

WOMEN WELL-SUITED
FOR LEADERSHIP IN AG
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BUREAU EVENTS
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MASSACHUSETTS FARM BUREAU FEDERATION'S

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NEWS & VIEWS

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www.MFBBF.net

Majority Of Massachusetts Experiencing Drought Conditions

With 90 percent of Massachusetts experiencing drought conditions, Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Beth Card declared a Level 2-Significant Drought in the Northeast, Southeast, Connecticut River Valley, and Central Regions of the state. Additionally, the Islands Region will remain at Level 1-Mild Drought along with the Western Region, which was elevated from Normal conditions last month. At this time, the Cape Cod Region will remain at Level 0-Normal conditions. As outlined in the Massachusetts Drought Management Plan, a Level 2-Significant Drought warrants the convening of an inter-agency Mission Group, which has

already been convened, to more closely coordinate on drought assessments, impacts and response within the government. A Level 1-Mild Drought warrants detailed monitoring of drought conditions, close coordination among state and federal agencies, and technical outreach and assistance to the affected municipalities.

"As the state continues to experience dry conditions, and with little rainfall expected in the immediate forecast, it is important that we all implement water conservation practices to reduce stress on our local water supply systems and our natural habitats," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Beth Card. "The Baker-Polito Administration will

continue to work closely with its municipal partners and local water suppliers as we further monitor ongoing drought conditions and address its impacts, particularly on the agricultural sector."

"As the drought conditions worsen across parts of the Commonwealth, MEMA reminds residents to exercise caution when using charcoal grills, backyard fire pits, and other open flame outdoor activities to prevent outdoor fires," said Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Acting Director Dawn Brantley. "Residents can also assist during the drought by minimizing water usage and following any local water restrictions for their area."

continue to impact the drought in the coming weeks as the state will experience the hottest time of the year. Furthermore, streamflow has been severely impacted across the Commonwealth, with dry stream beds and ponding visible in many locations. Ongoing drought conditions are also impacting growers, including local farms, with some farmers irrigating more heavily due to the lack of precipitation.

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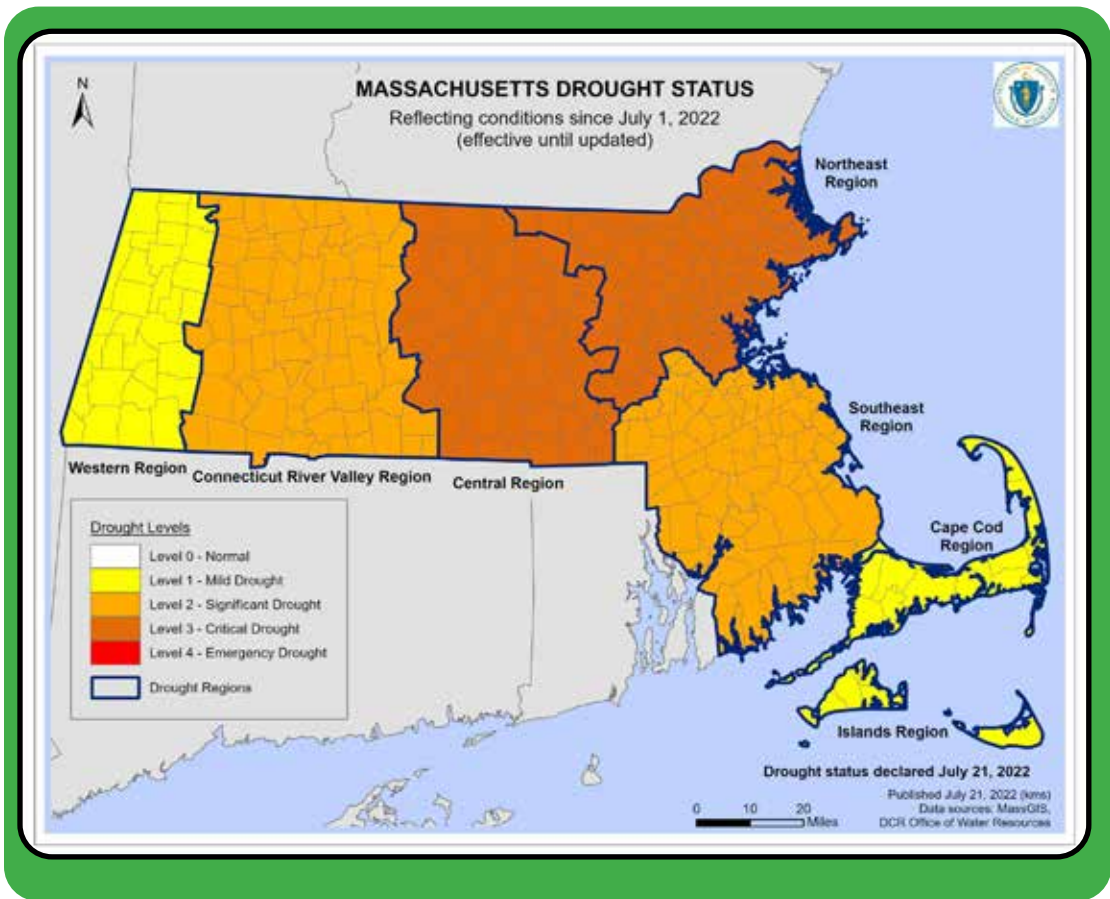
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Since the start of June 2022, hydrological conditions have continued to decline across the state and in particular in the northern half of the Commonwealth. Significantly, the drought has been both spreading and intensifying, with indices dropping more rapidly due to lack of precipitation over the past several months. Additionally, fire danger in the northern half of the state is steadily on the rise, with noticeable drought stress on foliage in shrubs and grasses. It is expected that low dew point and higher evapotranspiration may



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August Recess, Prime Time for Grassroots in Action

By: Zippy Duvall, AFBF President

In a little over a week, 435 members of Congress will head home, and just a week later, the Senate will join in the August recess. This tradition of leaving DC at the end of the summer to spend extra time meeting with constituents back home began more than 50 years ago. And this year, it will be one of the longest recesses in years, with 45 days for the House and 31 days for the Senate. For Farm Bureau this time is anything but a “recess”: this is prime season for grassroots activities.

Lawmakers across rural, suburban and urban areas need to see and hear from farmers and ranchers in all seasons, but especially during recess season. It’s hard to match the face-to-face connections between lawmakers and the people they represent. While I am committed to sharing your stories here in Washington, there’s an even greater impact when your Senators and Representatives hear directly from you about the issues you face. The most powerful influence of any advocate is your personal story. How are you impacted by the issues? This is what members of Congress and their staff need to hear from you. What’s more, the timing of August recess gives you an opportunity to have the ear of members of Congress right before they take up important issues in the fall.

August is the time to help our elected leaders understand the

many challenges across agriculture, from high input costs and inflation to the challenges Mother Nature brings. That’s why it’s not too early to talk about the farm bill. Discussions and hearings have already begun in preparation for the 2023 farm bill. This is really a “food and farm bill” as it provides critical programs and risk management tools for farmers, but also secures access to food and nutrition for low-income families across urban and rural America. This bill is updated every five years to ensure that it is working for all Americans and achieving the goal of keeping our food supply secure. You can share with your Senators and Representatives how specific farm programs support your family’s work as well as enable you to fulfill your mission of growing safe, sustainable food for our communities and nation.

Members of Congress need to hear that true sustainability for agriculture includes economic viability, ensuring that farm and ranch families can pass their work on to the next generation. Taxes play a consequential role in economic sustainability and your voices can directly impact what happens on the tax front. Tell Congress the tax increases



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

included in the Build Back Better bill, now being considered by the Senate, would have a devastating impact on farm and ranch families. Thanks to many of you making your voices heard, we have seen major successes with protecting stepped-up basis and limiting estate taxes. But so far many of these provisions remain temporary, leaving many families uncertain when it comes to estate planning. Congress needs to hear from you about the importance of permanent tax law that allows family-owned farms and ranches to transfer from one generation to another and about the serious consequences of tax code changes that put farms in the red.

