

**MFBF VICE  
PRESIDENT WINS  
SECOND IN NATIONAL  
FARM CONTEST**  
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CORNER**  
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MASSACHUSETTS FARM BUREAU FEDERATION'S

Vol. 30, No. 2

# NEWS & VIEWS

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2022

[www.MFBF.net](http://www.MFBF.net)

## Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Detected In Wild Birds In Massachusetts

**H**PAI has been detected in either wild water birds, domestic birds, or both, along the east coast from Canada to Florida. Affected states include MA, CT, ME, NH, NY, and others. HPAI has also been found in KY, IN, and MI. HPAI surveillance of domestic and wild birds in Massachusetts is ongoing.

This means that all domestic poultry in Massachusetts may be at risk of exposure. Use good biosecurity to protect your flock and your facility against the HPAI virus.

Report sick or dead birds: domestic 617-626-1795; wild 508-389-6300.

Once HPAI is detected in a

domestic flock (backyard or commercial), state and federal emergency actions to contain the disease place movement restrictions on all poultry and poultry products nearby. This may have a significant business and financial impact on those neighboring flocks and businesses.

Protect your flock, and your

neighbors' flocks! Prevent the introduction of HPAI through good biosecurity procedures. Eliminate contact between wild birds and your flock. Use a disinfectant foot bath at the entrance to your poultry area. Wear dedicated clothes and shoes when tending to your flock. Avoid contact with other domestic or wild birds, do not allow any visitors to your flock, and do not share equipment with other flocks.

### Meet Bear Paw - MFBF's Farm Dog of the Year

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**BRINGING NEWS TO MASSACHUSETTS  
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# Growing Sustainable Solutions Together

By: Zippy Duvall, AFBF President

Farmers and ranchers believe that each season can be better than the last. That's the optimism driving us forward in the face of hardship and overwhelming challenges. And it's the optimism that has been driving us for decades to adopt innovative tools and techniques to leave our land better than we found it. Looking back on agriculture's achievements, I am optimistic for where we can be in the days and generations to come. We cannot do that work alone, however. We must grow solutions together.

Today, farmers and ranchers are being identified more and more as partners in addressing the challenges of our changing climate. I cannot think of another time when our achievements across agriculture have been so recognized by leaders and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle. Add to that the fact that farmers and ranchers rank as the most trusted professionals in the U.S. today. Americans know they can count on us to produce a safe, sustainable food supply, and we take that trust seriously.

It's unfortunate that same respect is not being shown by some in the national media right now. A couple major publications have started singing from the activist's song sheet rather than presenting the full story of agriculture and sustainability. These articles and editorials claim agriculture to be a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, ignoring the fact that EPA data shows agriculture to be a small contributor overall. Also conveniently leaving out the unique and significant

characteristics of methane, the GHG emitted by animals and manure, that make it different from other industries' emissions of carbon dioxide. I understand that a newspaper column can't provide a full science lesson on methane's natural cycle, with its relatively short life span of 12 years compared to the hundreds of years CO2 remains in the

atmosphere. But it can be stated simply, as I just did, and noted that the short methane lifespan is relevant because as methane is being emitted, it's also being naturally broken down in the atmosphere.

Critics are looking for simple answers to complex solutions. Instead of hurling incomplete and disparaging statements at the farmers who feed the nation, how about we engage in an honest dialogue about potential solutions and unintended consequences. The burdensome regulations some are calling for place affordable food sources at risk. Asking farmers to bear the full burden of changes will put small farms out of business, increasing consolidation and making meat more expensive. Worsening food insecurity for millions of American families is not the solution. That's one of the reasons Farm Bureau is committed to advocating for sustainability initiatives and policies that provide the accessibility and flexibility needed by farmers and ranchers to adopt more climate-smart



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

practices economically and in a way that strengthens our food system and food security.

The announcement of USDA's new Climate Smart Commodities program is another important

step on the path forward. Secretary Vilsack acknowledged the leadership of the Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance, which Farm Bureau co-founded, and we are pleased to see that USDA's plan is consistent with the Alliance's policy recommendations. With this program, USDA is empowering farmers and ranchers of all commodities, sizes, backgrounds and regions to adopt more climate smart practices. This kind of voluntary, incentive-based program will be critical in helping agriculture achieve our shared sustainability goals and keep high quality protein within reach for American families.

The Growing Climate Solutions Act is another great example of what we can do to shape the future of sustainability in agriculture. This bill passed the Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support—92 yes votes to be exact. Now we are eager for the House to pass this legislation and deliver it to the President's desk. Of course, there is still work to be done on the policy side to ensure that programs

work for all farmers and that farm data is secure in the process, but these voluntary, market-based examples show how far we have come and give us optimism about where we go from here.

Just as critical to our future success, is our nation's investment in research and development. We need to empower our brightest minds and hardest workers to develop new technologies and techniques to further our sustainability efforts. My grandfather couldn't have dreamed of the technology available to farmers today, and I am excited to see glimpses of the tools in store for the next generation of my family and yours. From robotics that improve our efficiency in tending and harvesting our crops to advancements that protect animals from disease, the future of our farms depends on the research at agricultural companies and land-grant universities today. We need to ensure that the latest technology is not only available, but accessible to all.

The word sustainability gets thrown around so much, it can start losing its meaning for some. But for America's farmers and ranchers we know that we would not be able to fulfill our mission of growing food, fuel and fiber for all without sustainable practices. We are doing better today because of our commitment to care for our land, air and water, and we will continue to do better tomorrow for our families and yours.

**Zippy Duvall**  
AFBF President

## MFBF Vice President Ryan MacKay Wins Second In National Farm Achievement Award Contest

A Rutland livestock farmer and Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Vice President Ryan MacKay was awarded second



place in American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF's) achievement award competition. This competition evaluates competitor's excellence in management, growth and scope of their enterprise and self-initiative that have

been displayed throughout the farm or ranch.

"I am very honored to have received this award," MacKay said. "I've been considering

applying for a number of years and this year the timing felt right with my business growth and leadership development. I appreciate everyone who helped me get to this point in my career and am looking forward to the future."

He was presented with this honor during AFBF's Annual Convention and IDEAg Trade Show in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition to MacKay, four other MFBF members were in attendance, during which they could conduct business on the trade show floor, expand their knowledge at educational workshops and network with their peers. This event also gave Farm Bureau members the opportunity to gather and learn about advancements in agriculture and discuss ways to promote the future of agriculture.

"In 2021, this event was held virtually, which created an opportunity for farmers who don't travel to attend the annual event," MacKay said. "But it is good to gather in person again this year and re-connect with old and new friends from across the country. We get to network with like-minded farmers, who help us discover new solutions to old problems that we encounter on a day-to-day basis."

To learn more about the convention, please visit <http://annualconvention.fb.org/>.

### MFBF's Vision Statement

**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.

# “If You’re Not Moving Forward, You’re Falling Behind”

By: Warren Shaw, MFBF President

Certainly a perfect quote for where we are after two months of the new year, and in a very positive way it’s applicable. Many of the goals and objectives established by the board and our executive director are moving forward!



Hanover and Mapfre have already approved discounts.

For those of you who have done a start up retail business, you’re familiar with

the excitement that occurs when people discover something new is happening. A&B is currently experiencing something very similar with the large number of MFBF members, which in my book is great news.

Our new “revenue committee” has begun to look at a number of new possibilities that will likely be announced soon. Mike Sabitini from Essex County will chair that effort. We are happy to take a look at any ideas that come from members.

Our new insurance partners, A&B Insurance Group, report a tremendous response from MFBF members, who are interested in what this new relationship can do for their family farms. There is more positive news coming rapidly from A&B, as they have been appointed as the premier agency for Nationwide Insurance in Massachusetts for agriculture, with discounts currently anticipated.

Brad Mitchell, Katelyn Parsons, and I met with the World Farmers who joined in large numbers last year and discussed mutual interests and potential for working together moving forward. The troubling battle over debt forgiveness allowed by Congress and the President and resulting litigation has unfortunately created another place for our nation to be divided. Agriculture doesn’t need to be divided.

