thebige.com
Products & Services: fairgrounds & annual fair

World Farmers Inc.

769 Main St
Lancaster, MA 01523
978-706-7935
http://www.worldfarmers.org/
info@worldfarmers.org
Products & Services: education, beginning farmers and ranchers.

We Can't Afford To Take Our Farmers For Granted Anymore

Reprint From The Daily Hampshire Gazette, Written By Sarah S. Gardner

Massachusetts dairy farmers are essential to our state's food supply. They are essential workers who have been laboring around the clock through the pandemic to make milk for us in Massachusetts.

Dairy is the state's largest agricultural sector in terms of output and job creation. Dairy farms circulate millions into local economies. What's more, thanks to our dairy industry in Massachusetts, we have been well supplied with dairy products through the COVID months. Farmers have donated thousands of gallons of milk to feed the hungry, including the one in four children who don't get enough to eat.

With almost a quarter of Massachusetts' residents experiencing food insecurity since the pandemic began, this is time to support our farms and strengthen agriculture. Commercial dairy farms safeguard our food security, yet they are facing a crisis themselves. Even before the pandemic hit, milk prices were on a five-year slide.

Consumption was on the decline and farmers took another hit last year when President Trump started a trade war with China, a major overseas market for dairy. Then this spring, virtually overnight, sales halved as food services and restaurants closed to combat the spread of COVID-19.

Darryl Williams, who with his son, Jackson, farms their 180-milking cow dairy in Hatfield, is one of many farmers who fears he won't be able to stay in business. After five years of low milk prices, and debt from a necessary investment in a voluntary robotic milking system, they were looking forward to a year of more income from their milk. But as a result of the pandemic price dive, they are now selling each 100 pounds of milk at \$7 below what it costs to produce it.

"The May and June prices are catastrophic for all dairy farmers," says Williams. "We are blessed with the help of the Massachusetts Dairy Tax Credit, but it doesn't make us whole. The pandemic has pushed us to the brink."

The system is unfair to our essential farmers.

Massachusetts has 117 family dairy farms that produce enough milk to supply half the state's needs. Four major dairy plants across the state — Hood, Garelick, Friendly's, and Agri-Mark Cabot — bottle and process milk, cream, butter, yogurt, cottage cheese and ice cream that supplies supermarkets and mini-marts. Several other dairy farms produce and process their own products.

"We are in danger of losing a critical part of our food supply when we need it most," said Ed Townley, chief executive of Agri-Mark Cabot Creamery.

It's risky to rely on other regions for 90 percent of our food, especially when it means dependence on dwindling Midwestern aquifers, California's unreliable water supply, and long-haul trucking. We can't afford to take our farmers for granted anymore.

The federal milk pricing system disadvantages New England dairy farmers. We can't do much to change that pricing system, but we can use our purchasing power at the grocery store. We can befriend and defend the farms in our communities and we can support

state programs like the Dairy Farm Tax Credit, which has kept our farms afloat when the milk price takes a plunge (every month this year), and the Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program, which keeps farmland affordable for farmers.

June was National Dairy Month, a time to express gratitude to farmers. As you sip your iced coffee, dig in to your take-out pizza or enjoy an ice cream cone this month, take a moment to consider the source of the milk, cheese and ice cream. There's a good chance it was produced and processed in Massachusetts.

Milk is an affordable, vegetarian, protein-rich local product made from rain-fed grass converted by a cow into a nutrient-dense, low fat food packed with all nine essential amino acids that people need. You could say it's the original plant-based milk: more nutritious than its imitators. If you've switched to "milk" made from almonds grown in California, soy from Brazil, Midwestern oats, or Southeast Asian coconuts, consider switching back to cow's milk this month.

Buying Massachusetts' dairy products supports our farmers, our farmland, and ensures our future food security.



Meatworks: Booking Update

In response to unprecedented demand for local meat processing: Starting June 2020 processing dates at Meatworks will be made available 18-months out on a rolling basis. For example, on June 1, 2020 bookings for November 2021 will be opened.

