

**POLL FINDS  
AMERICANS SUPPORT  
SUSTAINABLE FARMING  
PRACTICES IN  
FARM BILL**  
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**FARM BUREAU  
ENCOURAGING  
FARMERS TO RESPOND  
TO CENSUS OF  
AGRICULTURE**  
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MASSACHUSETTS FARM BUREAU FEDERATION'S

Vol. 31, No. 1

# NEWS & VIEWS

JAN./FEB. 2023

*www.***MFBF***.net*

## State Announces \$28.5 Million In Available Funding For FY24 Food Security Infrastructure Grants

Working to combat against food insecurity throughout the Commonwealth, the Baker-Polito Administration in December announced the availability of \$28.5 million in funding for the FY24 Food Security Infrastructure Grant (FSIG) Program. This funding will allow the Commonwealth to ensure equitable access to healthy, locally-produced food for individuals and families throughout the state. A

Request for Responses (RFR) has been issued, seeking proposals from stakeholders. It is available online on [mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov). Additionally, the Baker-Polito Administration awarded \$7,260,000 in Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA) grants to 16 organizations across the Commonwealth. The grants, which are funded through the United

States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), seek to maintain and improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency through the purchase of domestic food from local and regional producers, by targeting purchases from socially disadvantaged farmers and producers, and the distribution to underserved communities.

"While the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program was created as part of our Administration's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, through this next \$28.5 million, we will be able to continue to utilize this important initiative to ensure access to healthy, locally produced food for all residents throughout the state," said at the time Governor Charlie Baker. "The \$7.2 million that we are awarding through the Local  
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*Mark Your Calendar:  
Ag Day At The Statehouse Is April 12!*



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**BRINGING NEWS TO MASSACHUSETTS  
FARM BUREAU FEDERATION FAMILIES.**  
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# President's Column

By: Warren Shaw, MFBF President

Membership strategy is more important than ever in 2023.

There's no doubt we will have some legislative challenges this year. We will certainly have to deal with the horrors of the forever chemicals, a.k.a. PFAS. If you have followed what happened in Maine, where farms have been shut down, it is certainly a wake up call. And we will no doubt have to battle legislation looking to take away our overtime exemption. In order to do this, Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) will need to be at full strength!

For these reasons, our biggest challenge this year will be to create a comprehensive membership strategy for MFBF that will sustain the organization for generations.

We can and must do it. Farm Bureaus across the country have



been hit with the recession like every other business. And the thing is sometimes people put that renewal bill in the pile and forget about it. After all, it's one of the few bills that you don't have to pay.

But any Massachusetts farmer can see what is going on in our political environment, and they are only kidding themselves if

they don't prioritize their Farm Bureau membership I always say to people, Farm Bureau is the only organization which has your back as a farmer at every level of government.

Sometimes I think folks forget about American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF). California's Prop 12 is a great example of their work to support farmers. Some of your membership dollars via AFBF

are trying to prevent California from setting arbitrary standards for animal housing that will most definitely impact the nation. AFBF and the National Pork Producers' Council have presented arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court. Our future markets depend on their testimony and the decision.

There is the protracted battle AFBF has with John Deere on behalf of farmers so that you can repair your own John Deere tractor. At the convention in Puerto Rico, AFBF signed an memorandum of understanding (MOU) securing fair and reasonable access for U.S. farmers to diagnostic and repair codes, manuals, and tools. That is a big deal.

And then there's MFBF, which has made a significant difference in the economic lives of our farmers here, year after year. Think of all of the major legislative gains over the years, which MFBF provided legislative leadership on. Additionally, livestock farmers who use the FLAME auction market benefit from our investment in that property. On a somewhat regular basis, we have folks who want to buy that property, however we keep it and maintain it to support our farmers.

We, as an organization, also have the ability to play defense, when misguided legislation is filed. At times this can be our most important role. Farmers have a voice and control policy through Farm Bureau. Our grassroots approach to policy sets us aside from others and gives farmers a chance to make a living on their farms.

MFBF also will stand behind you when there are problems with local government, which happens a lot. Our office on a daily basis takes calls from farmers, who have local government struggles. Through all of these services, and the insurance discounts offered with our membership, it's very likely that your membership cost will be covered. Additionally, in 2023 we will see A & B offer new discounts!

This is our year to get serious about membership. Every membership funded organization struggles during a recession but we can't let it be an excuse. Membership is everyone's responsibility! The MFBF board of directors is taking it seriously, and so should each and every county board. We are a team, let's get after it!

Warren Shaw  
MFBF President

## Funding Available For Livestock Producers In Western Massachusetts

The Natural Resources Conservation Service, in partnership with American Farmland Trust, will be accepting applications for financial assistance for Land Management activities through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Livestock producers in Berkshire,

Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden and Worcester counties are eligible for this program. Applications are accepted year-round, but the deadlines for fiscal year 2023 will be Feb. 17, 2023 and May 19, 2023.

This funding is part of the Western New England Regenerative

Agriculture RCPP project, focused on increasing the adoption of regenerative agriculture practices in Western New England livestock farms through technical and financial assistance opportunities. These funds will assist livestock producers in implementing conservation practices to improve

soil health or protect water quality. Examples of eligible projects include prescribed grazing, pasture and hay planting, cover crop planting, pollinator habitats, and more.

To learn more, reach out to Sarah Heller, project manager, at [sheller@farmland.org](mailto:sheller@farmland.org).

## New Benefit for Massachusetts Farm Bureau Members

The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) and Service First Processing (SFP) have put together a special "members-only program" with exclusive benefits that are designed to reduce the cost of credit card processing for your business while improving your level of service and support.

In addition to accessing low credit card processing fees, as a MFBF member you can qualify for an annual rebate.

- MFBF members receive annual 10% rebates on the net processing revenue SFP generates from their accounts.
- Free loaner equipment
- Free enhanced online reporting
- Dedicated help line for MFBF members. Always get a live person when you need it most
- 60-day trial period / 90-day pilot program for members new to credit card acceptance

Get a proposal for your organization today; the average savings for

Distributors is a 15% reduction in processing costs, before annual rebates. Additionally, as a MFBF member, you have access to a suite of electronic payment tools to help streamline your business.