We have a number of county Farm Bureau legislative breakfasts in March and it’s good to see some of them be in-person. I have felt for some time that COVID has taken away much of the enjoyment of participating in our meetings. Let’s look each other in the eye and shake hands again.

On another front, for any of you who have been part of the political process, you understand the need for candidates to raise funds. I have

always felt that we as an industry should show our appreciation for the folks who have become our friends in the legislature. I have volunteered to manage a list of donors who are interested in making occasional contributions. Please reach out to me if you would like to be part of that effort (warren@mfbf.net).

Finally... American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duval will visit us later this year. We will be setting up some farm visits as well as some type of an event. I’m looking forward to showcasing his position on climate change, as the American Farm Bureau Federation has taken a leadership position with other groups on this issue and I believe we should here in Massachusetts as well.

**Warren Shaw**  
MFBF Present  
warren@mfbf.net

## USDA Announces Additional FSA, Rural Dev. State Directors

President Joe Biden announced his intent to appoint eleven U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regional positions, including three Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Directors and eight Rural Development (RD) State Directors.

“I am thrilled to welcome these talented and experienced public servants to USDA at a critical time in the Biden-Harris administration,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “I look forward to working

alongside these individuals to build a better America.”

FSA State Executive Directors oversee Farm Service Agency operations and agricultural policy implementation in the state. Each State Executive Director works with the State Committee to administer FSA programs and County office operations, develops and maintains stakeholder relationships with customers and other agencies and governments.

RD State Directors serve as the chief executive officer of Rural Development in the states and territories and are tasked with carrying out the mission of Rural Development to the benefit of everyone in rural America. In conjunction with the guidance and support of the National Office, State Directors are responsible for promoting the mission and strategic goals of Rural Development and provide key leadership to develop and support a productive, diverse, and inclusive state workforce.

**Scott Soares has been appointed RD State Director for Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island**

Most recently, Scott J. Soares owned and operated his own firm, Boston Bay Consulting. He returns to this role after serving in it from 2015 to 2017, during which he oversaw delivery of over 50 programs aimed at improving economic prosperity for Southern New England’s rural communities. From 2012 to 2015, Soares served as Executive Director of the

U.S. Cranberry Marketing Committee (CMC). He began his career at the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, where he served in several positions including as the first Aquaculture Program Director. Soares was appointed Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture in 2009. He graduated with degrees in Biology and Marine Biology from UMass Dartmouth and is veteran of the United States Army.

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- Membership**
- Promotion & Education**
- Revenue**
- YF&R**

*News and Views* is published six times a year, by Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation. Subscription comes with membership. It is received in the homes of almost 6,000 MFBF members.

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

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter:  
@MAFarmBureau.

**Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation**  
249 Lakeside Ave  
Marlborough, MA 01752  
www.mfbf.net

# MFBF Names New Braintree Dog 'Farm Dog of the Year'

Guard dogs provide Massachusetts farmers with companionship and protect livestock from predator attacks. Bear Paw, who is a maremma, alongside Mr. Magoo and Moose, two other maremmas, protect 10 species of livestock on 77 acres in New Braintree. Since owner Rhonda Howe adopted these three guard dogs, the farm's predator attacks have dropped to zero. This dedication and his handsome demeanor, lead Bear Paw to be named Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation's (MFBF's) farm dog of the year.



Bear Paw is an excellent winner for this year's farm dog of the year contest."

The contest was sponsored by The Pet Food Institute, and the winners will receive a gift basket of pet-themed items. Thanks to their generosity, in addition to farm dog of the year, three other pups were selected to win awards in the

following areas and receive gift baskets:

- **Hardest Worker:** Lassie, who is owned by Rena Grover from Bernardston
- **Best Buddy:** Ian, who is owned by Marjorie Proulx from Haverhill
- **Best Napper:** Gus, who is owned by Valerie Fasano from Spencer

"Guard dogs, like Bear Paw, help farmers by reducing losses to predators as well as reducing their labor by lessening the need for night corralling," said MFBF Promotion and Education Chair Meg Gennings. "They allow for efficient use of pastures and possible expansion of herds because of decreased labor and space requirements. They are truly working dogs, which benefit their farmers. For these reasons,

Judging was conducted on MFBF's Facebook page in late December to name the 2022 Farm Dog of the Year. Entries included written responses and photos to showcase their dog's dedication to farm life.

Congratulations to this year's winners!

## The State Of: Regulatory Advocacy

Through a series of articles we call *The State, the American Farm Bureau Federation's Advocacy and Political Affairs team is providing analysis related to "the state of" various aspects related to advocacy and political trends impacting farmers and ranchers and rural Americans.*



asked farmers and ranchers to take action, over 1,800 farmers and ranchers answered the call in less than 36 hours.

Farmers and ranchers want clean water, and they need clear rules. We asked the EPA to withdraw its

A key element for many organizations is regulatory advocacy, through which advocates are activated to comment on an agency regulation and influence the outcome with both qualitative and quantitative messages on impacts of a proposed rule.

proposed rule and return to the clarity and common sense provided under the Navigable Waters Protection Rule.

This form of advocacy is just as important as legislative advocacy and is sometimes overlooked. Keep in mind that after a bill is signed into law, rules are written to carry out the implementation of the new law. Regulatory advocacy is another bite at the apple; it is another opportunity to limit or expand the scope of a statute as it is implemented.

Farmers play a leading role in protecting our nation's wetlands. Over the last 15 years, the number of acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program has more than doubled (from 2.5 million acres to 5.3 million acres).

Comments on this proposed rule closed on Feb. 7 and the number of farmers and ranchers who heeded the call to take action totaled more than 10,000.

However, this will not be the end of the process.

2022 began with an advocacy call to action familiar to farmers and ranchers. The Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposed a new rule that would reverse a Trump Clean Water Act rule, the Navigable Waters Protection Rule, to a troubling pre-2015 interpretation. AFBF called on its members to get involved and send comments directly to the EPA.

We anticipate a final rule will be published this year. And even though the agencies have previously mentioned a two-step process, it remains to be seen if they will carry on with the next step.

AFBF launched a regulatory advocacy campaign at our national convention in early January. When AFBF President Zippy Duvall

Either way, we are more than likely to engage in regulatory advocacy in the future and hope you will support farmers and ranchers in this effort.

# COVID Housing Guidance For H2A Workers in 2022

As farmers prepare for H2A workers to arrive for the 2022 season, it is important to know the guidelines for housing them as the COVID virus continues to spread. The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) met with the state Monitor Advocate and the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) to confirm any changes to the program.

H2A housing inspections are now being done at least 45 days in advance of the date of need. Paperwork is due to the U.S. Department of Labor 30 days prior to their start date, which includes a passed inspection. For employers who have used their housing before, the inspections will be virtual this year. However, for new employers or those with new facilities, the inspections will need to be in-person.

Most of the requirements from last season will remain in place and updated Control Plans will be required. There are three notable changes to the housing requirements that are different from 2021:

- Bunk beds will be allowed this year as long as workers sleep head-to-foot and the occupants are fully vaccinated
- Workers from multiple farms can stay in one facility as long as they are all fully vaccinated.
- It is recommended (but not required) that beds be set 6 feet apart

Fully vaccinated means they have had at least 2 shots of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or 1 of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, and at least two weeks have passed since the final vaccine. At this time, there are no requirements regarding boosters.

Due to a shortage of vaccines in Jamaica, workers may arrive unvaccinated. They will be required to be vaccinated.

Until two weeks pass, these workers will need to isolate, and wear a mask until two weeks have passed from their final dose. They may only work if they can be isolated from other workers and the public.

If you have questions about the vaccination status of Jamaican workers, you should contact Debby Hutchinson to confirm. Her email is dhutchinson@gmail.com.

Again, it is important to note that all employers must have a control plan in place, even if their



workers are fully vaccinated. The control plan requirements are the same as in 2021. As part of that plan, all employers should be aware that under both federal and state law if one or more workers in your labor housing contract COVID, you are required to report it to your local Board of Health and should report it to Jose Ocasio, the Massachusetts Monitor Advocate.

If you have further questions on these guidelines, you should reach out to Jose Ocasio at Jose.Ocasio@DETMA.ORG or 617-626-5587.

