



Young Farmers & Ranchers Happenings

If anyone is interested in hosting a tour of their farm
or joining the YF&R committee, please email
Heather at
heatherbonanno@gmail.com.

**Make Plans To Attend Our Sept. 25 Social At
Hollis Hills Farm!**



***Live Music!
Good Food!
Great Company!***

Time: 6 - 9 p.m.

Location: 240 Marshall Rd, Fitchburg, MA 01420

Registered attendees will receive a voucher for \$8 worth of food/drink!

Register to Attend Online: <https://mfbf.net/mfbf-yfr-social-event/>

Upcoming YF&R Tours!

If you are interested in attending any of the following tours, please let us know so we can send you details. Please email katelyn@mfbf.net.

Oct. 2, 2021

Join us for a tour of Barstow's Dairy Store and Bakery and Longview Farm. Longview Farm has been in the Barstow family since 1806 and the sixth and seventh generations now in charge are doing everything they can to continue this long run far into the future. With diversified revenue streams, robotic milking machines and an anaerobic digester the produces enough power to supply electricity to 250 homes, the family is simultaneously building a sustainable farm and a sustainable business. From prize-winning pie recipes, to chili made with the farm's own beef, to their popular sweet corn stand, Barstow's is a destination for good eats as well as tours of their operation. The farm draws everyone from local grade-schoolers to veterinary students and the Barstows really enjoy sharing their approach with all. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.barstowslongviewfarm.com>.

Oct. 15, 2021

Join us for a tour of Four Star Farm! Nestled along the banks of the Connecticut River you'll find the family farm, a fertile piece of land (about 250 acres). The farm's heritage is deeply rooted in agricultural tradition, built and passed down by 14 generations, and driven by a steadfast commitment to responsibly balance what is right for the environment with what is viable for the farmland and the family. Over the years, the farm has evolved and innovated to remain sustainable in changing markets and is now focused on hops. To learn more, please visit: <https://fourstarfarms.com>.

Nov. 10 & 11, 2021

The group will tour agriculture on Martha's Vineyard. More details to follow!

FDA's Guidance for Industry: Evaluating the Safety of Flood-affected Food Crops for Human Consumption



With the excessive amount of rain we've received so far this season, and the projection of an active hurricane season this fall, flooding is an issue for many farms this year, particularly in the Western end of the state. If your farm is susceptible to flooding, please read the FDA's **Guidance for Industry: Evaluating the Safety of Flood-affected Food Crops for Human Consumption**, found at [this link](#).

Per the guidance: "If the edible portion of a crop is exposed to flood waters, it is considered adulterated under section 402(a)(4) (21 U.S.C. 342(a)(4)) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and should not enter human food channels. There is no practical method of reconditioning the edible portion of a crop that will provide a reasonable assurance of human food safety. Therefore, the FDA recommends that these crops be disposed of in a manner that ensures they are kept separate from crops that have not been flood damaged to avoid adulterating "clean" crops (Ref. 1, 2, 3)."

The guidance also addresses potential microbial, chemical and fungal contamination, the safety of food crops when flood waters did NOT contact the edible portion of the crop, as well as flooding vs. pooled water.

Please contact [MDAR's Produce Safety Division](#) if you have any questions regarding the safety of your crops.

USDA to Invest \$50 Million in New Cooperative Agreements for Racial Justice and Equity

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing up to \$50 million in cooperative agreements to support historically underserved farmers and ranchers with climate-smart agriculture and forestry. The Racial Justice and Equity Conservation Cooperative Agreements are available to entities and individuals for two year projects that expand the delivery of conservation assistance to farmers who are beginning, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers.

“Historically underserved producers face significant barriers in accessing USDA assistance for conservation and climate-smart agriculture,” said Terry Cosby, Chief of USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). “USDA is committed to revising programs to be more equitable, and these producers deserve our support as they contribute to our vibrant and diverse agricultural communities.”

The projects should help historically underserved farmers and ranchers in implementing natural resources conservation practices that:

- Improve soil health;
- Improve water quality;
- Provide habitat for local wildlife species of concern;
- Improve the environmental and economic performance of working agricultural land; and
- Build and strengthen local food projects that provide healthy food and economic opportunities.

Projects should remove barriers to access and reach historically underserved groups through a combination of program outreach and technical assistance in managing natural resources that address one or more of the following four NRCS priority areas:

- Addressing local natural resource issues;
- Using climate-smart agriculture practices and principles;
- Encouraging existing and new partnerships; and
- Developing state and community-led conservation leadership for historically underserved agricultural producers, including educating and training students for careers in natural resources management.

Who Is Eligible

Entities and individuals who provide outreach assistance to historically underserved groups are eligible, including:

- Native American tribal governments and organizations
- Nonprofit organizations
- Private and public institutions of higher education
- Individuals

Historically underserved producers include those who are considered beginning, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers and ranchers.

How to Apply

Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 25, 2021. See the [grants.gov announcement](#) for details and application instructions.