- Accounts Payable Automation: Manage all invoice payments in an easier, more cost-effective way while receiving rebates.
- ACH Tools facilitate quick ACH and E-Check Services to suit your

- organization's needs.
- With online invoicing, you can easily create custom invoices directly online.
  - SFP will provide your company with a savings proposal based on your unique business processing needs and a consultative analysis.

Look for a call from SFP directly. They will be in touch, or feel free to call 855.632.9862. Visit the link below to learn more about this exclusive member benefit. <https://sfprocessing.com/mfbf/>

### 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.

# Upcoming County Farm Bureau Events

- March 17

Plymouth County Farm Bureau’s Legislative Breakfast

Starting time: 7:00 a.m.

Location: Lakeside Villa (formerly Monponsett Inn), 550 Monponsett Street, Halifax MA 02338

RSVP by 3/10: Lisa Blair 508 866-9150
- March 20

Martha’s Vineyard Farm Bureau’s Legislative Breakfast

Starting time: 9:00 a.m

Location: Ag Hall
- March 23

Essex County Farm Bureau’s Legislative Breakfast

Starting time: 8:00 a.m.

Location: Coolidge Hall, Topsfield Fairgrounds
- March 24

Worcester County Farm Bureau’s Legislative Breakfast

Starting time: 7:30 a.m.

Location: Hollis Hills Farm, Fitchburg

RSVP by 3/17: Mike Pineo mpineopfp@aol.com or 978-422-7350 (Leave Voicemail)

Cost: Free
- March 24

Middlesex County Farm Bureau’s Legislative Breakfast

Starting time: 8:00 a.m.

Location: Concord’s Colonial Inn, 48 Monument Square, Concord, MA
- March 31

Bristol County Farm Bureau Legislative Breakfast

Starting time: 8:00 a.m.

Location: Jockey Club, 115 New State Hwy, Raynham
- March 31

Tri-County Legislative Breakfast (Hampshire, Hampden & Franklin Counties)

Starting time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Blue Bonnet Diner, 324 King St, Northampton, MA 01060

RSVP by 3/28: Jaime Wagner 413-218-2695(call/text) or wagner41781@gmail.com

Cost: \$24.00
- April 7

Norfolk County Farm Bureau’s Legislative Breakfast

Starting time: 8:00 a.m

Location: IHOP, 1378 Boston Providence Hwy, Norwood, MA 02062
- June 21

Worcester County Farm Bureau Summer Picnic

Time: 5:30pm check-in, 6:30pm food buffet start

Location: Lilac Hedge Farm

RSVP by 6/14: Mike Pineo mpineopfp@aol.com or 978-422-7350 (Leave Voicemail)

Price: Free
- Oct. 18

Worcester County Farm Bureau’s Annual Meeting

Time: 6pm check-in and social hour, 7pm dinner

Location: Spencer Country Inn

RSVP by 10/11: Mike Pineo mpineopfp@aol.com or 978-422-7350 (Leave Voicemail)

Price: TBD

## USDA Expands Local Foods In School Meals Through Agreement With Massachusetts

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Agricultural Marketing

Service (AMS) announced it has signed a cooperative agreement with Massachusetts for more

than \$3.5 million to increase their purchase of nutritious, local foods for school meal programs.

Through the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement

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### New Membership Database

The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) is pleased to announce its new and improved membership database, called Your Membership (YM)!

Please log into the database and browse it’s features. If you have an email on file with MFBF, you can log in with your email and the default

password, which is Password1!. You can set up your own secure password once logged in. If MFBF does not have your email, please contact Kim Ashe at kim@mfbf.net for your username.

After logging in, you may review your membership, update your profile and set your messaging notifications. Two exciting new options this year

are auto-renewal and e-check. You can set up your payment options at time of renewal, and you won’t have to remember each year to pay! More exciting features will be unlocked in the months to come.

If you are an associate or a regular member, you will notice the membership names are now advocate

(individual) and farmer. We have also added a new category this year, advocate (family), for members looking to expand advocate member benefits to their families.

If you have any questions about the new database, membership levels or benefits, please email MFBF at info@mfbf.net or call (508) 481-4766.



Massachusetts Farm Bureau  
Federation, Inc.  
1-508-481-4766

MFBF Board of Directors

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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.

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FY24 Food Security Infrastructure Grants Application Available

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Food Purchase Assistance Program will further our efforts to invest in the Commonwealth’s food supply chain, creating a stronger and more resilient food system.”

“Food insecurity continues to be a significant issue throughout the Commonwealth and it is important that we continue to ensure programs across the state are being provided the resources they need to meet the demand that they are receiving,” said Lieutenant

Governor Karyn Polito. “Our Administration is proud to announce this new funding to further the critical work of ensuring greater access to healthy, locally produced food for all residents.”

The FSIG Program was created to provide grants for capital infrastructure investments that increase access to locally produced food for families and individuals throughout the state who may be facing food insecurity, live in gateway cities or food deserts, or who otherwise face unequal access to food. Additionally, FSIG works to mitigate future supply and distribution issues by partnering with local fishermen, farmers, and other producers to create a strong and resilient food system. The Administration initially announced the program in May 2020 and has since awarded \$63 million to 507 organizations throughout Massachusetts.

“The accomplishments from the first two years of the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program have shown how critical this funding is to strengthen the Commonwealth’s food supply system and prevent future disruptions from coming,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Beth Card. “Through FSIG and other important initiatives like the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program, we will continue to make great strides in ensuring everyone throughout Massachusetts has great access to healthy, locally grown products to enjoy.”

Furthermore, the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program seeks to maintain and improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency by working directly with socially disadvantaged farmers and producers to give food to underserved communities. Importantly, the food will meet the needs of the local and regional populations and serve feeding programs, including food banks, schools, and organizations that reach underserved communities. In addition to increasing local food consumption, funds will help build and expand economic opportunities for local and socially disadvantaged producers.