- New booking procedures apply to ALL species.
 - Booking dates are non-transferable. If you have to cancel your booking, please call Meatworks immediately.
 - A slaughter-only fee will be charged for 'no-shows'.
 - Maximum limits (amount of animals per booking) will be applied as necessary
- Please call Meatworks at 774-319-5616 to book processing dates.

Recording Of
MFBF Webinar/
Call With SBA
On PPP, EIDL

Farm Credit East Seeks Modern Ag Photos

Farm Credit East is currently seeking creative images of modern Northeast agriculture, commercial fishing and forest products to fill the pages of its 2021 Agricultural Views calendar. Upload your picturesque images from the farm, woods or dock that to FarmCreditEast.com/Calendar by July 31 for a chance to win \$100.

Winning photographs will be featured in Farm Credit East's 2021 calendar. From all entries, 14 photos will be selected for a \$100 prize each. Additional photos will be selected to fill the calendar pages, each earning a \$25 prize.

"For more than a decade, we've received many photo submissions illustrating progressive

agriculture operations," says Kristie Matuszewski, Farm Credit East director of marketing and communications. "We look for fresh imagery that represents Northeast farming, horticulture, forestry and commercial fishing during every season, as well as shots that celebrate rural life in New England, New York or New Jersey."

Winning photos are selected based on technical quality, clarity and composition, as well as photos that capture unique views of modern agriculture and life in the country. So take your camera out to the field, barn or dock, in the tractor cab, out on

the open water, or into the woods, and send in the many views of agriculture enriching northeast rural communities.

"Last year, we received more than 700 images from dozens of talented photographers. We look forward to receiving many more entries this year," said Matuszewski.



Only digital photos are accepted. Contest rules and an entry form, as well as inspiration from previous years' calendars, can be found at FarmCreditEast.com/Calendar. The submission deadline is July 31.

Did you know that it only takes 10 minutes to fill out an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Advance Application? And did you know that Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans may convert to a grant and be forgivable? Or did you know that all loans made through the Small Business Administration (SBA) between now and Sept. 27 will receive 6 months of forgiveness payments?

These programs and more was discussed during a Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) webinar on June 10. To view the recording, please visit: <https://youtu.be/pzCqKde3IDY>

Being A Farm Bureau Member Pays

MFBF Members Enjoy Discounts From National & Local Business Partners

Please visit www.MFBF.net for more information.

American National Insurance offers special rate plans for MFBF members on personal auto, business owners policies, SFP-10 and Country Estate insurance.



The personal auto special rate plan will represent a 5% savings on your American National personal auto policy if it's associated with an active MFBF membership. The business owners policy special rate plan will save up to \$100 off your business owners policies if associated with an active MFBF membership. The SFP-10 and Country Estate special rate plan will afford about a 3% savings on you Farm Family farm policy if it's associated with an active MFBF membership.

Visit americannational.com to find your local agent.

Massachusetts Farm Bureau members now receive a \$500 Bonus Cash offer from Ford Motor Company or \$750 Lincoln Motor Company on a purchase or lease of a new qualifying vehicle. You must be a Farm Bureau member in Massachusetts for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase or lease.



Visit fordfarmbureauadvantage.com or LincolnFarmBureauAdvantage.com or see your authorized Ford or Lincoln Dealer for qualifications and complete details.

Ford Program Disclaimer:
Farm Bureau Bonus Cash is exclusively for active Farm Bureau members who are residents of the United States. This incentive is not available on Shelby GT350®, Shelby GT350R, Mustang BULLITT, Ford GT, Focus RS and F-150 Raptor. This offer may not be used in conjunction with most other Ford Motor Company and Lincoln Motor Company private incentives or AXZD-Plans. Some customer and purchase eligibility restrictions apply. Must be a Farm Bureau member for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase and take new retail delivery from dealer by January 2, 2020.



Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation members can save up to \$2,500 on eligible Cat® machines. On top of that, members receive an additional \$250 credit on work tool attachments purchased with new Cat machines.

Visit <http://www.farmbureau.co/member-benefits/> for more information.

John Deere now offers GreenFleet Loyalty Rewards to members of Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation. Farm Bureau members receive discounts, special low rate financing and all other benefits associated with GreenFleet Platinum 2 status.



It's easy to become a GreenFleet member too! Just sign up for John Deere GreenFleet Loyalty Rewards program using a valid member ID and zip code for membership verification and become a Platinum 2 level by visiting www.JohnDeere.com/FarmBureau.

MFBF members receive \$300-\$500 off Farmall, Maxxum and more! Visit <http://www.farmbureau.co/member-benefits/> and enter your membership ID number and zip code to print a certificate to use towards your next Case-IH purchase. Please print before heading to your local dealer.



Massachusetts Farm Bureau members save 20% off published at almost 5,000 Choice Hotels Worldwide! Save 20% off at participating Comfort Inn®, Comfort Suites®, Quality Inn®, Sleep Inn®, Clarion®, MainStay Suites®, Suburban Extended Stay®, Rodeway Inn® and Econo Lodge® hotels. Call 800.258.2847 and mention your Massachusetts Farm Bureau ID or go to choicehotels.com and enter your Massachusetts Farm Bureau ID to book online (*if you don't know the MFBF ID call our office today at 508-481-4766).





Whether you are looking for an upscale hotel, an all-inclusive resort or something more cost-effective, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts has the right hotel for you! As a Massachusetts Farm Bureau member, you will save up to 20% off the Best Available Rate* at over 8,000 participating hotels worldwide. Discover the benefits of booking your vacation with Wyndham Hotels & Resorts as a Massachusetts Farm Bureau member. Our vast portfolio of hotels and resorts offer a variety of accommodations to meet your travel needs. Wherever people go, Wyndham will be there to welcome them.

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*Tufts University is a referral medical facility and should not replace your primary veterinarian service. This program is only for pre-qualified medical services provided at Tufts University's Large Animal Hospital when referred by your veterinarian.

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Thank you for your support!

Recipe: Perfect Baby Back Ribs

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Dash cayenne pepper (optional)
- 2 racks baby back ribs
- 2 tablespoons white or cider vinegar
- Nonstick spray, for spraying slow-cooker insert
- 1/4 cup beer (any kind)
- 1 cup your favorite BBQ sauce (optional)



How to make

- For the dry rub: Place the salt, smoked and sweet paprika, onion powder, garlic powder, cumin, black pepper and cayenne (if using) in a small bowl and mix with a fork until well blended.
- Sprinkle the ribs with the vinegar and rub into the flesh. Rub the dry rub mixture all over the ribs. (This may be done the night before for extra flavor, and placed in the refrigerator.)
- Spray the insert of a large (at least 6 quarts) slow cooker with nonstick spray. Place the ribs in the insert, cutting the racks in half if needed to fit. Pour the beer on the bottom of the insert.
- Cover and cook on low until the meat is tender but still intact (about 9 hours).
- When the ribs are almost cooked, prepare a grill for high heat.
- Remove the cooked ribs from the slow cooker, blot any excessive (dripping) moisture and place them on the hot grill. Cook until a nice char is formed, 10 to 15 minutes, coating them with BBQ sauce (if using) as they cook.

From: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/melissa-darabian/perfect-baby-back-ribs-3415182>

American National Announces Premium Credit For Personal Auto Clients

In an effort to help ease financial uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, American National is providing a premium credit to its personal auto insurance customers.

At a time when many Americans are doing the right thing by staying at home and off the road, American National is doing the right thing for its customers by taking steps to help them, including providing a premium credit to all its personal auto policyholders.

A 15% credit will automatically be applied to the monthly premium of every policy in force at the end of April and again at the end of May, 2020. Policyholders do not have to take any action to receive the credit.