# USDA Appoints New Board Members For Potatoes USA

On Feb. 17, the United States Department of Agriculture appointed 33 new or returning members to serve three-year terms on the National Potato Promotion Board, Dba Potatoes USA. The new members will be sworn in at the organization's Annual Meeting in March.



has a 102-member board consisting of 96 growers, five importers and one public member. Each Board Member serves a three-year term with the ability to serve a second consecutive three-year term. Roughly one-third of the board members are appointed each year.

Members appointed or reappointed are:

- Ed Staunton, California
- Les Alderete, Colorado
- Bevan Lenz, Colorado
- Jason Tillman, Colorado

- Kurtis Crapo, Idaho
- Tyson Funk, Idaho
- Taylor Grant, Idaho
- Eric Jensen, Idaho
- Jordan Johns, Idaho
- Braden R. Lake, Idaho
- Rick S. Miller, Idaho
- Adam Nielsen, Idaho
- Jeff VanOrden, Idaho
- Colin Szawlowski, Massachusetts
- Alison Sklarczyk, Michigan
- Erwin J. Styma, Michigan
- Peter A. Ewing, Minnesota
- Jocelyn Schlichting, Minnesota
- Martin H. Kimm, Montana
- Leah Halverson, North Dakota
- Nathan Bender, Nevada
- Kory Hansen, Oregon
- Luke Robison, Oregon
- Benjamin Zechmann, South Dakota
- Matthew Linehan, Vermont
- Jennifer Bunger, Washington
- Daniel Gundersen, Washington
- Andrew Hyer, Washington
- Rod Schutte, Washington
- Samueal Stahl, Washington
- Marvin Wollman, Washington
- Jon Gay, West Virginia
- Norbert Bomm, Illinois

## A&B Insurance Corner

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### Why is Insurance to Value so important?

"Insurance to Value" does not refer to the market value of your home, it refers specifically to the cost to replace or repair your home. By accurately matching the amount of insurance protection to the value of your home you can avoid being caught short of coverage when you need it most.

### How is your Insured value determined?

The critical factor in determining the amount for which your home should be covered is the cost-per-square-foot to rebuild the

structure. In addition, the number of bathrooms, the type of kitchen and attached structures all determine the value of your home.

### What happens if I don't insure my home to its replacement value?

Under your insurance contract, you must insure your house to its rebuild value. If you do not you may be subject to a co-insurance penalty in the case of a partial loss. The coinsurance formula is relatively simple. Begin by dividing the actual amount of coverage on the house by the amount that should have been carried. Then, multiply this amount by the amount of the loss, and this will give you the amount of the

reimbursement. For example: Your home is insured for \$200,000. Its replacement cost is actually \$400,000. You have a fire that destroyed your kitchen. The loss is \$100,000.

### What will you be paid?

Because the amount of insurance purchased is only 50 percent of the amount required (\$200,000/\$400,000), coverage is afforded for only 50% of the repair cost so you would only receive \$50,000 minus your deductible. You are said to have coinsured your home.

Make sure that you review your

coverage every couple of years. A good way to be sure that your home is keeping up to value on replacement cost is to be sure that you have inflation guard on your home & buildings. This will increase your values by a set amount each year, usually 4 percent, but you can set a higher amount if necessary. You want to be sure that if you have a loss, you will have adequate coverage to rebuild or replace the structure.

For additional information:

A & B Insurance Group, LLC  
Tel. 978-399-0025  
235 Littleton Road, Suite 3  
Westford, MA 01886

# Essex County Farm Bureau Meeting, Tour At Cider Hill Farm

**D**ate: May 28, 2022  
Time: 5:30

new e-commerce and shipping building.

**Who is invited?** Essex County Farm Bureau members, Essex County Fruit Grower Association members, local dignitaries and legislative officials.

6:00 The County will meet outside at the cider bar window for a hard cider tasting (this will be a good place to join the program if you miss the 5:30 tour). There also may be nonalcoholic options.

**Schedule:**  
5:30 Please arrive promptly for a short facilities tour which will include the farm store, hard cider production facility, updated vegetable washing station, and

6:30 Board hay wagons for a farm tour. This tour will be accompanied by an extension agent who will



7:30 The county will finish the tour and meet under the tent for a dinner with locally made Italian cuisine. Special guests may speak, as well as Farm Bureau to express the benefits of membership and the issues currently at hand.

Sunset is at 8:12pm so the county will plan on wrapping up by 8:30.

do an educational piece. Pesticide certification credit(s) will be available.

We hope to see you there!

## County Legislative Breakfasts

**Friday, March  
18  
at 7:00 A.M.**

**Plymouth County Farm Bureau's Legislative Breakfast**

Location: Lakeside Villa (formerly Monponsett Inn) - 550 Monponsett Street, Route 58, Halifax, MA

Time: Doors open at 7:00 a.m.

RSVP: Please contact Lisa Blair by March 11 at (508) 866-9150 or email her at plymouth\_county\_farm\_bureau@yahoo.com

**Thursday, March  
24  
at 8:30 A.M.**

**Essex County Farm Bureau's Virtual Legislative Breakfast**

Location: Zoom.com

Please RSVP by March 21 to Chris Grant at grantsplants@gmail.com or 978-423-6694 for the zoom link.

**Friday, March  
25  
at 11:00 A.M.**

**Tri-County (Hampshire, Hampden & Franklin) Farm Bureau's Legislative Breakfast**

Location: Blue Bonnet Dinner, 324 King St, Northampton MA

Cost: \$23 per person

RSVP to: Jaime Wagner at jwagner41781@gmail.com or 413-253-5194

**Friday, March  
25  
at 9:00 A.M.**

**Martha's Vineyard Farm Bureau's Legislative Breakfast**

Location: Agricultural hall, 35 Panhandle Rd, West Tisbury

RSVP to: Lauren Lynch at ed@mvalsoc.org of (508) 693-9549 by March 15th.

**Friday, April  
8  
at 8:30 A.M.**

**Bristol County Farm Bureau's Legislative Breakfast**

Location: The Jockey Club 115 New State Highway, Rte. 44 Raynham,

RSVP: Peggy Lopes by April 1st at lopesfarm@comcast.net or call/text 508 -889-0738

# Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee Happenings



Learn more about YF&R at [www.MFBF.net](http://www.MFBF.net)!  
 Or follow us on social media - Facebook: @MAFarmBureauYF&R &  
 Instagram: @MAFBYoungFamers.

## 5 Ways to Make the Most of Your Agriculture Experience

By: Abby Scholz

Growing up and being involved in the livestock industry, I've discovered that this is where my passion lies. Today I want to take some time and share with you five ways to make the most of your livestock experience, whether it be showing, ag-vocating or anything in between.



Michael and Abby Scholz. Credit: Abby Scholz

### Tip #1: Never underestimate the value of connections.

There will be times in your life where you need some extra encouragement, a recommendation (if you are a senior, you will understand this), or someone to be an excellent role model in your life. Never, ever, be afraid to say "hi" to someone or introduce yourself. This connection-building goes for social media too. I have reached out to so many random people who share the same interests and values I do, because why not? We could all use a little encouragement, especially now. You never know what will happen just by reaching out.

### Tip #2: Enjoy every second.

Yes, I know the old, cliché phrase "life goes fast" or "it'll be over in the blink of an eye." If you are rolling your eyes at this right now, I get it. I hated people telling me that growing up because I was sure that it wouldn't fly by. Well, as a senior in high school now, I can confidently say the joke's on me! My FFA experience and showing career will soon be over, and wow,

did that time fly by. While it'll be good to move on to new things, I know saying good-bye to the blue jacket and the show barn won't be an easy one.

### Tip #3: Your parents are probably right.

If you knew me growing up, and still a little bit now, I am stubborn. In my early teens, I was convinced my parents were always wrong. It turns out they do know a little bit more than what I gave them credit for. They know so much more than us teenagers give them credit for. While sometimes they are hard on me, they are also my biggest cheerleaders, and I think this next story perfectly depicts that. I looked at a photo a while back that Legacy Livestock took of me after I had just won showmanship, and my dad was hugging me with a huge smile on his face. That picture is priceless and shows me how much my parents love and care for me.