Finally, while some of you may have the opportunity to participate in virtual townhalls throughout the year, for many more, lack of broadband limits your ability to connect with lawmakers and customers far from your farm or ranch. In-person opportunities during recess are the perfect chance to talk with your lawmakers about securing broadband access. It’s unacceptable that 42 million Americans, mostly in

rural areas, don’t have broadband internet access. We all know that broadband is no longer a luxury, it’s a necessity. Congress made significant investments in new broadband programming through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. You can thank those lawmakers who supported these new investments, and stress how important it is for those resources to be targeted to those areas that remain unserved.

I understand that it’s a commitment—and often a sacrifice—for you to take the time away from the farm to meet with lawmakers. But I can also assure you that it is well worth it as an investment in your farm and the future of agriculture. I encourage you to look for opportunities, whether that be attending a townhall or county fair event, visiting your congressional district office, or hosting a tour or event on your farm or ranch. Farm Bureau is also here to support your grassroots engagement efforts. You can reach out to your county or state Farm Bureau or our Advocacy team here at AFBF for more information and ideas. Together, let’s make the most of this August recess and send Congress back to Washington this fall, ready to take action to strengthen agriculture and rural America.

Zippy Duvall
AFBF President

Help Wanted: Seeking a Solution to the Ag Labor Crisis

Help Wanted.” “Now Hiring.” “Apply now!” Drive through any town – large or small – and you’ll see businesses looking for employees. We’ve been trying to fill open positions on America’s farms and ranches for decades, so we’re no stranger to the current labor shortage. Finding Americans who want to work on the farm and get their hands dirty becomes harder each year. America’s farmers and ranchers have increasingly relied on workers from other countries to help us milk our cows and raise and harvest our crops.

Workforce shortages are the most significant limiting factor for growth in agriculture as America’s farmers and ranchers continue our mission to deliver a safe and sustainable source of food for

our nation and the world. Events over the past two years have underscored why the world needs to support farmers and ranchers as we work to ensure that our food supply is reliable and affordable for everyone. We are being asked to increase production to help feed a troubled world because of the war in Ukraine and other challenges. Farmers are up to it, but we need Congress to help us answer that call by providing a legal framework that enables us to hire the workers needed to meet the challenge.

For decades, the American Farm Bureau has been advocating for reforms to our ag labor system. We need solutions that allow more workers to come to our farms from other countries, help workers who don’t have proper

documentation come out of the shadows, and provide stability in labor costs. In this Congress, and the previous Congress, members of the House put forward legislation intended to achieve these goals. Unfortunately, the bill that was introduced fell short. It may have provided temporary relief to some, but it doesn’t provide a long-term solution for all. That’s why we have been committed to working with the Senate to produce a more comprehensive solution.

Since the House passed its bill, we have been working closely with Senators who share our goal of achieving ag labor reform. For months, Farm Bureau has been at the table and actively working to ensure the shortcomings of the House-passed legislation are

resolved in a Senate bill. One of the major challenges we face today is the absence of a year-round agriculture work visa. The H-2A program that many farmers use is limited to seasonal employment. As a former dairyman, I can tell you that our cows needed milking multiple times every day, year-round, so a seasonal work visa simply doesn’t work for everyone. We were pleased to see the House create a year-round agriculture visa program, but there was a big problem. They limited the number of these visas to just 20,000 a year, with only modest increases available in future years. That might sound like a lot, but there are at least 30,000 full-time farm

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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.

President’s Column

By: Warren Shaw, MFBF President

You’ll recall back in the early part of the year the marketplace for professional employees took away one of our finest, Katelyn Parsons, who received an offer from Farm Credit. MFBF’s board of directors is grateful for her hard work but understood the realities of the changing job market and opportunities for her future.

We were fortunate to hire a strong replacement, Nick John, who hit the ground running.

Now that changing and competitive job market we live in along with the opportunities it provides has given the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF), a new challenge.

Brad Mitchell, our current executive director and past lobbyist, an impactful employee since 2010, has been offered a new position, which will significantly increase his compensation, and he has given his notice.

What is very clear from this recent experience is that MFBF is going to have to compete for talent if we want to continue to be effective representing our farmer members.

Your board of directors has appointed a screening committee and the advertisement began in late July/early August. The committee has an ambitious goal to have the new executive director appointed before Columbus Day as we have much to do this fall most importantly our annual meeting in December, a fabulous opportunity to get together in person once again.



Warren Shaw is president of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation.

The annual meeting committee, led by Laura Abrams, is looking forward to a meeting that has interesting speakers, breakout sessions on grant writing, solar and other important topics. We also have an invitation into the governor’s office asking the governor to be our dinner speaker.

Speaking of the governor, like it or not we will have a new governor next year and the folks who are interested in getting the job certainly need your input as to agricultural policy that works for us. I have spoken with Republicans Geoff Diehl and Chris Doughty

who need to hear from you. I’ve also spoken briefly with Maura Healy, democrat candidate, who says she wants to work with us.

Reach out to them when you have the opportunity. There will be significant challenges for ag in the future and climate change will likely will be on that list.

In closing, I feel MFBF needs it’s own climate policy and position. If we stand by as folks who have never tried to make a living on a farm create the government policy that is sure to come, we are making a mistake.

Finally, I would also like to note that I heard from AFBF President Zippy Duvall and unfortunately he is no longer able to come and tour Massachusetts this fall. He expressed his regrets but his schedule would not allow him to visit the Commonwealth this year.

Warren Shaw
MFBF Present

USDA Announces August 2022 Lending Rates for Ag Producers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced loan interest rates for August 2022, which are effective Aug. 1, 2022. USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) loans provide important access to capital to help agricultural producers start or expand their farming operation, purchase equipment and storage structures or meet cash flow needs.

Operating, Ownership and Emergency Loans

FSA offers farm ownership and operating loans with favorable interest rates and terms to help eligible agricultural producers, whether multi-generational, long-time, or new to the industry, obtain financing needed to start, expand or maintain a family agricultural operation. FSA also offers emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, other natural disasters or quarantine. For many loan options, FSA sets aside funding for historically underserved producers, including veterans, beginning, women, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and Hispanic farmers and ranchers

Interest rates for Operating and Ownership loans for August 2022 are as follows:

- Farm Operating Loans (Direct): 4.000%

- Farm Ownership Loans (Direct): 4.250%
 - Farm Ownership Loans (Direct, Joint Financing): 2.500%
 - Farm Ownership Loans (Down Payment): 1.500%
 - Emergency Loan (Amount of Actual Loss): 3.750 %
- FSA also offers guaranteed loans through commercial lenders at rates set by those lenders.

You can find out which of these loans may be right for you by using our Farm Loan Discovery Tool.

Commodity and Storage Facility Loans

Additionally, FSA provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade on-farm storage facilities and purchase handling equipment and loans that provide interim financing to help producers meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are low. Funds for these loans are provided through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and are administered by FSA.

- Commodity Loans (less than one year disbursed): 4.000%
- Farm Storage Facility Loans:
 - o Three-year loan terms: 3.125%
 - o Five-year loan terms: 3.125%
 - o Seven-year loan terms: 3.125%
 - o Ten-year loan terms: 3.000%
 - o Twelve-year loan terms: 3.125%
- Sugar Storage Facility Loans (15

years): 3.250%

Pandemic and Disaster Support

FSA broadened the use of the Disaster Set Aside (DSA), normally used in the wake of natural disasters, to allow farmers with USDA farm loans who are affected by COVID-19, and are determined eligible, to have their next payment set aside. Because of the pandemic’s continued impacts, producers can apply for a second DSA for COVID-19 or a second DSA for a natural disaster for producers with an initial DSA for COVID-19. The COVID-DSA is available for borrowers with installments due before Dec. 31, 2022, and whose installment is not more than 90 days past due when the DSA request is made. The set-aside payment’s due date is moved to the final maturity date of the loan or extended up to 12 months in the case of an annual operating loan. Any principal set-aside will continue to accrue interest until it is repaid. Use of the expanded DSA program can help to improve a borrower’s cashflow in the current production cycle.