“The Baker-Polito Administration greatly appreciates the partnership with the USDA to provide these Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement grants to our Massachusetts farmers and agricultural organizations to purchase local food from our historically underserved farmers, as well as to distribute the food at no cost to our underserved communities,” said MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux. “We are excited

to be able to provide over \$7 million in funds to 16 organizations that will greatly assist with the long-term viability of agriculture in Massachusetts.”



“FSIG is one of the strongest, most resilient programs to emerge from the pandemic,” said State Senator Jo Comerford

(D-Northampton). “This latest round of grants through the LFPA program will bring over \$2 million to my district to reduce hunger and to provide more healthy, affordable, locally-grown food to my constituents. The continued funding for FSIG speaks to a shared commitment by the Administration and Legislature to fight food insecurity, tackle diet-related disease, and strengthen our food system — all at the same time.”

“It’s in a farmers DNA to feed people. Massachusetts farmers want to help eliminate hunger and get their local, healthy products into food deserts,” said State Representative Paul Schmid (D-Westport). “These awards and grants from the Baker-Polito team are making a difference all over the Commonwealth.”

“I am grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration for their continued investment in, and prioritization of, the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program,” said State Representative Hannah Kane (R-Shrewsbury). “Not only does this critical program, stood up during the height of COVID, help address the still high levels of food insecurity prevalent in the Commonwealth, it provides tremendous support to our local food system by investing in the food producers who can supply fresh, healthy food and strengthen their own operations.”

“FSIG has been a wonderfully successful program providing funds to individuals and organizations in the Massachusetts food system that help produce and distribute food in the commonwealth,” said State Representative Mindy Domb (D-Amherst), Acting House Chair for the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture. “Since the inception of the FSIG program, the Legislature has appropriated \$125,570,000 in funds for its operation, supporting applicants from nearly every municipality. Investing in our food system is essential in order to respond, relieve, and end hunger in the Commonwealth, and also to support and strengthen our commonwealth’s agricultural and seafood economy.”

For more information about the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program, please visit MDAR’s program webpage.

Please note: this release was sent out in December 2022.



# 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: @MAFarmBureauYFR &  
Instagram: @MAFBYoungFamers.



## Farm Bureau Encouraging Farmers To Respond To Census of Agriculture

By Hubert Hamer

The USDA's 2022 Census of Agriculture is officially underway across the United States and Puerto Rico. It is important for every farmer, rancher and producer to make sure they respond by the deadline on Feb. 6.

Every five years, America's producers have the opportunity to take part in the nation's only, most comprehensive and impartial data collection for agriculture. Since 1840, the ag census has played a significant role in showing the value of agriculture and informs decision-makers on how and where to allocate resources.

The data collected impact everything from farm programs and funding, crop insurance rates, rural development, disaster assistance, the farm bill and more. Producers, your voice needs to be represented in these important data. Who better to tell the story of American agriculture than the producers themselves? These statistics will directly impact our farming and ranching communities for years to come and without your input, your hard work to provide safe and abundant agricultural products to the world risks being underserved. For instance, understanding farm economics like value of production and income can help guide loan and grant assistance. Another example is that this year's ag census includes updates to internet access questions. Decision-makers



can use NASS data to determine service gaps such as the case for investment in broadband access and infrastructure. Also, because the ag census has been conducted for over 160 years, the data can help identify trends. The ability to see how U.S. agriculture has changed over time aids our nation as we plan for the future.

The questionnaire may look long, but the good news is that producers only fill out the information that pertains to their operation. We have also looked for opportunities to make responding more convenient than ever before, including launching our new online Respondent Portal. Answering the questionnaire online is fast and secure. Just go to [agcounts.usda.gov](http://agcounts.usda.gov) and enter your unique survey code. But whether producers respond online, or by mail, it is important to be counted. Better data can lead to better

decisions and better policies. We also want our producers to know that, by law, USDA keeps all personally identifiable information confidential and uses the data collected for statistical purposes only, publishing it in

aggregate form to prevent farmers or farm operations from being disclosed. So, though producers are sharing information about their agricultural operation, they remain anonymous in the data.

We recognize how incredibly busy our producers are, so I want to thank them in advance for taking the time to respond by Feb. 6, and for all they do in support of U.S. agriculture.

USDA NASS will release the results from the ag census in 2024. For questions or to learn more about the Census of Agriculture, visit [nass.usda.gov/AgCensus](http://nass.usda.gov/AgCensus) or call 800-727-9540.

Hubert Hamer is the administrator of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service.

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

## USDA Introduces an E-Application for the 1890 National Scholars Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has unveiled a new e-application for the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program, which aims to encourage students at 1890s institutions to pursue food and agriculture career paths. For the first time, the new e-application for the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program allows young people around the country to complete and submit their applications online. The program is administered through USDA's Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE).

"The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is crucial to USDA's efforts to provide career opportunities for the next generation of leaders in food and agriculture," said Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement Director Lisa Ramirez. "It introduces young people to the vast array of current needs and priorities in food, agriculture and natural resources, at a time in their lives when they are making decisions about their future careers."

The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is a partnership between USDA and the country's 19

historically Black land-grant universities that were established in 1890. USDA partners with these 1890 universities to provide scholarship recipients with full tuition, fees, books, room, and board. Scholarship recipients attend one of the 1890 land-grant universities, and pursue degrees in agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, or related academic disciplines. The scholarship also includes work experience at USDA.

USDA awarded 126 1890 scholarships in Fiscal Year 2022, the most in one year since the program began in 1992. The USDA/1890

National Scholar program helps to create a pipeline of skilled employees for USDA and the United States agriculture sector, which is a crucial part of USDA's next generation efforts.

The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is available to high school seniors entering their freshman year of college and rising college sophomores and juniors. Learn more and apply online at [USDA/1890NationalScholarsProgram](http://USDA/1890NationalScholarsProgram). The application deadline is Wednesday, March 15, 2023. For more information, contact [1890init@usda.gov](mailto:1890init@usda.gov).