### Tip #4: Be the bigger person.

If you know anything about me, you know that I don't do things halfway, and I certainly don't do anything expecting to lose – and

being involved in this industry has shown me how to lose. This includes being happy for whoever beats me, even if it's not the easiest thing to do. Losing isn't easy, and no one does anything wanting to lose, but I think it's still the right thing to do to be respectful to those who beat you. Be the bigger person, shake that person's hand and tell them sincerely, "good-job." It's not hard to do, and it honestly is a game-changer.

### Tip #5: Never forget where you started.

It's so easy to get caught up in all of the craziness of success, but please never forget where you started. For me, I started on square one. At my first Nebraska State Fair competition, I got dead last. While that wasn't fun, it did show me what I had to do to be competitive at a high level. I watched the older kids who were doing a good job, and while success didn't come overnight, eventually, it followed all of my hard work and dedication.

Moral of the story: don't be afraid to help that young person out. No matter who you are or where you come from, never underestimate the impact you can make on someone's life.

*Abby Scholz is a rancher from Phelps County, Nebraska, who enjoys exhibiting cattle and sheep at highly competitive shows. She is very involved in livestock judging at the local and state levels and is a member of her collegiate Farm Bureau. This column was originally published by Nebraska Farm Bureau.*

## Call For MFBF YF&R Board Members

Each county Farm Bureau has two seats on the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation's (MFBF's) Young Farmers and Ranchers (YF&R) committee board. Currently we have vacancies from the following counties:

- Berkshire (2)
- Bristol (1)
- Cape and Island (2)
- Franklin (2)
- Hampden (1)
- Hampshire (1)
- Middlesex (1)
- Plymouth (1)

We have approximately four meetings per year via zoom.com and in person (hybrid). We would love to have your support. If you are interested in serving, please email YF&R Chair Heather Bonanno-Baker at [heatherbonanno@gmail.com](mailto:heatherbonanno@gmail.com)

## Photo Update From 1 of 3 2021 Schipper Grant Award Recipients



The other two award winners were featured in the Dec 2021/Jan 2022 edition of News and Views.

## Do You Have An Internship Opportunity?

The UMass Stockbridge School of Agriculture requires an internship for students to graduate. To connect students with internship and job opportunities, the school has created a job board that students use to identify and apply for these jobs. If you have an opportunity, you can submit it online to their website: <https://stockbridge.cns.umass.edu/node/add/career-opportunity>.

# Deadline to Purchase Federal Crop Insurance/NAP Coverage

March 15, 2022

Last year's growing season brought with it excessive amounts of moisture. Prior growing seasons have seen hail, drought, excess moisture and freeze occur across Massachusetts. If you're concerned with extreme weather events and the impact they can have of your farm, you should consider purchasing some level of coverage on your crops. The deadline to purchase coverage for spring-seeded crops and the Whole Farm Revenue Program and the Micro Farm Policy is **March 15, 2022**.

## Individual Crop Policies:

Growers can purchase Federal Crop Insurance on **corn** (silage/grain), **fresh market sweet corn**, **potatoes**, **soybeans** and **cigar binder tobacco**. Availability to purchase coverage on potatoes is limited to Franklin and Hampshire Counties; for soybeans in Hampden, Hampshire & Worcester Counties; and for cigar binder tobacco in Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire Counties. These are yield-based policies and are based on a producer's historical crop yields.

## Whole Farm Revenue Program:

WFRP provides growers with revenue protection from weather related or market losses rather than yield based policies and are based on a five-year revenue history (in some instances as long as a producer has 3 years of records they may purchase a WFRP policy).

## Micro Farm Policy:

The Micro Farm policy is a new policy available for the 2022 crop year. Like WFRP, the Micro Farm policy is a revenue based policy that significantly reduces paperwork and record keeping requirements. The Micro Farm Policy is available to producers who have an operation that earns an average allowable revenue of \$100,000 or less, or for carryover insureds, an average of \$125,000 or less.

## Individual crop policies and



the WFRP policy are sold through private Federal Crop Insurance Agents. Use the following link to contact an agent: <https://www.rma.usda.gov/Information-Tools/Agent-Locator-Page>

## Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP):

NAP is available on all annual crops not insured by Federal Crop Insurance. NAP offers Catastrophic (CAT) Coverage which ensures 50% of your actual production history of the crop and any losses are paid out at 55% of the approved market price for the crop. "Buy-Up" coverage is also available under NAP. Producers can cover between 50 - 65% of their actual production history and losses are paid out at 100% of the approved market price for the crop. Under CAT, producers pay an administrative fee and for "Buy-Up" coverage, producers pay an administrative

fee and a premium based upon the coverage level selected. Beginning, historically underserved, and limited resource farmers receive a waiver of the NAP administrative fee and receive a 50% reduction on the "Buy-Up" premium. Check with your local USDA - Farm Service Agency (FSA) Office, which administers NAP for more details. **March 15, 2022** is the deadline to purchase NAP coverage for all 2022 Spring-seeded crops.

*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](mailto:pmrussell@umass.edu) or Tom Smiarowski at [tsmiarowski@umass.edu](mailto:tsmiarowski@umass.edu)*

## MFBF Bids Farewell to Katelyn Parsons

Please join the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) in saying farewell to Katelyn Parsons, who is leaving the organization to pursue a new career opportunity with Farm Credit East.



Parsons began her career with MFBF in 2016 as director of marketing and membership and has served in various roles throughout her tenure. Her final role was director of government and public affairs.

Her last day at MFBF is March 18. Best wishes, Katelyn!

## The Story Of Rising Fertilizer Prices

We've heard a lot about rising fertilizer prices since mid-2020 and various explanations have been offered. UC Davis DeLoach Professor of Agricultural Economics, Aaron Smith, says a confluence of factors have combined to cause the price spike and that, in part due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, prices continue to increase.

"Oil and gas prices have surged in the past couple of weeks due to supply uncertainty created by Russian threats to invade Ukraine," said Smith. "These events have pushed fertilizer prices up even more, strengthening the economic incentive for American farmers to cut back on fertilizer use this year."

The Green Revolution of the 60s and 70s that led to a boom in agricultural productivity was fueled not only by improved plant varieties but by an increased use of chemical fertilizers such as urea (nitrogen), phosphate products (phosphorus), and potash (potassium). Nitrogen use—which accounts for 60 percent of all fertilizer use—actually increased by a factor of four during this time, with a much slower but steady rise in use after the early 80s until a peak during the 2008 commodity boom. However, fertilizer prices, which had been relatively stable

since 2015, began to rise in 2020 and almost doubled between the summer of 2020 and the end of 2021.

In the United States, manufacturers use natural gas to turn nitrogen into ammonia, a more accessible form of nitrogen for most crops. In fact, natural gas accounts for 80 percent of the cost of producing ammonia fertilizer. Thus, when natural gas prices doubled between the summer of 2020 and the end of 2021, the increased cost of nitrogen production was reflected in the price of urea fertilizer.

Energy costs are important to a lesser extent for the mining of phosphate and potash. But as many crops apply a mix of the three macronutrients, rising energy prices have and will likely continue to play a significant role in the overall rise in fertilizer pricing. Severe storms, such as Hurricane Ida in August 2021 and the Texas freeze in February 2021 further disrupted nitrogen supply. Further, COVID-19 supply chains disruptions in late 2021, combined with the rising costs of shipping since 2020, also contributed to the perfect storm of events that caused the current skyrocketing prices.



Demand-side pressure has also contributed to the rising fertilizer prices. Corn takes up

about a quarter of all cropland but uses about 40 percent of each type of fertilizer. In 2020, fertilizer costs made up around 35 percent of the operating budget for corn farmers and around 25 percent of the operating budget for other major U.S. grain crops such as barley, oats, sorghum, and wheat. So, when corn, soybean, and wheat commodity prices increased between the summer of 2020 and the end of 2021, there was incentive for these farmers to plant more of these crops thereby increasing fertilizer use.

Currently, fertilizer prices—particularly amidst uncertainty over the Russia-Ukraine conflict—are rising more than most crop prices. This may lead to less fertilizer applied per acre in upcoming seasons; this decrease in fertilizer use could provide an environmental benefit in the form of decreased fertilizer runoff and leaching.

