



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.

***SEND IN YOUR PHOTOS
TODAY!***



Do you decorate your tractors or barns with lights for the Holiday season?
Enter a photo of them in MFBF's YF&R Farm Holiday Photo Contest by Dec.
15, 2021! Facebook will be the judge, with the photo that receives the most
reactions deemed the "Most Festive." Prizes TBD.

To submit your festive photos, please email your photo, name, mailing

Upcoming YF&R Events!

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.

Jan. 7-12, 2022

AFBF Annual Convention in Atlanta. Details here: <https://www.fb.org/events/afbf-convention>

Feb. 25-28, 2022

AFBF YF&R Conference in Louisville. Details here: <https://www.fb.org/events/2022-young-farmers-ranchers-conference/>

Farm Bureau Delegates Elect Board Members, Adopt Resolutions



The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) hosted its 2021 annual business meeting on Dec. 3, during which delegates voted on board of director positions and discussed and adopted resolutions.

"Farm Bureau is known for its grassroots policy process," said newly elected President and Dracut dairy farmer Warren Shaw. "By having our members bring up their concerns through the resolutions process, MFBF has a strong grasp on the industry and current events. It makes us relevant in today's industry."

This year's annual meeting was notable as it had heavy participation by a dozen or more new MFBF farmer members, all immigrant and refugee farmers operating farms in Massachusetts, supported by the nonprofit

World Farmers. Three of the new MFBF representatives served as voting delegates while more than a dozen sat in attendance.

"Farmers in our program were excited to be part of Farm Bureau forum where they could hear and participate in policy making decisions that influences the farming businesses," said World Farmers Executive Director Henrietta Isaboke. "Since they are such a big part of the food system in Massachusetts with what they produce, they are looking forward to becoming participating members of Farm Bureau both in the county and at the state level."

"I'm excited that Farm Bureau, and myself personally, have connected with World Farmers and am thrilled to see the future of these two organizations working together," said Worcester County Farm Bureau President Heidi Cooper. "This growth in membership reflects the farmers in the Commonwealth and Farm Bureau's mission statement. When farmers come together, we can achieve great feats."

At the end of this meeting, MFBF delegates prioritized resolutions that they believe MFBF staff and leadership should tackle first. Following the statewide meeting, if a resolution has national applicability, the MFBF will bring the resolution to American Farm Bureau Federation's annual meeting in January for consideration.

During the business meeting, delegates also voted on Board of Director positions that were up for election. Following this election, MFBF's 2021-2022 Board of Directors now includes:

- Warren Shaw, President
- Ryan MacKay, Vice President
- Wayne Smith, Treasurer
- Mark Amato, Immediate Past President
- Bob Kilmer, Berkshire County Representative
- Skip Vadnais, Bristol County Representative
- David Ross, Cape & Islands County Representative
- Charlie Tully, Middlesex County Representative
- Barbara Rogers-Scharneck, Essex County Representative
- Lenny Roberts, Franklin County Representative
- Richard Woodger, Hampden County Representative

- Karl Norris, Hampshire County Representative
- Dan Martino, Martha Vineyard's County Representative
- Rudy Medeiros, Norfolk County Representative
- Jim Hayward, Plymouth County Representative
- Heidi Cooper, Worcester County Representative
- Steve Ward, Budget Committee Representative
- Charles Proctor, Budget Committee Representative
- Will Pickard, Budget Committee Representative
- Alex Dowse, Director At Large
- Meghan Gennings, Director At Large
- Laura Abrams, Director At Large
- Heather Bonanno-Baker, Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee Chair

The new board was seated Dec. 3 and will serve until the organization's 2022 annual meeting.

In addition, awards were presented at the meeting that honored American National agents' accomplishments and members distinguished service to agriculture. Most notably, the following awards were presented:

- American National Agent of the Year: Dick Blair
- Rising Star Farm Family Agent: Shelia McCarthy
- John Ogonowski Award for Distinguished Service to Agriculture: Don and Judy Leab, Ioka Valley Farm, Hancock, MA

New Farm Bureau University Media Module Covers Message Crafting, Working with Reporters

The American Farm Bureau Federation's new "Media Advocacy Skills" training module will help farmers, ranchers and other advocates for agriculture with all aspects of working with the media to deliver an impactful message.



The module is available via FB University, which allows Farm Bureau members to learn through interactive experiences online when and where they want. It's easy to log onto the program from a desktop computer in an office or on an iPad in the field.

The module provides a deep dive into media engagement, from building relationships with reporters and understanding what makes a good news story to crafting and delivering a message that hits the mark. Though the media lessons are self-paced, the module takes about 50 minutes to complete.

Other training modules available online through FB University include political advocacy; Board Essentials, which helps county board members develop their skills; FB Builder, an evaluation tool county Farm Bureaus use to assess eight building blocks of organizational health; and Pillars of Agricultural Literacy, a tool to guide individuals or groups in creating a purposeful plan to help consumers learn about agriculture.

Contact Jordan Henry, director of leadership & organizational training (jordanh@fb.org), with questions about Farm Bureau University.

Small-Scale, Local Producers Get Improved Insurance Coverage Through New Micro Farm Policy

Agricultural producers with small-scale farms who sell locally can now get simplified insurance coverage through a new policy designed for their needs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed the new Micro Farm policy, which simplifies recordkeeping and covers post-production costs like washing and value-added products.