# Poll Finds Americans Support Sustainable Farming Practices In Farm Bill

As Farm Bill talks get underway, the Walton Family Foundation, in collaboration with Morning Consult, is pointing to recent polling that shows nearly 90% of Americans believe that it is “important to update the agricultural system to encourage sustainable farming practices that support clean water and healthy, productive soil.” Roughly 80% of Americans also support modernizing the Farm Bill to support farmers as they implement more sustainable farming practices.

“Americans understand that water, food, and the health of the planet are all deeply connected – and it’s time that our policy and our food production reflect that,” said Moira McDonald, Environment Program Director of the Walton Family Foundation. “Supporting farmers to grow food more sustainably is a way to protect people and nature together. This should be a priority in the Farm Bill, and also a call to action to the food industry – people are hungry for sustainable options.”

**Key findings from the poll:**

- A broad bipartisan coalition says it is at least an important priority for Congress to reauthorize the U.S. Farm Bill (88% of Democrats, 78% of Independents, and 78% of Republicans).
- Proposals in the Farm Bill reauthorization that move farming practices toward being more sustainable are popular among voters: 76% of voters support helping “farmers to implement practices that protect our land, water, and health such as improving water quality, reducing soil erosion, and establishing buffers between farm land and waterways.”
- Voters want the federal government to encourage sustainable farming practices. When asked, 60% of voters agree that “the federal government should use its power to encourage farmers to adopt more climate friendly practices.”
- Today’s inflation and rising food costs shouldn’t stop American agriculture from planning for the future. Most voters (84%) agree that “we need to do more to maintain soil health and water quality so we can feed future generations.” When asked to choose between the agriculture industry producing food in a sustainable way that ensures America will be able to produce healthy food for the future, or producing enough food to feed the American population now while keeping costs down, a majority of voters favor preparing for a sustainable future (57% to 44%).
- Voters are more likely to vote for a candidate for political office in their state if they advocate for modernizing the Farm Bill to better help farmers address climate change (50% say that they are more likely).

These findings come as the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) releases a new report commissioned by the Walton Family Foundation titled US Agriculture and the Net-Zero Challenge.

US agricultural activities – which provide the food we eat, the fibers we wear, and the biofuels that run our cars – account for ~11% of national greenhouse gas emissions and up to 20% of national emissions when looking at the entire agri-food value chain. As the United States works to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, the participation and transformation of the nation’s agriculture sector will be vital.

This report explores twenty-four practices and technologies that can reduce net emissions from US agriculture across three categories – how we grow, what and how we eat, and how we use land. The report finds that in a “business-as-usual” scenario, emissions are likely to stay flat over the next 30 years. However, with concerted and coordinated effort by key actors across the agri-food value chain – including policymakers, researchers, companies, farmer and ranchers, and consumers, we could achieve an over 50% reduction in net emissions by 2050 while also improving livelihoods and the resiliency of our agri-food system.

“The US food & agriculture sector is critical to the success of the nation’s drive to net zero. Our report outlines practical steps that companies, policymakers, farmers and ranchers, consumers, and other stakeholders can take to make a more environmentally friendly, healthier, and resilient agri-food system a reality,” said Sonya Hoo, a BCG managing director and partner.

**Polling Methodology:**

This poll was conducted between July 6-July 7, 2022 among a sample of 1,988 registered voters. The interviews were conducted online and the data was weighted to approximate a target sample of registered voters based on gender by age, educational attainment, race, marital status, home ownership, race by educational attainment, 2020 presidential vote, and region. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

## Local Foods In School Meals Expansion

*Continued From Page 3*


Program (LFS), the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will purchase and distribute local and regional foods and beverages for schools to serve children through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. These products will be healthy and unique to their geographic area, with the goal of improving child nutrition and building new relationships between schools and local farmers.

“This cooperative agreement supporting Massachusetts schools is another example of how USDA is working to build a more resilient food system rooted in local and regional production,” said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Jenny Lester Moffitt. “The Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program provides an opportunity for states to strengthen ties between local farmers, ranchers, food businesses

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### A&B Insurance Corner

Learn more about A&B at: [www.abinsgroup.com](http://www.abinsgroup.com)



**Why reviewing your home value is so important.**

Your home is often your largest investment and asset. A recent study shows, about two-thirds of all homeowners are underinsured by at least 18%. Being underinsured means that you don’t have enough home insurance coverage to protect you if your home is damaged or destroyed in a fire or another disaster. Not having enough insurance can result in you paying a large part of the repair construction costs. Inflation and rising construction costs are but a couple of reasons why so many homeowners become underinsured.

The average cost to build a home in Massachusetts today is \$200 per square foot on the lower side and upwards of \$350 for a semi-custom home.

Improving your home adds to its value but can also mean you become underinsured. It is up to you to inform your insurance agent if you renovate your home or add any new features so you’re your agent can update your policy accordingly.

Increasing your home’s value is only part of the equation, the factor is the type of coverage. Replacement Cost coverage (RC) VS. Actual Cash Value (ACV).

Replacement Cost will provide coverage for property affected at the cost to replace them ensuring you can properly repair and rebuild your home, along with replacing items damaged, destroyed or stolen. Actual Cash Value (ACV). ACV costs less than RC, but it also doesn’t cover you as much as replacement coverage. Instead, ACV considers depreciation and deducts the values accordingly. Much the same as most vehicle insurance policies.

Although replacement cost coverage is slightly more expensive, at the time of a claim you will be glad you opted to have Replacement Cost coverage. Having an inventory for your contents

is important. At the time of a loss, you want to be properly reimbursed for your items. Personal possessions that have significant value, such as jewelry, art, antiques, guns and coin collections, are usually limited to \$2,500 worth of coverage or less in your standard policy. If your items’ worth exceeds this amount, it’s wise to purchase extra coverage by scheduling the items. You’ll need to provide receipts and appraisals to document replacement costs.

These same principals apply to your farm buildings as well. Review values often, and be sure you can replace them at the time of a disaster.