Learn more about the Giannini Foundation and its publications at <https://giannini.ucop.edu/>.



# New Report Provides Insight On Consumer Food Spending, Satisfaction, Sustainability

The Consumer Food Insights Report, a new monthly report identifying trends and changes in consumer food purchases and preferences, has been released.



The survey-based report out of Purdue University's Center for Food Demand Analysis and Sustainability assesses food security and spending, consumer satisfaction and values, support of agricultural and food policies and trust in information sources. Purdue experts conducted and evaluated the first survey, which included 1,200 consumers across the U.S., in January.

Key results include:

- 25 percent of respondents were unable to find a specific food product at the grocery store.
- 32 percent of respondents are waiting for their next paycheck to buy groceries.
- 16 percent of respondents face food insecurity.
- 51 percent of respondents blame COVID-related shutdowns for the rise in meat prices.
- A Sustainable Food Purchasing (SFP) Index of 67/100.

"We are taking the pulse of consumers to help guide farmers and retailers along the food supply chain as we all adapt to changing circumstances," said Jayson Lusk, the head and Distinguished Professor of Agricultural Economics at Purdue, who leads the center. "Consumers significantly influence the direction of food and agricultural systems, and we need a timely way to track trends in what people are buying and eating, and how this is affected by events like inflation, climate change and COVID-19."

Sam Polzin, a food and agriculture survey scientist for the center and co-author of the report, said the

goal is to create a useful public resource.

"Informed decisions are one way we can build a better and more sustainable

food system," he said. "We are sort of democratizing food data that previously was limited by resources and access."

Larger corporations have the resources to conduct consumer surveys themselves, but the data isn't shared; and some of the data is publicly available, but over longer periods of time and in difficult-to-understand government or academic reports, he said.

"We also are covering new territory, like examining sustainability as a factor in food purchases, and establishing baselines in certain areas," he said.

The Consumer Food Insights Report includes a new Sustainable Food Purchasing Index that offers insight into how sustainability and health relate to consumer behaviors. It is a self-reported assessment of how consumer shopping habits correspond with healthy diets from sustainable food systems.

"We're looking at whether or not people are purchasing foods that align with different areas of sustainability," Polzin said. "We want to gauge consumer interest in this, as well as track changes over time and in response to outside factors, like climate change-related events. The January report is our first, so it is a baseline. We'll see what increases, decreases and remains steady over time."

The Sustainable Food Purchasing Index value for January is 67/100. The score reflects consumer food purchasing that aligns with a set of key recommendations for

healthy diets from sustainable food systems. The index includes six components correlating with different strategies for achieving food system transformation: nutrition, environment, social, economic, security and taste.

"For example, purchasing a diversity of foods with many different micro and macronutrients is central to supporting nutritional health, but a family must also be able to buy this food while staying within their budget," Polzin said. "Meeting the nutritional goals of a sustainable food system is moot if the system is not also providing affordable options that meet our economic goals."

The survey is flexible and has an "Ad Hoc" question section that can be tailored to current events. In January, the question was "Why are retail meat prices rising?" The results showed 51 percent of consumers blamed COVID-related shutdowns for the dramatic increase in meat prices, and less than 10 percent attributed the increase to concentration in the meat packing sector.

"Stock-outs also continue to affect consumers," Lusk said. "About a quarter of the respondents mentioned being unable to find certain items in the grocery store. The most commonly mentioned missing items were chicken, beef and dairy products."

The report offers data that the team hopes will lead to further research, guide strategic pivots from producers and retailers, and inform policymakers, he said.

The Center for Food Demand Analysis and Sustainability is part of Purdue's Next Moves in agriculture and food systems, and it aims to use innovative data analysis shared through user-friendly platforms to improve the food system. In addition to the Consumer Food Insights Report, the center offers a portfolio of online dashboards.

## "Maple Month" Began March 1!

March is known in the agricultural community as 'Maple Month,' and the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) encourages consumers to purchase a gallon of local syrup to show their support of this industry. This declaration was also made by Governor Baker on March 4 when a first ceremonial tree of the season was tapped.



"The season officially kicked off on Friday, March 4," said MFBF President Warren Shaw. "We encourage everyone to support their local farmers and purchase a gallon of syrup. As a dairy farmer, I know that many fellow dairies tap maple trees as the syrup offers a secondary income that helps them stay in business."

In addition to the month-long celebration, the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association will host its Maple Weekend on March 19-20. During this weekend, sugarhouses across the Commonwealth will host demonstrations, tours and tastings. Please call ahead to see if accommodations are being made to ensure social distancing.

Massachusetts is home to more than 250 sugarhouses. Please visit <http://massmaple.org/directory.php> to locate one near you. Additionally, many maple producers have websites, which offer consumers an opportunity to purchase pure maple products – and home delivery.

# Is Your Horse Protected Against Mosquito-Borne Disease?

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile Virus (WNV) are spread by mosquitos and can cause fatal neurologic disease in horses and other animals. Horses across Massachusetts and in surrounding states are at risk.

There is an effective vaccine. Call your veterinarian to schedule this life- saving vaccination. Can't afford this life-saving vaccine? MDAR is partnering with local veterinarians to offer discounted EEE and WNV vaccination for equine owners with financial need. Ask your veterinarian for more 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.

## Berkshire Agricultural Ventures

314 Main Street Suite#11  
Great Barrington, MA, 01230  
413-645-3594

glenn@berkshireagventures.org  
**Products & Services:** Provides grants, loans, business and technical assistance to support local farms and food businesses in the Berkshire-Taconic region.

## 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 Service

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.

## Clearway Energy

41 Brigham St Unit 6  
Marlborough MA 01752-5143  
(480) 521-1513  
daniel.barber@clearwayenergy.com

clearwayenergygroup.com/careers  
**Products & Services:** Clearway's leading the transition to a world powered by clean energy. Power up your career at our Massachusetts solar farms.

## 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.

## Greenfield Farmers Cooperative Exchange

269 High Street  
Greenfield, MA 01301  
413-773-9639

greenfieldfarmerscoop.com  
**Products & Services:** Farm, Home, Garden and Pet Supplies, Nursery, Bulk Grain, Wood Pellets. Member Discount, Local Delivery

## 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.

## Higgins Power-sports

140 Worcester Rd.  
Barre, MA 01005  
978-355-6343

www.higginspowersports.com  
www.higginsenergy.com  
**Products and Services:** LS Tractors & implements, DR & Husqvarna power equipment, Polaris & Can-Am ATV's, UTV's, Woodmaster outdoor furnaces, Vermont Castings, Jotul and HearthStone stoves

## 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/excavation. Give us a call for a free estimate!

## 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

781-589-8534  
jphorigan@me.com

**Products and Services:** kiln dried pine shavings. American made. Free storage for 60 days on our 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## Sprague Energy

185 International Drive  
Portsmouth, NH 03801  
413-374-6280

www.spragueenergy.com  
dbogan@spragueenergy.com  
**Products & Services:** Energy supplier since 1870. We provide and deliver Heating Fuels, On-road and Off-road Diesel Fuels, Bio Fuels, Gasoline and Natural Gas.

## The 107 Guys, LLC

51 Wareham Street  
Carver, MA. 02330  
774-433-9903  
www.The107guys.com  
Mdozier@the107guys.com

**Products & Services:** certified drone pilots throughout the USA providing NDVI, Thermal, and Aerial Spraying Services to farmers around the country.

## The Mane Place

510 W Hartford Ave  
Uxbridge, MA 01569-1384  
508-278-7563  
themanepace.com  
linda@themanepace.com

**Products & Services:** The Mane Place offers Poulin grain, hay, shavings, barn supplies, horse supplies, pet food and supplies, apparel, saddles, tack and gifts in a friendly family-owned setting.

## 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.

# Is Inflation Here To Stay?

In January 2022, inflation (at 7.5%) reached its highest yearly increase in nearly 40 years. But are these high rates here to stay, or are they only a temporary symptom of COVID-19 and the recent supply chain related disruptions? Economists from UC Davis, Bar-Ilan University, and the London School of economics analyzed financial markets that trade in the risk of inflation to show how expectations of long-term inflation have changed over the last year. They found that between November 2020 and November 2021, there was over a tenfold increase in the probability of average inflation lying above 3 percent over the next 5 years, suggesting that many expect inflation to persist.