This NRCS assistance builds on other USDA assistance to help historically underserved producers. In July, USDA’s Risk Management Agency invested nearly \$1 million in nine risk management education projects focused on historically underserved producers. Meanwhile, USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced in April its plans to establish partnerships with organizations to provide outreach and technical assistance to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. FSA plans to announce those partnerships in the coming weeks.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is engaged in a whole-of-government effort to combat the climate crisis and conserve and protect our nation’s lands, biodiversity and natural resources including our soil, air and water. Through conservation practices and partnerships, USDA aims to enhance economic growth and create new streams of income for farmers, ranchers, producers and private foresters. Successfully meeting these challenges will require USDA and our agencies to pursue a coordinated approach alongside USDA stakeholders, including State, local and Tribal governments. USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

Effective Writing Guide for Farm Bureau Volunteers Now Available

Whether it's drafting a grant proposal or writing an application for a County Activity of Excellence award, we could probably all use a refresher on writing effectively and efficiently. The AFBF Leadership Development team has compiled an "Effective Writing for Farm Bureau" handout that includes audience analysis, structure for success, how to keep things short and sweet and social media examples. This resource can be used by state staff to share with volunteer leaders at every level. This can be found in Staff Guides for Training under "Resources" in the Catalog in Farm Bureau University.



For more information on this resource and more on Farm Bureau University, please contact Jordan at jordanh@fb.org

You can register at university.fb.org using code `statefbstaff`, replacing "state" with your state's two-letter postal abbreviation. For example, New York's staff code is `nyfbstaff`.

Growing Your Farm Business Planning Course

Tuesday evenings, January 11 to March 8, 2022 - Location to be determined

MDAR offers a hands-on course to help established farmers develop a business plan and financial projections for their farm business. This course covers topics including resource assessment, marketing strategy, financial management, risk management, quality of life, and goal setting. The course is taught by professional business planners with years of experience working with Massachusetts farms and guest speakers on current topics such as succession planning and online marketing. The cost is \$200 per farm. Enrollment is open to farmers who have been operating a farm business in Massachusetts for at least the two prior years. Eight weekly classes will be held on Tuesday evenings starting January 11 and ending March 8 (with one vacation week).

Plans are for in-person class. Final decision in January based on current COVID conditions. Applications will be accepted until November 19 or until the course is full.

Farmers that complete a business plan by participating in the Growing Your Farm business planning course and then apply and get accepted to MDAR's APR Improvement Program or Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture may be able to waive the business planning phase of these programs, enabling them to move to the contract phase earlier to start implementing their projects.

The Growing Your Farm business planning course has been approved as a certified USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) borrower training for financial management.

TO APPLY: For a Growing Your Farm application, [click here](#), or contact Michael Parker at Michael.Parker@mass.gov, 857-895-0023.

USDA Accepting Applications To Help Cover Costs For Organic Certification



Organic producers and handlers can now apply for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funds to assist with the cost of receiving or maintaining organic certification. Applications for the [Organic Certification Cost Share Program](#) (OCCSP) are due Nov. 1, 2021.

"USDA is here to help all producers, including those who grow our nation's organic food and fiber. Many farmers have told us that cost was a barrier to their ability to get an organic certification," said Zach Ducheneaux, administrator of USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). "By assisting with the costs, this program can help organic farmers get their certification along

with the benefits that come with it.”

OCCSP provides cost-share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products for the costs of obtaining or maintaining organic certification under the USDA’s National Organic Program. Eligible producers include any certified producers or handlers who have paid organic certification fees to a USDA-accredited certifying agent during the 2021 and any subsequent program year. Producers can be reimbursed for expenses made between Oct. 1, 2020 and Sept. 30, 2021 including application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement and arrangement requirements, travel expenses for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage.

For 2021, OCCSP will reimburse 50% of a certified operation’s allowable certification costs, up to a maximum of \$500 for each of the following categories (or “scopes”):

- crops
- wild crops
- livestock
- processing/handling
- State organic program fees

Organic farmers and ranchers may apply through an FSA county office or a participating state agency. This funding will be complemented by an additional \$20 million for organic and transitioning producers through the Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative. More information on that funding will be available in the coming weeks.

SNAP Processing Equipment Available for Farmers, Farmers Markets: Apply By September 24

Free mobile SNAP processing equipment from Novo Dia Group is now available to direct-marketing farms and farmers’ markets through the Department of Transitional Assistance, in collaboration with the Department of Agricultural Resources, and with financial support from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Eligibility is limited to SNAP-authorized farms and markets that do not currently have working equipment received through previous federal grants. Equipment will not process credit/debit. For complete program details and a link to the application, go [here](#).



Are you looking for SNAP processing equipment but not eligible for this program? Learn about other options, [here](#).

Questions? Contact David Webber, 617-626-1754 or David.Webber@mass.gov or DTA.HIP@mass.gov.

Apply Today For MFBAPF’s John & Liolia Schipper Memorial Grant!