# NE-DBIC Dairy Innovation Grants Available

## Dairy Farm Innovation & Alternative Management Grant

This grant provides funds to support the implementation of community- and climate-forward production strategies. Projects funded through this grant program should take a whole farm system approach and increase collaboration with other farms or dairy sector stakeholders. Projects may address improvements in topics such as, but are in no way limited to, creating new models for collaborative/cooperative milk production, increased new and young farmer engagement, alternative business

ownership/management models, development of green technologies, farm-scale appropriate technology improvements, or creating a culture of continuous improvement.

Grants available of \$15,000 to \$75,000 with a 25% (cash or in-kind) match commitment required. The Request for Applications (RFA) is now available.

Application period: December 1, 2022 - February 2, 2023 at 2:00 PM ET. Open to dairy farmers, producer associations, and technical service providers.

Additionally, the current round of the Dairy Food Safety & Certification Grant is open now:

### Dairy Food Safety & Certification Grant

This grant will provide dairy farmers, processors, and/or producer associations with funds needed to take actionable steps to improve the safety of dairy products. Projects funded through this program will support increased production safety standards with the goal of accessing new markets. Projects that increase marketability of dairy products will be prioritized. Activities covered by this grant include accessing technical

assistance, audits, food safety plan development, training, testing fees, and certain infrastructure upgrades.

Grants available of \$10,000 - \$40,000 with a 25% (cash or in-kind) match commitment required.

Application deadline: January 19, 2023

The NE-DBIC is seeking additional grant reviewers who represent the dairy supply chain across an 11-state region. Apply online: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/dbic/grants/dairy-food-safety-certification-grant>

# Massachusetts Farm Energy Program Grants & Deadlines

## Rural Energy For America Program (REAP)

The next REAP deadline for renewable energy and energy efficiency grants and loan guarantees is March 31, 2023. For more information on applying, click [here](#), and please note that the percentage of project costs

applicants can request has recently increased from 25% to 40%. MFEP will be hosting a webinar about applying to this grant in February, so be on the lookout for more information, coming soon. If you have questions about the REAP grant in the meantime, call the Massachusetts Farm Energy Program 413-727-3090.

### Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources CSAP Grant

MDAR's Climate Smart Agriculture Program (CSAP) grant will reopen in the spring of 2023. If you have questions about the CSAP grant, call 413-727-3090.

### Grant Application Assistance

Need help with your MDAR or REAP grant application? The Massachusetts Farm Energy Program helps farms prepare these applications at no cost. REAP applications can be submitted any time, so call the Massachusetts Farm Energy Program 413-727-3090.

# Glass, Cardboard, Or Plastic? Milk's Packaging Influences Its Flavor

The dairy industry strives to preserve the quality and safety of milk products while maintaining the freshest possible taste for consumers. To date, the industry has largely focused on packaging milk in light-blocking containers to preserve freshness, but little has been understood about how the packaging itself influences milk flavor. However, a new study in the *Journal of Dairy Science*®, published by Elsevier, confirms that packaging affects taste—and paperboard cartons do not preserve milk freshness as well as glass and plastic containers.



least due to the paperboard's absorption of milk flavor and the transfer of paperboard flavor into the milk. Milk packaged in paperboard cartons, in fact, showed distinct off-flavors as well as the presence of compounds from the paperboard. The final results show that, while glass remains an ideal container for preserving milk flavor, plastic containers provide additional benefits while also maintaining freshness in the absence of light exposure.

Paperboard cartons are the most widely used packaging type for school meal programs in the United States, so these findings are especially relevant for the consideration of how young children consume and enjoy milk.

Lead investigator MaryAnne Drake, PhD, of the North Carolina State University Department of Food, Bioprocessing and Nutrition Sciences, Raleigh, NC, USA, explained that “milk is more susceptible to packaging-related off-flavors than many other beverages because of its mild, delicate taste.” Besides light oxidation, “milk’s taste can be impacted by the exchange of the packaging’s compounds into the milk and by the packaging absorbing food flavors and aromas from the surrounding refrigeration environment.”

To quantify the flavor impacts of packaging, the researchers examined pasteurized whole and skim milk stored in six half pint containers: paperboard cartons, three plastic jugs (made from different plastics), a plastic bag, and glass as a control. The milk was stored in total darkness to control for light oxidation and kept cold at 4°C (39°F).

The samples were tested on the day of first processing, then again at 5, 10, and 15 days after. A trained panel examined the sensory properties of each sample, and the research team conducted

a volatile compound analysis to understand how the packaging was intermingling with the milk. Finally, the samples underwent a blind consumer taste test on day 10 to see whether tasters could tell any difference between milk stored in the paperboard carton or the plastic jug compared with milk packaged in glass.

The results showed that package type does influence milk flavor, and skim milk is more susceptible to flavor impacts than whole milk. Of the different packaging types, paperboard cartons and the plastic bag preserved milk freshness the

“These findings suggest that industry and policymakers might want to consider seeking new package alternatives for milk served during school meals,” said Drake. Over time, the consequences of using milk packaging that contributes significant off-flavors may affect how young children perceive milk in both childhood and adulthood.



# Metabolic Pathway In Honey Bees Discovered With Strong Connections To Winter Colony Losses

Agricultural Research Service scientists and their Chinese colleagues have identified a specific metabolic pathway that controls how honey bees apportion their body's resources such as energy and immune response in reaction to stresses such as winter's cold temperatures, according to recently published research.

This cellular pathway has the strongest connection yet found to the large overwintering colony losses that have been plaguing honey bees and causing so much concern among beekeepers, and farmers, especially almond producers, during the last 15 years, said entomologist Yanping "Judy" Chen, who led the study. She is with the ARS Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland.

The "signaling" pathway governs the increased and decreased synthesis of the protein SIRT1, one of a family of proteins that help regulate cellular lifespan, metabolism and metabolic health, and resistance to stress.

"In honey bees merely exposed to a cold challenge of 28 degrees C (82.4 degrees F) for five days, we saw almost three-fold lower levels of SIRT1 and significantly higher levels of colony mortality compared to bees maintained at 34-35 degrees C (93.2-95 degrees F), which is the optimal core temperature of a honey bee cluster inside a bee hive in winter," Chen said.