Inflation, as measured by the



Consumer Price Index (CPI), has risen dramatically over the last year. Gas prices hit a new all-time high in November 2021, with inflation for food at home, electricity, and new vehicles at 6.5 percent, 6.3 percent, and 11.8 percent, respectively, in December. Rising oil and natural gas prices, higher personal savings and increased consumer demand coming out of the lockdown, and a sluggish supply chain coming out of the pandemic may all be partially to blame for inflation over the last year.

As pent-up demand slows and supply chains adapt, their impact on inflation may also subside. But,

if the energy price spike in response to the invasion of Ukraine persists and if supply disruptions continue, it could lead consumers to demand higher wages to increase their purchasing power. "If companies raise prices in response to higher wage demands by workers, leading to further high expectations of inflation, further wage demands, and so on, then the United States could enter the wage-price spiral that is often at the heart of high and persistent inflation," says UC Davis economist Jens Hilscher.

To better understand the likelihood of long-term inflation, Hilscher, Alon Raviv, and Ricardo Reis looked to the financial markets that trade in contracts that pay off if inflation rises above a given cutoff (with one cutoff at 3 percent and another at 4 percent—both well above the Fed's target of 2 percent inflation per year). Assessing the payoffs of these two types of contracts allowed them to determine the probability of the average inflation being above 3 percent or 4 percent

over the next five years. They found that between November 2020 and November 2021, the probability of an average inflation of 3 percent rose from 6.1 percent to 66.2 percent, while the probability of an average inflation of 4 percent rose from 1.6 percent to 14.1 percent, a dramatic increase!

Long-term inflation leads to higher uncertainty, making long-term planning harder for businesses and individuals alike. It also leads to lenders experiencing a loss in the real value of the money they are repaid. Over time, these factors lead lenders to charge higher interest rates to account for uncertainty and potential losses. In turn, access to credit will suffer.

Hilscher notes that, "A central bank that is very committed to a stable inflation target can always bring inflation down, even if only by causing a recession." We will see over the next several months which risk the Fed perceives to be the greater threat to our economy.

Learn more about the Giannini Foundation and its publications at <https://giannini.ucop.edu/>.

## Five Ways To Dry Off Cows More Comfortably

"We in the dairy industry have a social contract with our consumers to keep cows comfortable," said Linda Tikofsky, DVM, Boehringer Ingelheim. "Consumers want to be assured that dairy cows have a good life and they're well-treated."

Cow comfort is important at all times, but particularly during the dry period. "We've learned that managing dry cows pays dividends down the line," said Luciano Caixeta, DVM, PhD, assistant professor, University of Minnesota. "How the cow moves through the dry period influences her production, health, ability to become pregnant again and ability to stay in the herd."

So how can we help cows stay comfortable and healthy through the dry period? Drs. Caixeta and Tikofsky emphasize that it starts at dry off, and offer four ways to dry off cows more comfortably:

**1 – Use an appropriate dry cow antibiotic.** About 60% of mastitis cases that occur during a cow's lactation can be traced back to the dry period.<sup>1</sup> A dry cow antibiotic tube can treat current subclinical infections and prevent new infections during the dry period. For producers looking to cut antibiotic use and associated costs, selective dry cow therapy (SDCT)—

when antibiotics are only used to treat cows with likely mastitis infections—is an option to explore with a veterinarian.

**2 – A teat sealant is a must no matter your dry cow antibiotic protocol.** More than 25% of cows don't form a keratin plug at dry off,<sup>2</sup> so cows need a teat sealant to provide a sterile, antibiotic-free physical barrier between the udder and its environment.

**3 – Ensure high-producing cows are ready to be dried off.** Cows that are dried off giving large amounts of milk can experience serious udder engorgement. They are also more likely to leak milk and become infected with mastitis.

Producers can reduce milk production before dry off in a few different ways. They can move animals to a separate pen and feed a lower-energy diet, or they can reduce the number of milkings to once per day just before dry off.

A new approach is to provide cows with an oral mineral bolus designed to reduce milk production. Administering two boluses 8-12 hours prior to dry off creates a mild, temporary metabolic acidosis that decreases dry-matter intake and impacts milk synthesis.



**4 – Vaccinate.** Cows vaccinated during the dry period are more likely to enter the next lactation with a robust immune system to fight off infectious disease threats.

Killed vaccines keep the dam healthy and enhance antibody levels found in colostrum.<sup>3</sup> Coliform mastitis is the source of 50% of mastitis infections in U.S. dairy herds.<sup>4</sup> Look for a coliform mastitis vaccine that's effective against *Escherichia coli* and the effects of endotoxemia caused by *E. coli* and *Salmonella Typhimurium*.

**5 – Work with your veterinarian.** The right dry off program varies from farm to farm. Before

making a new protocol decision or change, talk with your veterinarian. They understand your operation's specific challenges and can ensure the change is right for your herd.

Provide comfort through the dry period

Both Drs. Caixeta and Tikofsky agree that cow comfort doesn't stop at dry off. It's crucial to keep cows comfortable through the entire dry period. To provide optimal comfort, keep the following factors

in mind:

**Heat abatement.** Helping dry cows stay cool is just as important as keeping lactating cows cool. Dairy cows can experience heat stress beginning at 68 degrees Fahrenheit. Provide dry cows with proper shade, fans and sprinklers. Ventilation. A well-ventilated building prevents high humidity in the winter and heat buildup in the summer. Signs of poor ventilation include air that smells like ammonia and animals that are coughing or experiencing nasal discharge or open-mouthed breathing. A cow's hair coat should be free of moisture when you run

*Continued on Page 13*

# Being A Farm Bureau Member Pays

*MFBF Members Enjoy Discounts From National & Local Business Partners*

Please visit [www.MFBF.net](http://www.MFBF.net) for more information.

Kickoff 2022 with a 5% discount on your farm package with Countryway Insurance. Coming early 2022, save 3%-5% off your personal auto with various companies. Your friendly A&B Insurance Group Agents offers a full line of insurance services to meet all your needs. Your knowledgeable and experienced agent can help arrange a program that will best meet your farm and personal insurance needs. With four farm carriers and eight personal lines carriers, your agent can tailor a program specifically for you or your family's needs. In addition to Farm Packages, we also offer personal & commercial auto, homeowners, property insurance, workman's compensation as well as health, life & disability insurances.



Visit the A&B's Website at [www.abinsgroup.com](http://www.abinsgroup.com) 978-399-0025.

Massachusetts Farm Bureau members now receive a \$500 Bonus Cash offer from Ford 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](http://fordfarmbureauadvantage.com) or [LincolnFarmBureauAdvantage.com](http://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.*



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](http://www.JohnDeere.com/FarmBureau).

MFBF members receive up to \$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](http://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.

To take advantage of this valuable travel discount rate please call 877-670-7088 to connect with a dedicated travel expert and be sure to mention you are a Farm Bureau member or go to [www.wyndhamhotels.com/farm-bureau](http://www.wyndhamhotels.com/farm-bureau) to book.

Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University in North Grafton will apply a 10% discount to Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation regular members in good standing. Call: 508-839-7926



\*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.

MFBF members can now go solar, no roof required. When you join a Clearway Community Solar Farm, you can support renewable power for the Commonwealth and receive an additional savings guarantee on energy. Through our special partnership with Clearway, there is no sign up cost, no cancellation fee, and for every MFBF member that joins, Clearway will donate \$150 to the MFBF.

To learn about supporting renewable power and Clearway's savings guarantee, please visit [www.clearwaysolarfarm.com/MFBF](http://www.clearwaysolarfarm.com/MFBF). Use promo code: MFBF and enroll online in just 5 minutes.

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# Five Ways To Dry Off Cows More Comfortably

Continued From Page 11

your fingers through it.

reproductive performance.

**Stocking density.** Dry cows require significantly more space than lactating animals. To ensure dry cows have enough space to eat and rest, keep stocking density at or below 85 percent.

**Cleanliness.** Remove manure as soon as possible and keep plenty of fresh bedding under animals. Manage water tanks, feeding areas and walkways to eliminate standing water or manure.