FSA also reminds rural communities, farmers and ranchers, families and small businesses affected by the year’s winter storms, drought, hurricanes and other natural disasters that USDA has programs that provide assistance. USDA staff in the

regional, state and county offices are prepared to deliver a variety of program flexibilities and other assistance to agricultural producers and impacted communities. Many programs are available without an official disaster designation, including several risk management and disaster recovery options.

More Information

Producers can explore available options on all FSA loan options at fsa.usda.gov or by contacting your local USDA Service Center.

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 usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

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

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Baker-Polito Administration Announces \$63K In Grants For Beginning Farmers

The Baker-Polito Administration announced the awarding of \$63,788 through the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources’ (MDAR) Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture (MEGA) Program, which seeks to assist beginning farmers expand and improve their farm operations. This year, seven farms located in the Towns of Falmouth, Hadley, Lincoln, Oxford, Sterling, Stow, and West Brookfield were nominated to receive grant assistance. As part of the MEGA Program, participating farmers will receive individual business planning and financial assistance to help guide the growth of their farm business, and if the plan identifies a need for funds, they may receive a matching grant of up to \$10,000.

“The Baker-Polito Administration is dedicated to supporting farmers in the Commonwealth, including assisting the state’s beginning farmers, by providing the resources they’ll need to grow their operations,” said Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Commissioner John Lebeaux. “Dedicated beginning farmers will contribute to the future of a strong regional food supply in Massachusetts, and these grants will go a long way in funding the purchase of farm equipment and infrastructure necessary to help keep these agricultural businesses viable for many years to come.”

Since the MEGA Program began in 2010, it has provided a total of \$834,327 in grants to 98 diverse farms throughout the state, averaging approximately \$8,500 per farm, and a total of \$397,117 in business and technical assistance (\$4,052 average per farm). For more information regarding the program, please visit the MDAR MEGA program webpage. Farms receiving MEGA funds this round are:

Farm Name, Town - Grant Award Amount	
• Small Farm Inc, Stow	- \$6,238
• Maplebrook Farmstead, Sterling	- \$10,000
• Many Graces LLC, Hadley	- \$10,000
• Bell Brook Farm LLC, West Brookfield	- \$7,550
• Nantucket Sound Shellfish Company, Falmouth	- \$10,000
• Hannan Agro Farms, Lincoln	- \$10,000
• Dintino Farms. Oxford	- \$10,000

“Access to regionally sourced, fresh and



nutritious food is paramount to maintaining healthy and thriving communities” said State Senator John J. Cronin (D-Lunenburg). “With more extreme weather now a common occurrence, it is imperative that we give local farms the resources and tools they need to continue delivering high-quality agricultural products to the region without interruption. I am confident that this grant funding will do exactly that and put our farmers in a position for long-term success.”

“I appreciate that MDAR continues to find ways to support our farms and farmers and this funding, aimed for newer farmers is critical,” stated State Senator Anne Gobi (D-Spencer). “I am especially glad to see that Bell Brook Farm in West Brookfield will receive a grant that will assist them in revitalizing a sustainable farm and allow more people to experience and enjoy locally grown flowers.”

“We are so pleased that Maplebrook Farmstead will be receiving a MEGA grant,” stated State Representative Kimberly Ferguson (R-Holden) and State Representative Meghan Kilcoyne (D-Northborough). “We have visited their property in Sterling together, and have been so happy to see their progress to date. These investments are critical in supporting the future of farming in the Commonwealth and we are thrilled that Sterling’s own Maplebrook Farmstead will receive this funding. We thank the Administration for their ongoing support of farmers in the Commonwealth, including assisting the state’s beginning farmers.”

MEGA is one of several programs within MDAR’s Division of Agricultural Conservation and Technical Assistance (DACTA), whose mission is to advance the conservation and utilization of agricultural resources through preservation, environmental stewardship, technology, technical assistance, and education in order to enhance the viability of agricultural enterprises and safeguard natural resources.

Baker-Polito Administration Announces \$400K In Farm Improvement Grants For APR Farms

The Baker-Polito Administration announced grants totaling \$400,000 has been awarded to several Commonwealth farms through the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources’ (MDAR) Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program (APR) to improve farm operations. MDAR provides farmers with business planning and technical assistance in addition to grants through its APR Improvement Program (AIP). This year’s grants have been awarded to farms in the following communities: the Cities of Amherst and Easthampton, and the Towns of Plainfield, Sunderland, Westport, and Whately, and will be

used to construct hay and equipment storage buildings, produce washing and packing facilities, and a farmstand.

“The Baker-Polito Administration remains committed to the Massachusetts agricultural industry to ensure our local farmers continue to succeed and have the support they need to provide invaluable products for the public to enjoy,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Beth Card. “These Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program Improvement grants will further strengthen

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Legislative Update

By: Nick John, MFBF Interim Executive Director

In the final days of the current legislative session, the stakes are high! On July 28, Governor Charlie Baker (D-MA) agreed to a major increase in state spending by signing a \$52.7 billion annual budget; the final budget of his tenure in office. He vetoed less than half a million dollars of spending, and returned 41 sections to the Legislature with amendments. During the July 25 week, a nearly \$5.2 billion bond bill was sent to the Governor for review. The bill (H 5065) would fund improvements in government buildings and related infrastructure while also imposing a five-year moratorium on prison and jail construction and expansion.

In late July, in a session that stretched more than 13 hours, the Senate approved a sweeping economic development bill (S 3018), totaling more than \$4.4 billion and advanced major clean energy and government infrastructure legislation. As is common practice for bills of this scope, a six-member conference committee has been appointed to reconcile differences before sending the bill to the Governor.

Of interest to our members, the



Nick John is MFBF's interim executive director. Senate version of the bill contained favorable updates to Chapter 61 program deadlines and a proposal (by way of amendment) to create a two-year economic impact study of Holtec International's proposal to dump 1million gallons of radioactive waste water into Cape Cod Bay as part of the decommissioning of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant. The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) and our partners worked diligently with legislators to ensure that these proposals were included.

In late July, a major clean energy and climate change bill (H 5060) reshaping how the state accesses offshore wind power and making new commitments to speed a transition away from fossil fuels emerged from conference

and was sent to the Governor's desk. Included in the bill text were provisions which would create a sensible pathway for the inclusion of dual use solar energy on lands utilized for agriculture or horticulture as defined under Massachusetts General Law. More specifically, the solar measures in the climate change bill would eliminate the "donut hole" for on-site solar net metering allowing systems up to 25kW to be exempted from the cap. This means that more homes, barns, etc. would be eligible to install solar under the net metering program. The language would also loosen the single payer rule for net metering facilities on the same parcel as solar facilities. Lastly, the text calls for a commission to examine opportunities for farms and agricultural lands for the development of agro-voltaic projects.

There are several long-refiled pieces of legislation that we hope to advance in the coming weeks during informal sessions; stay tuned for more information!

Nick John
MFBF Interim Executive Director
nick@mfbf.net

USDA To Forecast Cranberry Production

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct a forecast survey for 2022 cranberry production during August 2022. This survey can be completed by mail, phone, or online at agcounts.usda.gov.

"The information from this survey directly impacts our regions' growers by providing a forecast of production throughout the country," said King Whetstone, director of the NASS Northeastern Regional Field Office. "States with cranberry growers participating in this survey include Massachusetts, New Jersey, Oregon, and Wisconsin."

In these surveys, NASS asks participants to answer a variety of questions about cranberries. For their convenience, survey participants have the option to respond online. NASS safeguards the privacy of all respondents and publishes only aggregate data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified, as required by federal law.

NASS will compile, analyze, and publish survey results in the Aug. 12, 2022, Crop Production report.

Creating Economic Opportunities (CEO) Project

Nonimmigrant H2A Visa Activity

On Feb. 2, 2021, President Biden signed an Executive Order calling for the development of a Central American Migration Root Causes Strategy. Vice President Kamala Harris leads the Administration's diplomatic efforts to address the root causes of migration from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

The United States must consistently engage with the Central America region to address the hardships that cause people to leave their country and come to our border (National Security Council, 2021). It is in our national security interest to promote a democratic, prosperous, and secure Central America, a region closely connected to the U.S. by culture, geography, and trade.