The researchers also found that bees under cold stress were associated with an increased risk



of disease infections, which in turn led to an increased likelihood of colony losses.

For example, when honey bee colonies were inoculated with the intracellular microsporidia parasite *Nosema ceranae*, and kept at 34 degrees C, they had a survival rate of 41.18 percent while the mortality rate of the colonies exposed to the cold stress of 28 degrees C for 5 days was 100 percent.

"So that showed it is primarily cold

stress that the SIRT1 signaling pathway is responding to rather than pathogens," Chen said. "Our study suggests that the increased energy overwintering bees use to maintain hive temperature reduces the energy available for immune functions, which would leave overwintering bees more susceptible to disease infections; all leading to higher winter colony losses."

Chen points out this research also offers a promising avenue for new therapeutic strategies to mitigate overwintering and annual colony losses. One way could be by raising the production of the SIRT1 protein by treating honey bees with SRT1720, a specific SIRT1 gene activator being experimentally used as an anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer treatment.

# As Prices Ease, 1.45 Billion Chicken Wings On The Menu For Super Bowl LVII

While typically its barbecue in Kansas City and cheesesteaks in Philly, when it comes to the Super Bowl, the wing is still king. The National Chicken Council (NCC) released its annual Chicken Wing Report, projecting Americans to consume a record-breaking 1.45 billion chicken wings during Super Bowl LVII weekend. This figure represents an increase of two percent from last year's report, the equivalent of 84 million more wings.

There are several reasons for the uptick, says National Chicken Council spokesperson Tom

Super: "The two main reasons are more favorable prices and more people getting back to normal and gathering for the Big Game, whether at home or at a bar/restaurant," Super said. "While Americans are seeing inflation impact almost every part of their lives, both wholesale and retail wing prices are down double digits from a year ago, according to USDA, and consumers are seeing a lot more features and promotions.

"There are a lot of great story lines heading into the game," Super added. "Andy Reid versus his old team. A battle of the Kelce brothers. Mahomes versus Hurts.

But no Super Bowl story line is hotter than wings!"

Big games inspire gatherings, and wings are on the menu. When comparing the week ending 1/22/23 to the week ending 1/08/23 (final week of regular season), wing sales grew double digits in both dollars (+11.5%) and pounds sold (+13.5%) within the Kansas City, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Cincinnati markets. (Source: IRI OmniMarket Integrated Fresh)

So how do 1.45 billion chicken wings stack up? Picture this:

• 1.45 billion wings laid end to end

would stretch from GEHA Field at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Mo. to Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia, Pa. about 62 times.

• Enough to give four wings each to every man, woman and child in the United States.

• Phoenix's State Farm Stadium (home of Super Bowl LVII) can hold 73,000 people. If 1.45 billion chicken wings were distributed to the full stadium, each fan could enjoy 19,863 wings.

• Assuming Kansas City Chiefs' coach Andy Reid can eat three wings per minute, it would take him more than 900 years to eat 1.45 billion wings.

# Local Foods In School Meals Expansion

Continued From Page 6

and schools, and gives students access to nutritious foods unique to the area they live in, building stronger connections across local communities."

"Strengthening relationships between local producers and schools is a long-term strategy to ensure our children always have access to nutritious foods in school, a win-win for child health and American agriculture," said Deputy Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services Stacy Dean. "Through this program and many other efforts to support the school meal programs, USDA is committed to giving schools the tools they need to set children up to learn, grow, and thrive."

With the LFS funds, DESE will partner with Massachusetts Farm to School to increase the capacity for School Food Authorities (SFA) administering the National School Lunch Program to procure local unprocessed or minimally processed foods to service in school meals and snacks. The goal of this initiative is to expand the capacity for procuring and providing local foods to schools, strengthening local food systems, and improving meal quality for children.

"The Local Food for Schools funds will help school nutrition professionals support a diverse local food system and create more opportunities for farmers in the region to grow,

harvest and distribute healthy ingredients to schools across the Commonwealth," said Jeffrey C. Riley, Massachusetts commissioner of elementary and secondary education. "We thank the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service for this new and substantial investment in Massachusetts farms and students."

The LFS cooperative agreements will allow organizations the flexibility to design food purchasing programs and establish partnerships with farmers and ranchers that best suit their local needs, accommodate environmental and climate conditions, account for seasonal harvests, improve supply chain resiliency and meet the needs of

schools within their service area. Additionally, the program will provide more opportunities for historically underserved producers and processors to sell their products. Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program is authorized by the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act. AMS looks forward to continuing to sign agreements under this innovative program.

The Local Food for Schools cooperative agreement program is one of many ways USDA is supporting school meal programs this school year and transforming our food system in the long term. For more information on USDA's work to support school meal programs, visit USDA Support for School Meals page.



# Calcium Boluses: Pick Your Product Wisely

After calving, cows experience a steep spike in calcium demand. Milk (including colostrum) is rich in calcium, and cows need to quickly shift their priorities to adjust for this sudden calcium outflow. Most second- and greater-lactation cows cannot meet this new calcium demand, which may trigger clinical hypocalcemia (commonly known as milk fever) or more commonly subclinical hypocalcemia (SCH).

**Look closely at the ingredient list**



“Luckily, there are a number of bolus products available to help cows maintain calcium levels after calving,” said Curt Vlietstra, DVM, Boehringer Ingelheim. “But it’s important to pay attention to what type and the amount of calcium we’re giving a cow.” He said these differences can greatly affect that

“Calcium chloride is going to be the one that’s quickly available,” explained Dr. Vlietstra. “It’s absorbed right out of the rumen, instead of having to go into the intestines to provide benefits.

Calcium sulfate — the other form of calcium — we think of it more as the slower-acting one. Really, what that does is keep the cow’s pH low, so that she can provide some additional calcium from her body.”