Massachusetts farmers are faced with many unique challenges and barriers as the Commonwealth is an expensive and tough business environment. Fortunately, the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation’s Agricultural Preservation Foundation (MFBAPF) is looking to assist farmers with a new grant program that was made possible through a generous bequest from the late John and Liolia Schipper.

With an emphasis on new farmers, all meeting the criteria are welcome to apply.

Eligibility requirements: Applicants must be regular Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation members -or- be sponsored by a regular Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation member at the time of application and enrolled as a regular MFBF to receive grant payments.

Grant applications will be reviewed by a committee and receipts will be notified shortly after. Maximum grant amounts for recipients will be \$3,000.

The deadline to apply is Nov. 1. For an application, please visit: <https://mfbf.net/schipper-grant-program/>.

Developing Risk Management and Marketing Plans
Virtual Workshop Series For Beginning, Women, and Shellfish Growers
in Rhode Island and Massachusetts

Join us for a virtual workshop on risk management and marketing. This workshop will be delivered through nine zoom sessions and will be accompanied by homework assignments, and individualized counseling sessions if desired.

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
June 3 • June 17 • July 8 • July 22 • August 12 • August 26 •
September 16 • September 30 • October 14•

Please plan to attend ALL Nine workshops

To register please contact:

Rhode Island event info here

There is a \$25 non refundable registration fee.

??Questions??

Peggy Siligato (401) 874-5997 Siligato@uri.edu

Paul Russell (508) 472-2364 pmrussell@umass.edu

Tom Smiarowski (413) 320-1718 tsmiarowski@umass.edu

Pre-registration is required to participate. Please register early as space is limited.

At the end of this project, each participant will have developed a personal risk management and marketing plan for their farm/ranch.



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

This workshop is open to all interested persons. The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital status.

Developing Risk Management and Marketing Plans

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June 3 • June 17 • July 8 • July 22 • August 12 • August 26 • September 16 • September 30 • October 14
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Participants are encouraged to attend ALL NINE zoom workshops

Participants will acquire the skills and understand their own operation sufficiently to develop personal risk management and marketing plans and strategies at the enterprise level.

Objective: Assist Beginning, Women and Shellfish Growers respond to and manage risk.

Participants in this virtual workshop series will:

1. Be introduced to the **farm business planning process** and learn how to:
 - Identify and list all of their farm's assets and their productive capacity
 - Determine the current wellbeing of the farm business
 - Review the feasibility of alternative enterprises
 - Evaluate the risks the farm faces.
 - Determine who the customers of the farm are and what utility (form, place, time, possession) these customers want.
 - Make basic marketing decisions:
 - What form, grade, quality to produce.
 - When, where, how to price.
 - When, where, how to deliver.
2. Be introduced to five areas of risk (**Production, Marketing, Financial, Human Resource, Legal**) and learn how to identify, measure, and manage risks on their farms in these areas.
3. Understand financial management of the farm and how to use financial statements (**Income Statement, Balance Sheet**) and **enterprise budgets** to assess the performance of the farm business and make better decisions.
4. Understand marketing principles and how the elements of the **marketing mix (Product, Price, Promotion, Place, People)** are used to create an effective plan to manage the marketing decisions on the farm.
5. Develop a **personal risk management and marketing plan** for your farm.
 - Develop goals in each of the five risk areas, and in each of the five marketing areas.
 - Identify specific actions you will take for each goal.
 - Commit to follow through and implement the actions identified.

Individualized Study

The activities in the workshop series will build on each other with specific homework (individual study) assignments to be conducted following each workshop. Local Extension Educators will also attend the workshops and will provide assistance to the producers on an individual basis to ensure that homework assignments are completed.

Farm Bureau University

What is Farm Bureau University?

“Online Learning for Farm Bureau”

Learning is no longer confined to four walls and formalized training. Farm Bureau University allows Farm Bureau members to learn through interactive experiences online when and where they want. Farm Bureau members can log onto FB University from a desktop computer in their office or on an iPad in the field.



Currently available to Farm Bureau members:

- Board Essentials – Online training for county board members to develop skills and acquire knowledge as a Farm Bureau leader.
- FB Builder – An evaluation tool for your county Farm Bureau to assess on eight building blocks of organizational health.
- Pillars of Agricultural Literacy – A tool to guide you, or a group, through the Pillars of Agricultural Literacy in order to create a purposeful plan to educate consumers about agriculture.

What's new on Farm Bureau University?

Farm Bureau Board Essentials, the newest online learning program, offers resources and training to county board members to improve governance, planning, policy development and advocacy, and membership.

Whether you've been on the board for three weeks or 30 years, Farm Bureau Board Essentials sharpens your skillset and understanding as a board member.

How to register for Farm Bureau University

Any member can register for free at university.fb.org. New users need to register for an account and type

in the correct code. The member code is "statefb" replacing state with the two-letter postal abbreviation. For example a New York Farm Bureau member's code is "nyfb."

Click [here](#) to register today.

**Are you looking for industry events?
Check out MDAR's Agriculture Industry Calendar!**

[Click Here For Calendar](#)

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