Temporary, seasonal labor shortages continue in both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors of the U.S. economy. The H-2A agricultural worker visa program has experienced unprecedented growth in recent years. U.S. growers cite labor shortages as one of the top issues they continue to face.

USDA 2021 statistics note that Massachusetts has approximately 7,200 operations working on over 500,000 acres of land. The industry provides employment to 25,920 individuals and produces an annual market value estimated at \$475 million in goods. In FY 2021, the U.S. Department of Labor certified approximately 500 H-2A positions for growers in Massachusetts.

The CEO H2 activity promotes the many positive attributes of Guatemala's workforce with U.S. employers experiencing temporary, seasonal workforce shortages where employers have demonstrated that there are no available, willing, and able U.S. workers for the jobs. This work is done collaboratively with the Guatemalan Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and its Seasonal Labor Program which provides qualified workers, free of charge, for temporary, agricultural jobs in the U.S.

Altogether, this work assists in reducing irregular migration to the U.S., provides meaningful income and experience to Guatemalan workers and their families, and

addresses well-documented U.S. employer seasonal workforce shortages.

For more information about this activity, please e-mail the project at h2jobs@mintrabajo.gob.gt.

NEED H-2A AGRICULTURAL WORKERS?

The governments of Guatemala and the United States are working together to help U.S. agricultural businesses like yours find the workers you need.

Guatemala's Seasonal Labor Program provides:

- Free recruitment services to U.S. agricultural employers.
- A database of 10,000 agricultural workers qualified in 60 different sectors.
- A team that helps you to manage the hiring process for H-2A workers.

"In the first six months working on H-2A petitions with the Guatemalan Ministry of Labor, we've encountered an energetic, dedicated and passionate team that has been great to work with. As both parties share the same vision, our goal of creating a safe, efficient and well informed process for workers has been very easy to pursue"

- Testimonial from H-2A Agent Firm, Seso, 2022.

For more information contact:
h2jobs@mintrabajo.gob.gt

Reminder to Report Crop Losses Promptly

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

- Check with your crop insurance agents to review any prevented planting options.
- Check with your crop insurance agent for reporting requirements for direct marketed crops.
- Do not destroy crop evidence that is needed to support your



claim without clear direction, in writing, from the crop insurance adjuster. Producers having coverage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) have similar loss reporting requirements. NAP producers should contact the

FSA Office that serves their farming operation to report losses and to review prevented planting options. Federal Crop Insurance is sold and delivered sole through private crop insurance agents. A list of available agents is available online at the RMA Agent Locator. You can learn more about Federal crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov.

Risk Management Agency (RMA) Announces Greater Flexibilities For Crop Insurance Reporting

Specialty crop (which include all fruits and vegetables) producers can now benefit from greater flexibility to use their own records to meet crop insurance reporting requirements. USDA-RMA announced revisions that will make it easier for specialty crop producers and other producers who sell through direct marketing outlets to obtain Federal Crop Insurance, report their annual production, and file a loss claim.

Changes include:
•A new marketing certification that allows producers to self-certify if they will not have disinterested third-party records(verifiable records that showed the name of the buyer, which direct marketers have never maintained) when required, and

enables them to use their own supporting production records. This will benefit direct marketers since they generally do not have disinterested third-party records.
•Allowing producers to use their own records, thereby limiting the need for Approved Insurance Providers (AIP's) to require preharvest appraisals as a supporting record.
Before these changes, RMA generally required disinterested third-party records and AIP's may have conducted preharvest appraisals to support productions records. These updates also improve transparency in a producer's policy by adding production reporting definitions, listing the 30-day appeal deadline for good farming practice

determinations, clarifying where a producer can find information in the policy, and updating terminology to be consistent across the policy.
Specialty crops and their producers are a recent priority at RMA. While individual policies for specialty crops have increased very little in New England, nationally Federal Crop Insurance coverage for specialty cops has grown steadily over the past 15 years and RMA is constantly looking to add specialty crops grown by producers in New England. These latest updates and flexibilities build upon RMA efforts to simplify reporting requirements for specialty crop producers as well as all producers who sell through direct marketing outlets. RMA implemented changes to the

Whole Farm Revenue Protection policy for the 2021 crop year that streamline revenue reporting for producers who direct market two or more commodities. Additionally, the new Micro Farm option was rolled out for the 2022 crop year specifically for small producers who sell locally including direct marketing. The Micro Farm option reduces reporting requirements, providing more access to the program.
Federal Crop Insurance is sold and delivered sole through private crop insurance agents. A list of available agents is available online at the RMA Agent Locator. You can learn more about Federal crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov.

Calling All College Sophomores and Juniors: Apply For The Greg Finn Scholarship Today!

This \$500 scholarship is awarded in memory of Gregory Finn and is meant to foster an understanding between the farm community and suburban agriculture. Applicant must be a child or legal dependent of a regular member in good standing of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation. Applicant must be at least in their junior year of college when the scholarship is awarded. Applicant must be majoring in communications, journalism, music or an agriculturally related field. Visit mfbf.net to download the application. The deadline is Sept. 21.

A&B Insurance Corner

Learn more about A&B at: www.abinsgroup.com

Fire safety and Prevention in your home

There are some simple things you can do to make your home safe from fire.

Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Test smoke alarms every month. If they're not working, change the batteries. Talk with all family members about a fire escape plan and practice the plan twice a year.

Kitchen fires are a major cause of house fires. Be alert and always stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, boiling or broiling food. When simmering, baking or roasting, use a timer. Keep anything that can catch fire away from your stovetop.

Have a 10-B:C extinguisher mounted in a convenient location in your kitchen. Always put your safety first; if you are not confident in your ability to use a fire extinguisher, get out and

call 9-1-1. Evaluate the situation and ensure:

- Everyone has left or is leaving the home
- The fire department has been called
- The fire is small, not spreading, and there is not much smoke
- Your back is to an exit you can use quickly
- You remember the acronym PASS:
- Pull the pin.
- Aim low at the base of the fire.
- Squeeze the handle slowly.

- Sweep the nozzle side to side.

Grilling outdoors, is another major contributing factor of house fires. Never place your grill on your deck or close to your home. Gas grills were involved in an average of 8,900 home fires per year. Leaks or breaks were primarily a problem with gas grills. Charcoal or other solid-fueled grills were involved in 1,300 home fires per year. Install a cement or stone pad a sufficient distance away from your home or any combustibles.

Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee Happenings

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



Photo Update: Illinois YF&R Visits Massachusetts Farm Bureau!



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

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

Farm Bureau Mortgage Offers Members USDA Home Loans for a Little as 0% Down

Today's Housing Market With its pivot to remote work and historically low interest rates, the COVID-19 pandemic generated an exodus of people from urban areas to suburbia and rural regions. Anxious buyers quickly snapped up real estate, leaving high demand and little-to-no supply. The resulting steep home prices contributed to an affordability crisis for much of the country and particularly, those in rural areas.

With inflation now at a 40-year high, the Federal Reserve has implemented a series of interest rate hikes — three so far and four more on the horizon — to battle inflation and curb demand in the red-hot housing sector. Those who waited to buy property now face a higher cost of entry with higher interest rates driving increases in monthly mortgage

payments. However, along with the rising rates, there are signs that the housing market is beginning to cool, with most economists predicting a normalization in the months ahead.

USDA Loans for Rural Dwellers and Farmers

Living in a rural area, you know cost can be a barrier to entry when it comes to owning property. However, there are special USDA programs that provide clear paths to rural homeownership, helping to create thriving communities for future generations.

These guaranteed USDA loans are available through Farm Bureau Mortgage for qualified borrowers purchasing property in rural areas or small towns. With the Single-Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program, loans are available with low interest rates and down

payments as low as 0%. Available to those with a low- to moderate-household income looking for a new primary residence, applicants are able to purchase, build, rehabilitate, improve or relocate a dwelling within a qualifying area with 100% financing.