You may see the words “acidogenic calcium salts” on the ingredient list — that simply means it is a form of calcium that lowers pH. Calcium carbonate is a much cheaper calcium option, but Dr. Vlietstra warns that it actually raises a cow’s pH. Raising the pH counteracts what you’re trying to do long term. “There’s research out there that shows if you supplement a cow with a form of calcium that raises her pH, over time, her blood calcium levels will actually be lower than a cow that received no calcium,” Dr. Vlietstra continued. “It’s important to give calcium. But then, beyond that, it’s also about getting enough of the right forms of calcium without it being too much.”

In addition to looking for the right forms of calcium, look at the amounts. A bolus doesn’t need fillers, he said. The fast-acting calcium chloride should be about two-thirds of the bolus, and the longer-lasting calcium sulfate should be the other third.

**Prioritize comfort at freshening**

“It’s also important to look for a bolus with a fat coating to ensure the cow’s comfort when dosing,” Dr. Vlietstra said. An effective coating provides both lubrication while the cow is swallowing the bolus and protection. “While calcium chloride and calcium sulfate are excellent for supplementing calcium levels, they can irritate the cow’s throat and stomach if not protected with a fat coating.

“It’s not physically possible for a cow to ingest enough calcium in the first day after she calves,” he added. “That’s why we need to follow up with another bolus 12 hours later.”

By reading the ingredient labels for calcium supplements, producers give their cows a better chance to live up to their lactation potential. By reading the ingredient labels for calcium supplements, producers give their cows a better chance to live up to their lactation potential.

# New National Vineyard Acreage Survey Covers All 50 States

WineAmerica, the National Association of American Wineries, is pleased to report major early progress on one of its top 2023 policy priorities: A national vineyard acreage survey covering all 50 states.

The breakthrough came as part of the massive \$1.7 trillion Omnibus spending bill passed by Congress on December 23 and signed into law by President Biden. The exact language: “The agreement encourages NASS to reinstate the 5-year Vineyard and Orchard Acreage Study and resume data collection and reporting so grape, wine, and juice producers can remain competitive and respond to challenges in the industry.”

NASS is the National Agricultural Statistics Service of the United States Department of Agriculture which used to conduct such surveys until budget cuts eliminated them over a decade ago. Two recent National Economic Impact Surveys of the Wine Industry sponsored by WineAmerica demonstrated the vital need to reinstate them.

“We are delighted at this step, and deeply grateful to Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer for including this language in the bill,” said Jim Trezise, WineAmerica’s President. “When we met with him in the Finger Lakes in early December, he immediately understood the importance of this

as a vital first step.”

Now WineAmerica and its allies will seek to get a specific commitment from NASS to conduct a survey which would ideally include total vineyard acreage, different grape varieties, their use (wine, grape juice, table grapes, raisins), relative crop value, full-time equivalent employment, and other measures of economic impact.

“This type of information is vital to accurately measure total economic impact,” said John Dunham of John Dunham & Associates which conducted both the 2017 and 2022 studies for WineAmerica. “Grapes are the foundation of the wine industry, and reliable data is the foundation of economic research.”

The 2017 study reported the wine industry’s total economic impact of \$220 billion, and the 2022 study \$276 billion—a 25% increase despite the Covid era. All 50 states produce wine and include 10,637 wine producers, provide 1.84 million jobs, pay \$95.5 billion in annual wages, attract 49 million tourists, and pay a total of \$22.8 billion in taxes. Wine is the ultimate value-added product from the vine to the glass, and a powerful economic engine.

“This step is very encouraging in bolstering our efforts to secure reliable vineyard data for the industry,” said Michael Kaiser, Executive Vice-President and



Director of Government Affairs at WineAmerica. “We still have more work to do in garnering additional support in Congress and USDA, but this makes it much simpler and faster.”

WineAmerica had planned on requesting restoration of the vineyard survey as part of the 2023 Farm Bill, and still will so so, but including it in the Omnibus spending bill will greatly speed up the process. The Farm Bill is a massive, complicated, five-year law that is difficult to pass under the best conditions but will likely be even more so with a new divided Congress starting in January. Most likely it will not be passed until the end of 2023 or later.

WineAmerica will immediately start advocating for NASS to get the funding and approval to begin creating the study parameters, since the study itself will likely

take considerable time. However, it will be of great value to all 50 states. WineAmerica is the National Association of American Wineries headquartered in Washington, DC. The organization includes over 400 winery members, 40 winery trade associations, and several suppliers from 41 states, and is widely respected in Washington as a key advocate for the American wine industry.

WineAmerica is the National Association of American Wineries headquartered in Washington, DC, with a focus on grassroots public policy advocacy at the federal level to protect and enhance the business climate for the American wine industry. The organization also includes a State and Regional Associations Advisory Council (SRAAC) of winery trade association leaders from around the country, and represents over 400 members from 46 states.



# Allied Business Directory

## 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.

## AVIV, LLC

115R S Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
Eva Smith, Director of Operations, Partner  
Eva@aviv.life  
www.aviv.life  
774-231-8008  
**Products & Services:** We are a farm based mental health practice that specializes in animal assisted psychotherapy. Our practice holds sessions outdoors and with equines or other farm animals.

## 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

## 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.

## Critter Control of Springfield, MA

Jonathan Cahoon  
Phone: 413-262-0138  
Email: springfieldma@crittercontrol.net  
**Products & Services:** Critter Control offers vertebrate control from mice to beaver. We are a certified Avix bird control installer and service provider. Serving the Springfield, MA area

## 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 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.

## 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  
508-289-1814  
www.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.

## 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.\*\*\*



# USDA Announces Grants For Urban Agriculture & Innovative Production

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is making available up to \$7.5 million for grants through its Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP). The competitive grants will support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production projects through two categories, Planning Projects and Implementation Projects. USDA will accept applications on Grants.gov until 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 27, 2023.

## Planning Projects

Planning Projects initiate or expand efforts of farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools and other stakeholders in urban areas and suburbs. Projects may target areas of food access, education, business and start-up costs for new farmers and the development of plans related to zoning and other needs of urban production. For example, the Texas Coalition of Rural Landowners used 2022 awarded funds to conduct a feasibility study and develop a business plan to establish a cooperative for small-scale agricultural producers serving low food access markets in Harris County, Texas.