American National has always been there for its clients and this has never been more true than in times of crisis. Its proud history of providing outstanding service to clients through dedicated agents will continue.

American National also announced it will cover its insured drivers who are making deliveries of food, medicine or other essential goods in their personal vehicles for their employer—something typically not covered by personal auto policies.

American National is committed

to helping clients through times of hardship. As the lives of individuals across the country are impacted on a massive scale by the current situation, we are proud of the steps we're taking to help our clients and their families.

The premium credit is in addition to other steps the company has taken to help ease the burden of clients during this difficult time. American National is working with state insurance departments to secure approval for the premium credit and other measures. These include:

- Payment Relief:** American National has suspended cancellation of coverage due to non-payment for all policyholders. While American National encourages policyholders to continue to make payments on policies, clients can go to <https://www.americannational.com/wps/portal/an/menu/contact> and discuss a revised payment plan or method.
- No Minimum Payment Requirements:** The company is



suspending minimum payment requirements on all policies. Clients may pay any amount between \$1 and the full account balance, regardless of the minimum amount shown.

- Enhanced Self Service:** American National is adding capabilities to their online portal. Clients can now suspend Auto Pay to prevent payments from being withdrawn automatically from their bank accounts by going to <https://www.americannational.com/wps/portal/an/home/info/response-to-coronavirus/#cancellations>

Working through challenges together with clients is the foundation of American National. For 115 years, the company has built a reputation of doing the right thing by its clients and being there whenever needed. That holds true now more than ever.

New England Leopold Conservation Award Seeks Nominees

Know a farmer or forestland owner who goes above and beyond in their care and management of natural resources? Nominate them for the 2020 New England Leopold Conservation Award®.

Sand County Foundation presents the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 20 states for extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. In New England the \$10,000 award is presented annually with American Farmland Trust and New England Forestry Foundation.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award recognizes landowners who inspire others with their dedication to soil health, water quality and wildlife habitat on private, working land. In his influential 1949 book, A Sand County Almanac, Leopold called for an ethical relationship between people and the land they

own and manage.

Nominations may be submitted on behalf of a landowner in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. Landowners may also nominate themselves. The application can be found at www.sandcountyfoundation.org/ApplyLCA.

The application deadline date is July 15, 2020. Applications can be emailed to award@sandcountyfoundation.org. If mailed, applications must be postmarked by July 15, and mailed to: Leopold Conservation Award c/o New England Forestry Foundation P.O. Box 1346 Littleton, MA 01460

Applications will be reviewed by an independent panel of agricultural and forestry conservation leaders.

"Leopold Conservation Award recipients are at the forefront of a movement by America's farmers, ranchers and foresters to simultaneously achieve economic and environmental success," said Kevin McAleese, Sand County Foundation President and CEO.

The New England Leopold Conservation Award is made possible through the generous support of American Farmland Trust, New England Forestry Foundation, The Ida and Robert Gordon Family Foundation, Wildlands and Woodlands, David and Ann Ingram, Whole Foods Market, the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, and Farm Credit East.

Last year the inaugural recipient of the award was Bill Hull of Hull Forest Products in Pomfret Center, Connecticut.

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REAL ESTATE APPRAISER/CONSULTANT: Valuations and consulting for estate planning/gifting, buying/selling, APR/CR, Chapter 61, 61A, 61B tax appeals. William King 508-867-2600 or whking2005@gmail.com

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Use the application in this issue, or sign-up online: <http://www.farmbureau.co/online-application/>.

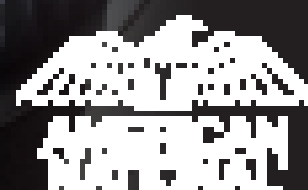


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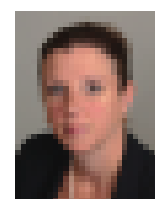
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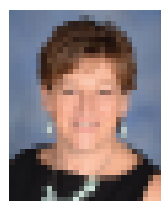
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