Other benefits to the USDA Single-Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program include:

More cash available upfront – lending fees and closing costs are rolled into the loan, so you have more money when it matters most
Concessions can be used – if you receive a gift fund or qualify for a grant, the funds can be put toward the loan
"USDA encourages approved lenders to partner with low- and moderate-income families in eligible rural areas to make homeownership a reality. This

in turn promotes prosperity, creates thriving communities and improves rural quality of life," said Farm Bureau Mortgage President Dominick Deorio.

To find out if you live in an eligible rural area, visit USDA's eligibility site.

This article was provided to the American Farm Bureau Federation by Farm Bureau Mortgage.

Women Well-Suited for Leadership in Ag

By Sam Schwoeppe

The American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee hosted its inaugural ACE (Advocate, Cultivate, Empower) Summit in Washington, D.C., in June. The event was much more than a traditional advocacy "fly-in." It was a rich opportunity for attendees to build advocacy skills, connect with others in agriculture and develop a community of empowered women ready to take on leadership roles. Women who serve as leaders in agriculture at the local, state and national level from around the country packed up their suitcases and brought a wide range of talents, skills and expertise to D.C.

On the farm, we are always looking for new technologies that are going to help us be more efficient and do more with less. Each day we strive to be better than the day before. Opportunities like the summit help us to add more tools to our toolbox for communications and advocacy so that we can create a better agriculture community. These tools help us effectively share our stories with those who have the power to influence outcomes on our farms and in our communities.



Historically, roles in agriculture have been somewhat siloed. People worked on the farm, or they worked in agriculture-related industries. Few opportunities were offered where farm and industry met to discuss policy and practices, and when meetings did occur, they were somewhat awkward.

Today, women are in a unique role in agriculture. Many of us have various side-hustles off the farm to bring in income or insurance benefits to support our families. Women own this "in-between" space because many of us have had one foot on the farm and one food on the industry side for years. Women's roles in agriculture are changing because more of us are educating ourselves to prepare for leadership positions and serving in these dual positions both on and off the farm. When balancing this preparation and knowledge gained from life experience, women bring deep expertise to their leadership

roles. They are confident in their abilities because not only can they drive the machinery to harvest the crop, but they can also market, process and package it, and put it in front of the consumer who is purchasing it.

More opportunities such as the ACE Summit are needed. Agriculture is changing faster than ever and we need more women in decision-making roles. In today's fast-paced business world where change is the new norm, women are more suited to leadership positions than ever before.

Effective leaders are open to change, inspiring and motivating with an agile ability to switch from one leadership style to another. Younger professionals have different requirements to create success in organizations. The demand for transparency is one example. Interactive leadership, often espoused by women, meets this demand and provides for the sharing of information and encourages collaboration and contribution from all stakeholders. Women's leadership is all-encompassing and provides a supportive leadership style through engaging and empowering people. Effective leaders must recognize the differences and unique contributions people bring to

today's workforce. Not only should they understand the differences, but leaders must also know how to leverage individual strengths and differences to engage people to put forth their best efforts and lead thriving organizations.

This is my call to women in the agriculture community: Have the courage to stand up for what you believe in and live your lives as a testament to your faith, your love of farming and to your values and beliefs of hard work, dedication and service to your profession.

My hope is that women in agriculture will be the change they want to see in the world – gracefully exhibiting the example of an educated and empowered woman who knows her way around the agriculture industry. When obstacles are placed in your path, see them as opportunities to learn, and turn challenges into teachable moments that hopefully create an easier path for the next woman to walk down. When offered the opportunity to lead, accept it with grace and show up. Taking advantage of opportunities like the ACE Summit will empower you to do so.

Sam Schwoeppe is a farmer and Farm Bureau member in Indiana.

Growing Relationships With Urban Lawmakers

By Sunny Andersen

Geography and large membership numbers put urban county Farm Bureaus in a unique position to advocate for agriculture with elected officials.

Raghela Scavuzzo, associate director of food systems development with Illinois Farm Bureau; Lauren Williams, senior

associate director for national affairs with New York Farm Bureau; and Martha Moore, senior vice president of government relations at Virginia Farm Bureau, recently shared how their organizations are effectively connecting with city-based policymakers.

Scavuzzo said ILFB is focused on "growing our community together."

"What we're building in our system is more than just 'take them to a farm,' we wanted to build relationships and work on deeper conversations," she explained.

Williams notes that New York has over 8 million city and suburban residents who have little exposure to agriculture. To set the stage

for constructive conversations between farmers and urban legislators, NYFB hosted a reception in Queens.

"From our perspective, we really wanted to provide an experience for urban legislative members to realize there are farms in New York that are able to operate at the

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Help Wanted

Continued From Page 2

jobs in Wisconsin alone. Another issue with this approach to year-round visas is that half of the visas are reserved only for the dairy industry, leaving farmers in other year-round sectors like livestock, mushroom production, and some greenhouse operations without ample access to a year-round workforce.

We also continue to work on challenges with the Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR), the government-set wage that farmers and ranchers must pay H-2A

workers. The government uses a flawed formula that often results in significant yearly increases that outpace wages in the broader U.S. economy. Farmers work on slim margins and can't set the price of their products to keep up with labor costs. Farmers want to offer their employees a competitive wage for their hard work, but they must stay in business to continue providing these employment opportunities.

Another problem with the House-passed bill is that it would put

farmers at greater risk of facing frivolous lawsuits. Currently, the H-2A program is governed by a long list of regulations covering all facets of the program, including working and housing conditions. These current rules work to protect both workers and farmers by providing a clear path to address concerns. If employees think they are being taken advantage of, aren't getting the wages they are owed, or are living in unsafe conditions, they can file complaints with a government agency like the Department of Labor. The

government can order farmers to fix the problem, fine them, and even prohibit them from using the H-2A program in the future.

The last time Congress passed significant reforms to our immigration system was more than three decades ago. We cannot afford to wait another three decades to address these challenges. We need to get it right this time. You better believe Farm Bureau will be at the table, working with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to find a solution that will work for all farmers and ranchers.

Farmer Sentiment Remains Weak, Crop Producers Contemplating Acreage Shifts in 2023

Farmer sentiment remained weak in June as the Purdue University-CME Group Ag Economy Barometer fell to a reading of 97, 2 points below its May reading. During June farmers were a bit more optimistic about current conditions as the Current Conditions Index of 99 was 5 points higher than in May. However, the small improvement in current conditions was more than offset by weaker expectations for the future, as the Index of Future Expectations declined 5 points to a reading of 96, the lowest level since October 2016. Rising costs and uncertainty about the future continue to be a drag on farmer sentiment. This month 51% of survey respondents said they expect their farms to be worse off financially a year from now, the most negative response received to this question since data collection began in 2015. The Purdue University-CME Group Ag Economy Barometer sentiment index is calculated each month from 400 U.S. agricultural producers' responses to a telephone survey. This month's survey was conducted from June 13-17, 2022.

High producers said they expect their farm's financial condition to be worse in June 2023 compared to June 2022, the Farm Financial Performance Index actually improved slightly to a reading of 83 compared to 81 in May. Responses received to the Farm Financial Performance Index question are

primarily reflective of income expectations for 2022. On the other hand, the question that asks them about financial conditions a year

from now brings into play concerns about the ongoing escalation in production costs, in addition to concerns about commodity price volatility, which could lead to a production cost/income squeeze taking place in 2023. Still, even with the small rise in the financial performance index, it remained one of the index's lowest readings of the last two years.

The Farm Capital

Investment Index remained at its record low of 35 for the second month in a row. Producers continue to view this as not being a good time to make large investments in their farm operation. One reason producers say it's not a good time to make large investments is the problems they've experienced in the supply chain. For the second month in a

row, fifty percent of producers in this month's survey said that tight machinery inventories impacted their farm machinery purchase plans.