**Nutrition.** Adopting a negative dietary cation-anion difference (DCAD) diet can help reduce the risk of subclinical hypocalcemia. Studies have shown a DCAD diet results in increased dry-matter intake in early lactation, increased milk production, fewer fresh cow health events and improved

“The dairy industry is on a continual path of improving cow comfort and overall animal well-being,” concluded Dr. Tikofsky. “Work with your herd veterinarian to stay on top of the latest animal welfare research and to create a cow comfort program that’s best for your operation.”

# DOT Extends Modified National Emergency Declaration For Commercial Vehicles


The Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has extended its modified expanded national emergency declaration to provide hours-of-service regulatory relief to commercial vehicle drivers transporting emergency relief in response to the nationwide COVID-19 pandemic. The notice

extends the exemption through May 31 (the emergency declaration has been in effect since March 18, 2020). The regulatory relief is limited to transportation of select categories of freights, including but not limited to livestock and livestock feed; food, paper products and other groceries for emergency restocking of distribution centers or stores; and gasoline, diesel, jet fuel and ethyl alcohol.



## P&E Resources

MFBF’s promotion and education (P&E) committee has compiled two children’s activity booklets for farmers to use at farmers’ markets and at local agricultural fairs.



The P&E committee has also compiled a success guide for county Farm Bureaus to use when planning their legislative breakfasts.

Finally, the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation’s Promotion and Education Committee hosted a webinar covering pesticide issues with Natalia Clifton, UMass Extension Pesticide Education Program. A PDF copy of her PowerPoint presentation is available.

For electronic PDF copies of these resources, please contact MFBF’s office at [info@mfbf.net](mailto:info@mfbf.net).

## Support Massachusetts Farmers - Join MFBF

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Farm Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby make application for an annual membership in the \_\_\_\_\_ County Farm Bureau and Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, whose purpose is to promote, protect and represent the economic, social and educational interests of Massachusetts’ farmers, as well as encourage the protection of agricultural areas and rural interest within the state. I understand acceptance or denial and classification of my membership are determined by the County Farm Bureau.

Contributions, gifts or membership dues to a County Farm Bureau, or MFBF, are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. However, they may be tax deductible under other provisions of the IRS code. Membership dues are non-refundable and non-returnable.

A service fee of \$15 may be assessed for a returned check.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

- Membership dues (please select one):**
- Voting Members**
- Regular Member: \$225 for 1 year
  - Gold Member: \$350 for 1 year
  - Platinum Member: \$500 for 1 year
- Non-Voting Members**
- Associate Member: \$70 for 1 year
  - Allied Business: \$225 for 1 year
  - Student: \$25 for 1 year

**Method of Payment**

**Credit Card:**

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- Visa
- MasterCard
- Discover

CC#: \_\_\_\_\_  
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- Please indicate which commodity areas best fit the product(s) you produce:**
- Ag/Open Space Supporter
  - Aquaculture
  - Equine
  - Forestry
  - Fruits
  - Horticulture
  - Livestock
  - Poultry
  - Vegetables
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Check:**  
 Make checks payable to:  
 Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation

**Mail completed application and payment to:**  
**Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation**  
**249 Lakeside Ave**  
**Marlborough, MA 01752**

*Thank you for your support!*

## Recipe: Maple Brown Sugar Cookies

### Ingredients

- 2 and 1/3 cups all-purpose flour (spoon & leveled)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1/3 cup pure maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon maple extract
- 1 cup chopped pecans

### Maple Icing

- 2 Tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/3 cup pure maple syrup
- 1 cup sifted confectioners' sugar
- pinch salt, to taste



### How to make

1. Whisk the flour, baking soda, and salt together in a medium bowl. Set aside.
2. Using a hand mixer or a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, cream the butter and brown sugar together on medium speed until smooth, about 1-2 minutes. Add the egg and beat on high until combined, about 30 seconds. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl as needed. Add the maple syrup, vanilla extract, and maple extract, then beat on high speed until combined.
3. Pour the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, then mix on low until combined. Add the pecans, then beat on low speed until combined. Dough will be creamy and soft.
4. Cover and chill the dough for 2 hours in the refrigerator (and up to 3-4 days). If chilling for longer than a few hours, though, allow to sit at room temperature for at least 30 minutes before rolling and baking because the dough will be quite hard.
5. Preheat oven to 350°F (177°C). Line 2-3 large baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats. (Always recommended for cookies.) Set aside.
6. Roll cookie dough into balls, about 1.5 Tablespoons of dough per cookie. This cookie scoop is helpful. Bake each batch for 12-13 minutes until lightly browned on the sides. The centers will look very soft.
7. Remove from the oven. If your warm cookies look puffy, lightly bang the pan on the counter when you remove it from the oven. That will help slightly deflate the cookies, creating lovely cracks as you see in the pictured cookies. Cool cookies on the baking sheets for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.
8. Make the icing: In a small saucepan over low heat, melt the butter and maple syrup together, whisking occasionally. Once the butter has melted, remove from heat and whisk in the sifted confectioners' sugar. Taste. Add a pinch of salt, if desired. Drizzle over cooled cookies. Icing will set after about 1 hour.

Recipe from: [Recipe from: https://sallysbakingaddiction.com](https://sallysbakingaddiction.com)

# New England Leopold Conservation Award Seeks Nominees

**K**now a farmer or forestland owner who goes above and beyond in their care and management of natural resources? Nominate them for the 2022 New England Leopold Conservation Award®.

Sand County Foundation and national sponsor American Farmland Trust present the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 23 states for extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. In New England the \$10,000 award is presented with, New England Forestry Foundation and Wildlands Woodlands Farmlands & Communities.

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](http://www.sandcountyfoundation.org/ApplyLCA).

The application deadline date is July 18, 2022. Applications can be emailed to [award@sandcountyfoundation.org](mailto:award@sandcountyfoundation.org). If mailed, applications must be postmarked by July 18, 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.

"As a national sponsor for Sand County Foundation's Leopold Conservation Award, American Farmland Trust celebrates the hard work and dedication of farmers, ranchers and forestland owners," said John Piotti, AFT President and CEO. "At AFT we believe that conservation in agriculture requires a focus on the land, the

practices and the people and this award recognizes the integral role of all three."

"Recipients of this award are real life examples of conservation-minded agriculture," said Kevin McAleese, Sand County Foundation President and CEO. "These hard-working families are essential to our environment, food system and rural economy."

The New England Leopold Conservation Award is made possible through the generous support of American Farmland Trust, New England Forestry Foundation, Wildlands Woodlands Farmlands & Communities, Sand County Foundation, David and Ann Ingram, Farm Credit East, Yale School of the Environment and Whole Foods Market.

The first recipient of the award was Bill Hull of Hull Forest Products in Pomfret Center, Connecticut. Cranberry grower Linda Rinta and the Rinta Family Farm of West Wareham, Massachusetts received the award in 2020. Choiniere Family Farm from Highgate Center, Vermont received the award last year.

# USDA To Gather New Data On Certified Organic Agriculture Production

**T**he U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA)

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is conducting the 2021 Organic

Survey to gather new data on certified organic crops and livestock commodities in the United States. This effort is critical to help determine the economic impact of certified organic agriculture production on the nation.

NASS is mailing the survey to all known certified organic farms and ranches within the 50 states. The questionnaire asks producers to provide information on acreage, production, and sales as well as production and marketing practices. Participants should respond by April 4. Producers can return their questionnaires by mail or complete them online at [www.agcounts.usda.gov](http://www.agcounts.usda.gov) using the new Respondent Portal. On the portal, producers can complete their surveys, see previously reported data, access data visualizations and reports of interest, link to other

USDA agencies, get a local weather update and more.



in the production sector of the organic industry," said Donald Buysse, chief of the Census Planning Branch at NASS. "According to the 2019 survey, U.S. certified organic producers sold a total of \$9.93 billion in products, up 31 percent over 2016. That is a significant increase, and this upcoming survey will help determine if that type of growth has been sustained."