"USDA is focused on supporting local and regional



food systems, and Micro Farm is one more example of how we're helping agricultural producers with farms of all shapes and sizes to manage their unique operations and risk," said Marcia Bunger, Administrator for USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA). "The Risk Management Agency values collaboration and feedback from our customers, and Micro Farm is one way we're responding to producers' needs."

Micro Farm is offered through Whole-Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) and is geared to local

producers.

Details include:

- **Eligibility:** Micro Farm is available to producers who have a farm operation that earns an average allowable revenue of \$100,000 or less, or for carryover insureds, an average allowable revenue of \$125,000 or less. The increase in allowable revenue for a carry-over insured will allow for some farm growth in subsequent years before they become ineligible for the program. RMA's research showed that 85% of producers who sell locally reported they made less than \$75,000 in gross sales.
- **Coverage Levels:** All coverage levels will be available to producers using Micro Farm. This will enable producers to purchase the 80% and 85% coverage levels without providing additional paperwork.
- **Underwriting and Recordkeeping Requirements:** Micro Farm minimizes underwriting and recordkeeping requirements, and producers will not have to report expenses and individual commodities.
- **Post-production Revenue:** Producers can include post-production activities as revenue, such as washing and packaging commodities or value-added products like jam.

Micro Farm is available for the 2022 crop year. Sales closing dates are Jan. 31, 2022, Feb. 28, 2022, or March 15, 2022, depending on the producer's county.

Producers with crops insured under another crop insurance policy or a vertically integrated operation will not be eligible.

This new policy derived from research directed by the 2018 Farm Bill, and it includes feedback from producers who grow for their local communities. [See the full report](#)

Specialty and Organic Crops

The Micro Farm policy builds on other RMA efforts to better serve specialty and organic crop growers. This includes WFRP, which provides coverage for producers with larger operations that may not be eligible for Micro Farm. RMA recently made [improvements to WFRP](#) as part of a broader set of [new policies and expanded policies](#) to assist specialty crop and organic producers.

More Information

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA Agent Locator](#). If you have difficulty finding an agent, contact your [RMA Regional Office](#). Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov.

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 safe, 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.

Farm Credit East Offers Seminars For The Next Generation Of Ag Producers

A successful manager is required to master many aspects of the farm business. To help the next generation develop the necessary business and financial skills, Farm Credit East is once again hosting GenerationNext seminars, and is currently seeking interested young leaders to attend. In-person sessions are limited, however a virtual

option is also available.

GenerationNext is optimal for those producers who will be the next generation operators of a farm business or for entrepreneurs starting their own business. The sessions will cover a range of topics, including leadership and management, human resource development, financial management, production economics, marketing, risk management, and farm transfer and estate planning.



“The management skills in the GenerationNext program can be helpful regardless of your role in the operation,” said Chris Laughton, Farm Credit East Director of Knowledge Exchange. “Whether you are the son or daughter who’s returned to the home operation or an entrepreneur looking to grow your ag business, GenerationNext can help prepare you to be successful.”

Whether just entering into a management role or an experienced manager, participants will gain valuable insights from Farm Credit East farm business consultants and from their GenerationNext colleagues. Virtual sessions will be two-hour sessions that run for eight weeks, starting January 5, and running every Wednesday through February.

For more information and to sign up, visit FarmCreditEast.com/GenerationNext. It is not necessary to have an existing relationship with Farm Credit East to attend. Contact your local Farm Credit East office, or call (800) 562-2235 for more information or to sign up.

Do You Have A Buddy On The Farm? Enter Them In MFBF's Inaugural Farm Dog Photo Contest



Do you have a farm dog that follows you around the barnyard, works alongside you, and provides constant companionship? Honor them this winter by entering them in MFBF's Inaugural Farm Dog Photo Contest before the Dec. 15 deadline!

The contest is sponsored by The Pet Food Institute and prizes will be awarded for 'Farm Dog of the Year,' and four separate sub-categories. To enter, please email MFBF Director of Government

and Public Affairs Katelyn Parsons at katelyn@mfbf.net with your full name, full mailing address, email address, a short bio on your dog that includes their name, age, and gender, and at most three photos of your farm dog. In one photo, the dog must be helping on the farm. This contest is meant to honor farm dogs, not house companions.

“Farm dogs work alongside their owners and become trusted, loyal companions,” said MFBF Promotion and Education Committee Chair Meg Gennings. “Our farmers can spend hours many hours alone while working in the field and around their barns. The dogs that work alongside them offer a non-judgmental ear and friend to lean on.”

Farm Dog of the Year will be judged as a People's Choice award, where MFBF will post photos of the dogs on their Facebook page and the pup with the most reactions will receive this title. For the other categories, MFBF staff will serve as a panel of judges to determine winners of each category.

Those categories, in addition to Farm Dog of the Year, include the following:

- Hardest Worker
- Best Dressed
- Best Napper
- Best Buddy

For more information, please visit: <https://mfbf.net/mfbfs-inaugural-farm-dog-photo-contest/>

We look forward to seeing your entries!

2022 Massachusetts Agriculture Calendar

The annual Massachusetts Agriculture Calendar is an excellent resource that serves as an educational tool for teachers, legislators and the public. The calendar provides an attractive daily reminder of the diversity of agriculture across the state. It

includes monthly educational/teaching tips, special ag-related days and website links on each page.

The calendar is a collaboration between the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, The Massachusetts State Grange and the Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom (MAC). Proceeds from the Calendar help with MAC's programs.



Each calendar month features one full-size photograph portraying a Massachusetts farm or farm product. The photographs for each calendar month are winners that were selected from the annual photo contest (deadline July 1st).

Click [here](#) to order your calendars!

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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