Both the Short-Term and Long-Term Farmland Value Expectations Indices declined in June. The short-term index fell 9 points to a reading of 136, while the long-term index fell to 141, 8 points below its May reading. Both farmland value indices are well below the highs established last fall. The long-term index in June was 12% below last fall's peak and the short-term index was down 13% compared to its fall 2021 high of 157. Taken in context over the life of the barometer survey, both indices remain at strong levels, but farmers are noticeably less confident that farmland values will continue to rise from current levels. Producers who expect farmland values to rise over the next five years continue to point to non-farm investor demand

and inflation

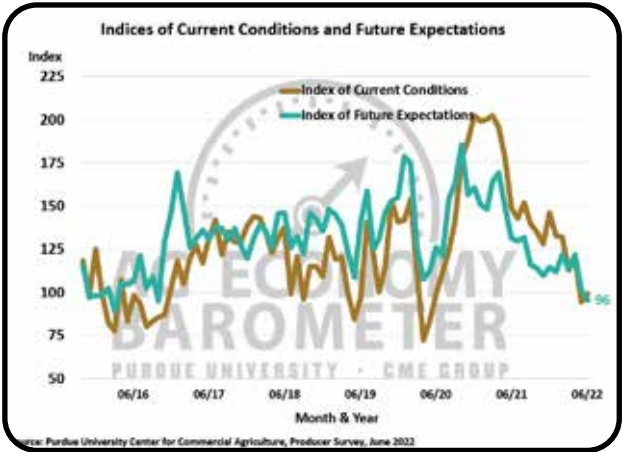
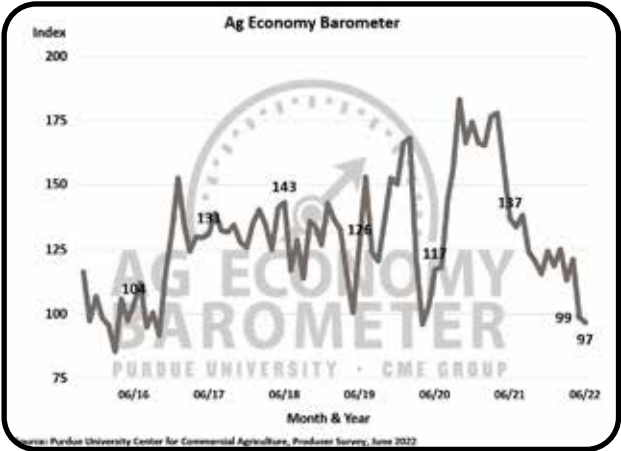
question posed only to those who said they expect rates to rise, eight out of ten respondents said they expect rental rates to rise 5% or more and four out of ten said they look for rental rates to rise by 10% or more in 2023.

Given ongoing concerns about world food grain supplies, this month's survey again included several questions focused on crop producers' production plans for the upcoming year. Among the farmers in our survey who planted winter wheat in fall 2021, one out of four (24%) said they plan to increase their winter wheat acreage this fall. Among crop producers who did not plant winter wheat last fall, 14% responded that they intend to plant some winter wheat this fall. Responses to both questions point to a rise in wheat acreage in response to strong wheat prices. Responding to a somewhat broader question about their cropping plans for the upcoming year, one out of five (19%) of crop producers said they intend to change their crop mix in the upcoming year in response to rising input costs. Among those who plan to shift their crop mix, almost half of respondents (46%) said the biggest change will be to devote a higher percentage of their acreage to soybeans. Twenty-six percent of those planning a crop mix change said the biggest change would be to devote more of their farm to wheat production while 21% of respondents said they would shift towards planting more corn.

Wrapping Up

Farmer sentiment remained weak in June as the Ag Economy Barometer fell two points below its May reading. Producers were somewhat more optimistic about current conditions this month, but that improvement was more

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Relationships With Urban Lawmakers

Continued From Page 8

commercial level," Williams said. Shifting focus and utilizing contributions and endorsements is helping VAFB to build long-term relationships with legislators. Offering nonstructured farm visits while legislators are travelling to party caucus events and providing opportunities to participate in roundtables with members is "increasing farmer transparency and building trust," Moore said.

Cultivating Agriculture in an Urban Setting Webinar Series

Scavuzzo, Williams and Moore participated in an American Farm Bureau Federation-hosted webinar on growing relationships with

urban lawmakers. The webinar is the second in a series of bi-monthly webinars focusing on avenues of engagement with farmers and others in urban settings. Webinar recordings and supported materials, such as how-to toolkits and articles on related county Farm Bureau programs, are available to Farm Bureau members and staff on Farm Bureau University. If you are not already registered on FBU, you can register at university.fb.org using the code statefb, replacing "state" with your state's two-letter postal abbreviation. For example, New York members would use the code nyfb. Staff should add staff to their registration code (statefbstaff), as

in nyfbstaff.

Sunny Andersen, a senior at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, is an intern in the American Farm Bureau Federation's Communications Department.

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Allied Business Directory

Able Farm & Garden

51 South Rd
Pepperell, MA 01463-1634
978-448-3144
Products & Services: landscaping and lawn supplies, mulch, loam, firewood, frozen meats, dairy, baked goods, honey, maple products, grab & go meals, gifts, décor.

Auto Shine Auto Body

310 Bedford St Abington MA
Phone: 781-421-6042
531-549 Pond St Braintree MA
Phone: 781-337-4309

Copeland Street Auto Body
65 Copeland St Quincy MA
Phone: 617 479-6352

Products & Services: We are offering 10% off any collision job for Farm Bureau Members! Specializing in Any Collision Job, We work with all insurances and handle all necessary arrangements for Your Convenience Free Estimate.

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.

The Big E

1305 Memorial Ave
West Springfield, MA 01089
413-205-5011
https://www.thebige.com/p/agriculture
info@thebige.com
Products & services: Fairgrounds and Annual Fair

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.

Colonial Restorations

PO Box 868
Fiskdale, MA 01518-0868
508-735-9900
http://www.cr1981.com
info@cr1981.com
Products & Services: Colonial Restorations, LLC specializes in the structural restoration/repair of post and beam homes and barns throughout New England since 1981.

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 Powersports

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

Hyperion Systems, LLC

HearthStone stoves
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.

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.

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
themaneplace.com
linda@themaneplace.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.

Due to space limitations, products and services listings will be limited to 20 words or less.

Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$400k

Continued From Page 4

the Commonwealth’s food supply system making it more resilient now and well into the future.” “The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources is steadfast with its commitment to our Commonwealth’s farming families,” said MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux. “Through the APR Program we have been able to conserve critical farm land, preserve Massachusetts agricultural history, and provide support to help keep these farm businesses sustainable now and for future generations.”

Since it began in 2009, AIP has provided \$6,425,000 in total grants, averaging approximately \$70,250 per farm. Additionally, to date a total of \$558,958 has been provided in technical assistance to 100 Massachusetts farms, averaging approximately \$5,590 per farm. Farms receiving AIP funds this round includes:

- | Farm, Town - Project Description, Nomination | Amount |
|--|-----------|
| • Foxcroft Farm, Amherst - Hay/equipment storage building, | \$40,000 |
| • Long Plain Farm, Whately - Produce storage/packing building, | \$40,000 |
| • Orr’s Farm, Westport - Storage building, | \$40,000 |
| • Mountain View Farms, Easthampton - Storage barn, | \$40,000 |
| • D.A. Smiarowski Farms, Sunderland- Produce washing/packing building, | \$120,000 |
| • Wolf Tree Farm, Plainfield - Produce washing/packing building & farmstand, | \$120,000 |

“I thank Governor Baker and the

MA Department of Agricultural Resources for their continued support of the Massachusetts agricultural community,” said State Senator Michael J. Rodrigues (D-Westport), Chair of Joint Committee on Ways and Means.

“The vital APR program has helped to preserve farmland throughout the Commonwealth, including at over 380 APR farms in the Hampshire, Franklin, Worcester district,” stated State Senator Jo Comerford (D-Northampton), Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Health and Joint Committee on Covid-19 and Emergency Preparedness and Management. “I am delighted that these farm improvement grants will fortify the Commonwealth’s food system, increase the availability of fresh and healthy local produce, and help keep farmland as farmland. Congratulations to Foxcroft Farm in Amherst, Long Plain Farm in Whately, and D.A. Smiarowski Farms in Sunderland for these very well deserved awards.”