Agriculture statistics are used by many, including business and policy decision makers, but in this case, farmers and ranchers stand to reap the most benefits. The 2021 Organic Survey will provide data for USDA's Risk Management Agency to evaluate crop insurance coverage to help provide adequate pricing for organic producers. The report, to be released on the NASS website Dec. 15, 2022, will also assist producers, suppliers,

and others in the private sector in planning the production and marketing of new products to help sustain industry growth.

"This survey continues a great partnership across USDA agencies in a commitment to support certified organic producers based on the best data possible," added Buysse. "This voluntary survey gives all organic farmers and ranchers who receive it an opportunity to impact the industry."

"I encourage producers to participate in this survey so we can continue to improve Federal crop insurance for organic producers," said Marcia Bunker, Administrator for USDA's Risk Management Agency. "We now offer an organic price for 84 crops, which is up from just four in 2011, due in part to the information received from this survey. Producers' participation in this survey will aid USDA efforts to meet the needs of our nation's ever-expanding organic market."

Information provided by respondents is kept confidential and will not be published in identifiable form, as required by federal law.

# MFBFB Members' Classifieds

## FARM STUFF WANTED

**FARM STUFF WANTED:** We are interested in picking your barns, outbuildings, etc. Looking for galvanized buckets, tin roof, old boxes and anything we can make into something cool! Call Mike at 978 230 1131

**LOOKING TO BUY:** A good used fudge machine. Call Ken 508-865-4905.

## FOR SALE

**FOR SALE:** 24 inch wide 20 brush vegetable washer with ball bearings, two adjustable top brushes, new curtains, and padding. Includes feeder table with new belt and padding. Both washer and feeder table driven by a 1 hp motor. Excellent condition. Made by the Amish-- AZS Brusher Equipment Ephrata, PA \$2000. 508-496-9873.

**Hay for Sale:** Round Bales, 4 x 4, Good Quality. 1st cutting, 2nd cutting and

baleage at Lowland Farm in Monterey. berkshiremaple@verizon.net or (413)528-4091.

**FOR SALE:** Tires: Great prices, all sizes, tire repairs, road service, calcium chloride service. Hoey Tire, Worcester. Call 508-755-6666, www.hoeytire.com

**FOR SALE:** Vandana Vacuum Seeder for plug trays. Used very little. Will seed 200, 288 and 394 plug trays. Have 7 templates that will plant begonias to snapdragons and more. For veggies cabbage, cauliflower, broccet., tomatoes, peppers and more. Have plug dislodger for the 288 and 394 plug trays. All three items are from Growing Systems inc., Milwaukee, Wisc. 53212 (414-263-3131). All three items brand new over \$12,000. Asking \$6,000. Will deliver within reason. Also 4 brand new boxes of plug trays at no charge. A brand new box of plug trays over \$100.00. Call 774-402-0069.

**FOR SALE:** Hereford Calves for Sale: 6-7 months old, hand raised and tame, polled, both steers and Heifers, for your feed lot or pasture. 617-840-2074.

**FOR SALE:** 26% Tax Credit on EPA certified Central Boiler Classic Edge HDX models and installation. Call today to learn more 413-296-4320.

**FOR SALE:** Hay 1st and 2nd cutting. 4' X 5' round and small square bales. Conway Farms, Lakeville, MA 508-821-0149.

**FOR SALE:** John Deere wheel extensions/clamps for dual rear tires \$600. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693

**FOR SALE:** Chevy 305 with Berkley irrigation pump \$5200. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693

**FOR SALE:** 6,8,10 inch PVC irrigation pipe. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693

**FOR SALE:** Berkley 12 inch flow pump \$1200. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693

**FOR SALE:** 3 pt hitch subdrainage plow for 4 inch pipe \$3400. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693

**FOR SALE:** Used aluminum water control flumes 36/30/15inch outlets. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693

**FOR SALE:** Used collapsable Macro Bins 40x48x36 \$100 each. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693

**FOR SALE:** Buckhorn vented/stackable/plastic field bins 40x48x16 \$60/bin or bulk pricing. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693

**FOR SALE:** Collapsable RPCs 24x16x8 \$10/or bulk pricing. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693

## HELP WANTED

**FARM HAND:** Pleasant working conditions at family-owned flower farm in Berlin, MA. 15-20 hours/week mid-March to Mid-November. Minimum Age: 18. Contact Carl at 978-838-2471 or info@goldenskepfarm.com

## SERVICES

Looking for a break? Email Amos@constellategroup.com to talk about selling your Ag business!

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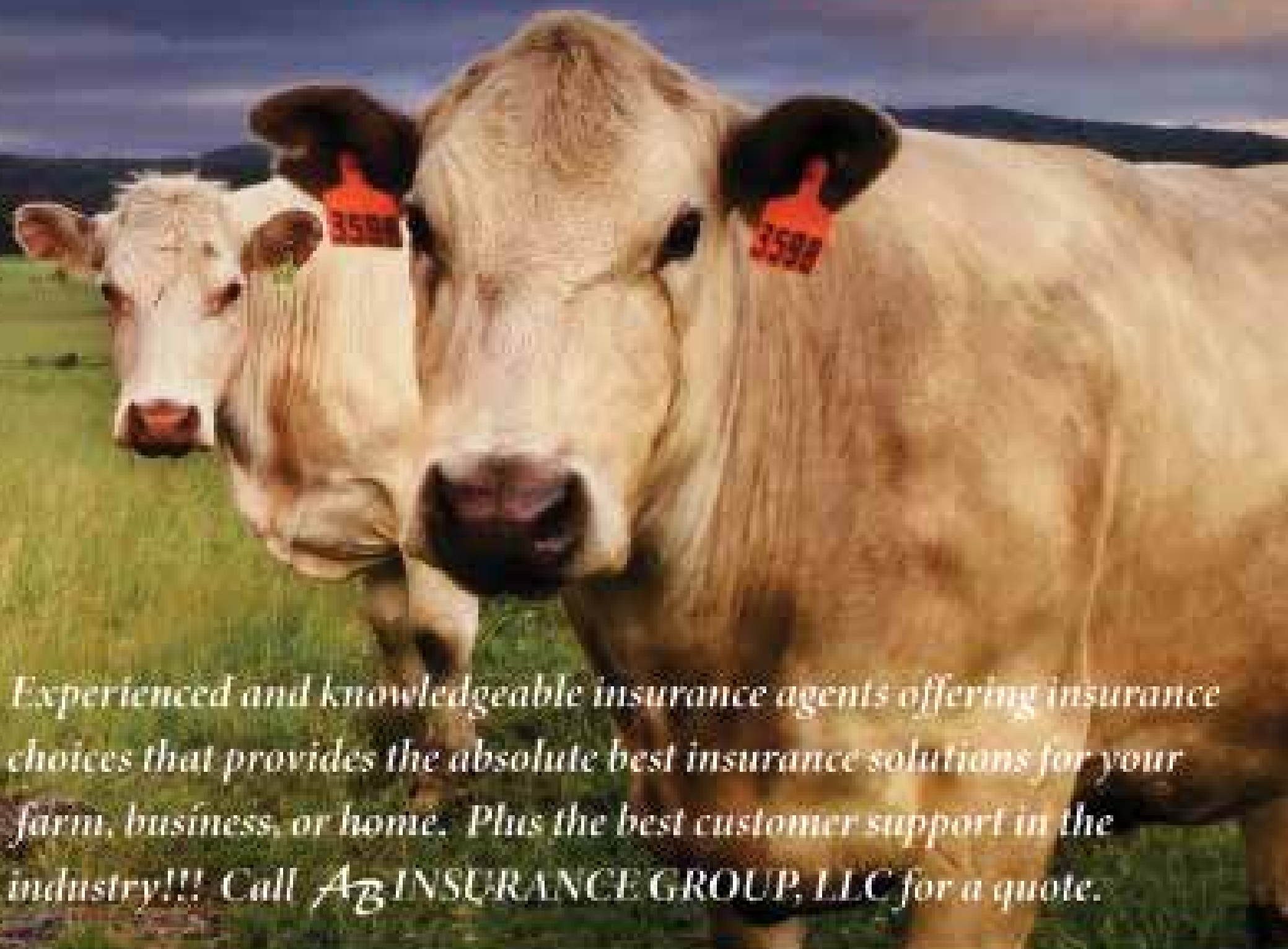
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