“The APR Improvement Program is critical in helping our farmers remain competitive in a changing food production world,” stated State Representative Paul Schmid (D-Westport). “We are deeply indebted to our Governor and Lieutenant Governor for their demonstrated commitment to farmers and food.”

“I am excited that the state is awarding these grants to local farms to support their financial viability. All of us need our farms and farmers to succeed. And we know our farms and farmers need greater attention and resources

to survive. These grants look at supporting those farms with land that is already protected for agricultural use and maximizes their capacity for long-term success,” said State Representative Mindy Domb (D-Amherst), Acting Chair of the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture. “I want to congratulate all of today’s recipients, the majority of whom are located in western Massachusetts, as these grants contribute to our region’s economy as well. And, a special shout-out to Foxcroft Farm, located in the 3rd Hampshire District, with my appreciation for its efforts to secure these state resources for our community.”

“Support for our local farms is vital to the success of our food system,” said State Representative Natalie M. Blais (D-Sunderland). “These investments allow farmers to make improvements that will enhance operations and truly make a difference in their long-term viability.”

For more information about AIP, please visit MDAR’s program webpage. AIP is one of several programs within MDAR’s Division of Agricultural Conservation and Technical Assistance (DACTA), whose mission is to advance the conservation and utilization of agricultural resources through preservation, environmental stewardship, technology, technical assistance and education in order to enhance the viability of agricultural enterprises and safeguard natural resources.

Apply Today For The John & Liolia Schipper Memorial Grant

Through a generous bequest to the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Agricultural Preservation Foundation from the late John and Liolia Schipper, the organization is pleased to provide a grant program to assist Massachusetts farmers in becoming more economically viable and sustainable, with an emphasis on new farmers facing challenges of building a farm business in the expensive and challenging environment of Massachusetts.



Applications are accepted annually through Nov. 1, the maximum grant award is approximately \$3,000 per applicant. Applicants do not need to be a Farm Bureau member. However, if selected to receive a grant you must be a Regular member or become one before receiving funds.

Apply online at <https://mfbf.net/resources/grants-and-scholarships>

Upcoming Farm Bureau Events

Bristol County Farm Bureau’s Summer Picnic

Date: Friday August 12th, 2022

Time: 6pm - 8pm

Location: Chamberlain Farm, 12 Friend Street Berkley, MA 02779

Please RSVP By August 5th: Margaret Lopes lopesfarm@comcast.net or Call/Text 508-889-0738

Plymouth County Farm Bureau’s Annual Meeting

Date: Monday August 22nd, 2022

Time: 6:00pm

Location: Lakeside Villa (formerly BR’s), 555 Monponsett Street, Halifax, MA 02338

Email Lisa Blair plymouth_county_farm_bureau@yahoo.com or 508 866-9150 to RSVP and confirm membership.

Farmer Sentiment Remains Weak

Continued From Page 9

than offset by weaker expectations for the future. Just over half of respondents to this month’s survey said they expect their farms to be worse off financially a year from now, which was the most negative response received to

this question since data collection began in 2015. Rising input costs and uncertainty about the future continue to weigh on farmer sentiment. One out of five crop producers in the June survey said they intend to change their

crop mix in 2023 with the largest percentage of respondents planning a move towards more soybean production. Although both farmland value indices remain at strong levels, producers were noticeably less confident that

farmland values will continue to rise than they were last fall. However, in our first attempt to learn about corn/soybean farmers’ expectations for 2023 cash rental rates, over half of producers said they expect to see rental rates rise.

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McGovern Auto Group has partnered with MFBF to provide up to \$500 worth of incentives for members.

Growing up in the farming business, Matt McGovern learned the value of American ag and wants to give Massachusetts farmers an opportunity to save on one of the tools that keep their farms running.


Visit <https://www.mcgovernauto.com/mcgovern-farm-bureau-program.htm> for more info today!

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.



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What Is Trichoderma & How Is It Beneficial?

Trichoderma is the Latin name for a genus of fungi that are present in all types of soils. The Soil Science Society of America’s (SSSA) July 19th Soils Matter blog explores these fascinating fungi and how scientists have found that applying captured Trichoderma on farm fields can help crops.



According to soil scientist and blogger Lovepreet Singh, Trichoderma is present naturally in the soil and it has been isolated by scientists in the lab. It is a filamentous fungus, and it belongs to group Deuteromycetes which means it reproduces by producing spores.

Trichoderma interacts with plants, which in result produces beneficial effects for plants. Trichoderma colonizes the roots of plants. They can penetrate the outer “skin” of the plant, resulting in plant-microbe-soil environment interaction.

Benefits offered by Trichoderma

Several strains of Trichoderma produce various “secondary metabolites.” Compounds like epipolythiodioxopiperazines, peptaibols, pyrones, and pyridones help in plant development and promotes plant growth. When the fungus colonizes the plant roots, the plant develops more robust roots. Trichoderma has effects on physical attributes of the plants, and effects how it grows and metabolizes nutrients – its

physiology. This can lead to better yield and quality of the produce.

Seed treatment with Trichoderma leads to better germination of plants and more and healthier plants in the field.

The most important benefit from the fungus is its ability to fight diseases caused by other microbes. Trichoderma shows antagonistic interactions with other pathogens by various mode of actions, and it saves plant from dying.

One way Trichoderma fights is by attacking the other fungus. It is known to coil around the other fungus and penetrate cells of other fungus. It can also secrete harmful chemicals for the fungus, and steal nutrients from it. This eventually kills the other fungus. Other mode of actions is competing with pathogens for resources and releasing chemicals into environment which inhibits growth of pathogens.

Using fungi like Trichoderma is an alternative to pesticide use. This is called a biological control method.

How do scientists isolate the fungus from the soil?

Scientists collect soil samples from diverse fields, and then place cultures on a type of gel that any fungi can grow on. This helps isolate the fungus for study. Trichoderma produces green colored colonies when cultured in the lab. If other colors of colonies

show up in the gel, we isolate the green sections, confirm them, and grow them in new dishes.

How is Trichoderma research applied in farm fields?

Researchers have found that there are many compounds related to Trichoderma which makes it useful in agriculture. They can grow large amounts of the fungus in labs. Trichoderma based commercial products are mainly powder and liquid formulations. For powder type formulations Trichoderma cultures (active ingredient) are mixed with talcum powder (inert matter). Other agricultural waste materials such as wheat and rice straw, sugarcane bagasse, ground

corn cobs, sawdust, rice bran can be used as inert matter. The mixture is then dried and ground to powder. This powder can be applied to seeds or soils to tackle plant diseases.

To read the entire blog visit here: <https://soilsmatter.wordpress.com/2022/07/15/what-is-trichoderma-and-how-it-is-beneficial/>

Follow SSSA on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SSSA>, soils, Twitter at SSSA_Soils. SSSA has soils information on www.soils.org/discover-soils, for teachers at www.soils4teachers.org, and for students through 12th grade, www.soils4kids.org.

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: _____

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- ☐ Regular Member: \$225 for 1 year
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- ☐ Platinum Member: \$500 for 1 year

Non-Voting Members

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Please indicate which commodity areas best fit the product(s) you produce:

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Recipe:
Savory Blueberry
Rub

- Ingredients**
- 1/3 cup blueberry powder*
 - 2 tablespoons brown sugar, packed
 - 2 tablespoons grated lime zest
 - 1 tablespoon chili powder
 - 1 tablespoon coarse salt
 - 1 - 2 teaspoons ground red pepper
 - 1 teaspoon garlic powder



- How to make**
1. In a small bowl, stir all ingredients together.
 2. Pour into a jar, label, date and seal. Use within 3 months.

Recipe Tips
Uses: rub for grilling ribs, beef, pork, lamb, fish or poultry, like for this Grilled Chicken Seasoned with Savory Blueberry Rub; rim cocktail glasses; stir into Bloody Mary mix; add to sauces, marinades or dressings; finish plates.

*Blueberry powder is available online or at well-stocked retailers. Make blueberry powder by pulverizing freeze-dried blueberries in a blender

USDA Invests \$14M+ To Support
Agricultural Workforce Training For
Historically Underserved Communities To
Bolster U.S. Meat, Poultry Sector Resilience

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced an additional investment of more than \$14 million to support agricultural workforce training in historically underserved communities that will increase the resilience of the U.S. meat and poultry processing sector. This investment is part of the Biden-Harris Administration’s ongoing efforts through the American Rescue Plan to strengthen the nation’s food supply chain by promoting fair and competitive agricultural markets.

Funding is available through the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture’s (NIFA) Request for Applications process to eligible universities. Eligible applicants include qualified Centers of Excellence at 1890 Land-grant Universities, 1994 Land-grant Tribal Colleges, Hispanic-serving institutions, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and participants in the Resident Instruction Grants Program for Institutions of Higher Education in Insular Areas.

“These investments provide

critical support to our higher education partners to increase rural prosperity and economic sustainability of food systems in underserved agricultural communities,” said Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young, Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics and USDA’s Chief Scientist. “Food insecurity and food system interruptions have hit underserved communities hardest during the ongoing pandemic. By investing in education and workforce development at these institutions, we are training the workforce of the future to develop long-lasting solutions to these and other critical agricultural issues facing our nation.”

Minority-serving Institutions, Hispanic-serving Institutions and Land-grant Tribal Colleges have made invaluable contributions to advancing scientific research and developing future agricultural leaders and change makers. Collectively, program investments at these institutions will build a pipeline of well-trained workers and support management of small-scale meat or poultry processing plants.

The Hispanic-serving Institutions grants are competitive among qualifying higher education institutions. Complete information on this funding opportunity can be found on the NIFA website. The deadline to submit applications is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, August 29, 2022.

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, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

Protecting The Environment Via Climate Smart Ag, Forestry

A healthy environment is a foundation for a stable and healthy human society. On World Nature Conservation Day, learn about how NIFA-supported research and Extension at Land-grant Universities are helping conserve and protect the environment and natural resources via climate smart agriculture and forestry.

Since 1900, New York state has lost 60% of its wetlands as land was cleared for agriculture. Wetland restoration, while beneficial for many reasons, can also lead to increased production of greenhouse gases like methane and nitrous oxide. At Cornell University, researchers sought to better understand the role of alder trees in restoring wetlands.

They found that wetland reforestation with nitrogen-fixing plants like alder trees do help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. Alder trees work symbiotically with soil bacteria: The bacteria pull nitrogen from the atmosphere and make it available to the trees, and the trees give back sugar to the bacteria, benefiting both partners. Even though the soil

microorganisms were producing more nitrogen, the trees were taking it up before it could be released into the atmosphere. Wetlands reforestation with nitrogen-fixing plants like alder trees also aids soil recovery, but slowly: The researchers project that restored wetlands at a site near Ithaca, New York, will need 26-32 years of tree growth to recover to 90% of their original capacity.

Residential energy efficiency is widely considered to be one of the most cost-effective strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. As such, it has become central to climate policy around the world, with billions of dollars invested annually to unlock its potential. Independent of climate change policy, many energy efficiency programs focus on other benefits, such as reduced energy costs for low-income households and reduced pressure on energy generation capacity. However, these programs will be less cost-effective than anticipated if realized savings from energy efficiency fall short of expectations.

At the University of Illinois, researchers conducted three

large studies to help improve outcomes in energy efficiency programs and in the Weatherization Assistance Program in particular. These studies were conducted in collaboration with the Illinois implementation of the program and have involved extensive engagement with more than 30 agencies that support the program. As a result, the researchers identified the factors that drive underperformance in the nation’s largest energy efficiency program and tested the impacts of two potential solutions. Decision makers in Illinois and in federal programs now are considering restructuring the program based on this evidence.

Climate change is shifting weather patterns, altering the paths of the storms that provide life-giving water in many regions. The development of drought-resistant crops is becoming ever



more important as climate change changes weather patterns and increases evaporation, drying out soil and vegetation.

Researchers at Auburn University have identified two genes that appear to coordinate the fitness of plants in defending themselves from drought while also stimulating growth. The genes appear to be unique, feasible candidates for introduction into the genomes of other plants to generate crops that are truly tolerant of drought. Scientists now are working on designing a gene cassette that can be used to insert the desired genes into other plants to engineer induced systemic tolerance commercial-grade drought tolerance in plants.

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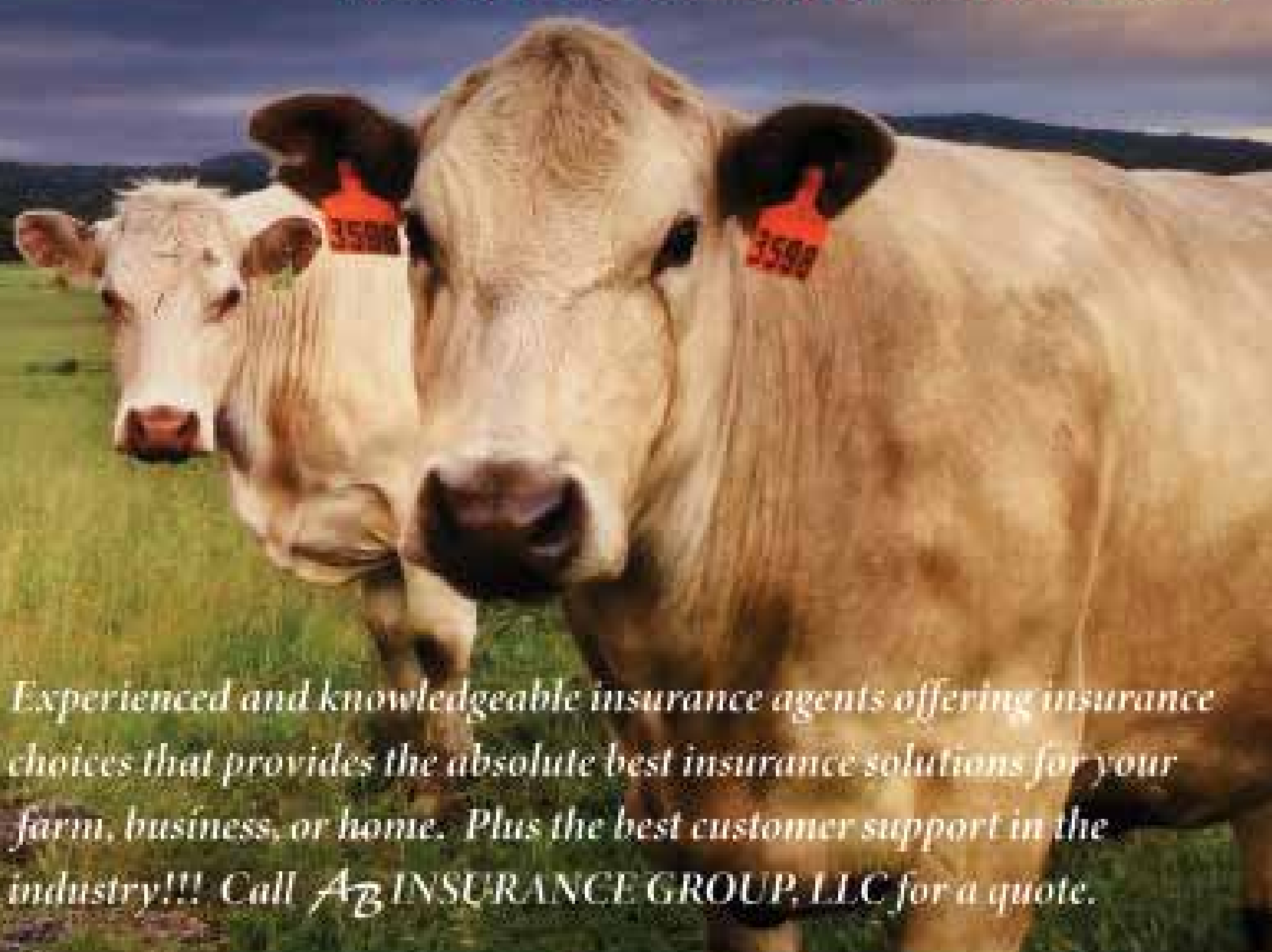


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