## Implementation Projects

Implementation Projects accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor and other agricultural practices that serve farmers and communities. Projects may improve local food access, include collaboration with partner organizations, and support infrastructure needs, emerging technologies, and educational endeavors. For example, the Moka Urban Agriculture Initiative used 2022 awarded funds for a project to increase local food access and provide culturally relevant options that create economic opportunities for urban farmers. The project will help to reduce food insecurity, improve health and establish outdoor spaces for food production in Missouri.

## Webinar

A pre-recorded webinar on Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Grants | USDA provides an overview of the grants' purpose, project types, eligibility and basic requirements for submitting an application.

## More Information

OUAIP was established through the 2018 Farm Bill. It is led by the

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and works in partnership with numerous USDA agencies that support urban agriculture and innovative production. The grants are part of a broad USDA investment in urban agriculture. Other efforts include:

- Creating and managing a Federal Advisory Committee for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production to advise the Secretary on the development of policies and outreach relating to urban agriculture.
- Reopening the People's Garden Initiative. People's Gardens across the country grow fresh, healthy food and support resilient, local food systems; teach people how to garden using sustainable

practices; and nurture habitat for pollinators and wildlife and greenspace for neighbors.

- Providing cooperative agreements that develop and test strategies for planning and implementing municipal compost plans and food waste reduction plans.
- Providing technical and financial assistance through conservation programs offered by NRCS.
- Organizing 17 Farm Service Agency urban county committees.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under 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](https://usda.gov).

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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 six 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.

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

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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.

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# USDA Announces Signup For 2023 Assistance For On-Farm Food Safety Expenses For Specialty Crop Growers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reminds specialty crop producers of available assistance to help cover certain costs of complying with regulatory and market-driven food safety certification requirements.

Applications for the Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops (FSCSC) program for eligible 2022 costs are due by Jan. 31, 2023. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will accept applications for 2023 costs from Feb. 1, 2023, to Jan. 31, 2024.

FSA is making available up to \$200 million through the FSCSC program, which is part of USDA's broader effort to transform the food system to create a more level playing field for small-scale agricultural operations and a more balanced, equitable economy for everyone working in food and agriculture.

USDA first announced and opened this program for signup in 2022, delivering critical assistance for specialty crop operations, with an emphasis on equity in program delivery while building on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and supply chain disruptions.

"Specialty crops growers experienced many challenges meeting regulatory requirements and accessing additional markets due to the COVID-19 pandemic," said FSA Administrator Zach Ducheneaux. "Many of these producers had to pivot quickly as demand shifted away from traditional markets, like restaurants and food service, and many continue to feel the impacts of those abrupt changes. By helping mitigate the costs of on-farm food safety certification, the Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops program will help create new markets and opportunities for small-scale producers. In turn, these producers will have another tool to leverage as they work to become more nimble and more resilient in the face of unforeseen challenges, serve their local and regional economies, and support fairer and more transparent markets.

### Program Details

FSCSC assists specialty crop operations that incurred eligible on-farm food safety certification and expenses related to obtaining



or renewing a food safety certification in calendar years 2022 and 2023 for certifications issued on or after June 21, 2022. For each year, FSCSC covers a percentage of the specialty crop operation's eligible costs of obtaining or renewing their certification, as well as a portion of their related expenses.

To be eligible for FSCSC, the applicant must:

- Be a specialty crop operation.
- Meet the definition of a small business or very small business.
- Have paid eligible expenses related to certification.

Specialty crop operations may receive assistance for the following costs:

- Developing a food safety plan for first-time food safety certification.
- Maintaining or updating an existing food safety plan.
- Food safety certification.
- Certification upload fees.
- Microbiological testing for products, soil amendments and water.
- Training.

FSA calculates FSCSC payments for each category of eligible costs. FSA set a higher payment rate for underserved farmers and ranchers, which includes socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning and veteran producers who have a CCC-860 on file with FSA.

FSA will issue payments at the time of application approval for 2022 and after the application period ends for 2023. The 2023 application period opens Feb. 1, 2023, and closes Jan. 31, 2024. If calculated payments exceed the amount of available funding, payments will be prorated.

### Applying for Assistance

Interested specialty crop producers can apply by completing the application, FSA-888. The application, along with other required documents, can be submitted to the FSA office at any USDA Service Center nationwide by mail, fax, hand delivery or via electronic means. Producers can visit [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-locator) to

find their local FSA office. Specialty crop producers can also call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to assist.

Producers can visit [farmers.gov/food-safety](https://farmers.gov/food-safety) for additional program details, eligibility information and forms needed to apply.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under 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](https://usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

## 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

- ☐ Farmer Member: \$225 for 1 year
- ☐ Gold Member: \$350 for 1 year
- ☐ Platinum Member: \$500 for 1 year

#### Non-Voting Members

- ☐ Advocate Member (Individual): \$70 for 1 year
- ☐ Advocate Member (Family): \$100 for 1 year
- ☐ Allied Business: \$225 for 1 year
- ☐ Student: \$25 for 1 year

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

- ☐ Ag/Open Space Supporter
- ☐ Aquaculture
- ☐ Equine
- ☐ Forestry
- ☐ Fruits
- ☐ Horticulture
- ☐ Livestock
- ☐ Poultry
- ☐ Vegetables
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### Method of Payment

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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:  
The Best  
Classic Chili

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion -diced
- 1 pound 90% lean ground beef
- 2 1/2 tablespoons chili powder
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper\* -optional
- 1 1/2 cups beef broth
- 1 (15 oz.) can petite diced tomatoes
- 1 (16 oz.) can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce



How to make

1. Add the olive oil to a large soup pot and place it over medium-high heat for two minutes. Add the onion. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the ground beef to the pot. Break it apart with a wooden spoon. Cook for 6-7 minutes, until the beef is browned, stirring occasionally.
3. Add the chili powder, cumin, sugar, tomato paste, garlic powder, salt, pepper, and optional cayenne. Stir until well combined.
4. Add the broth, diced tomatoes (with their juice), drained beans, and tomato sauce. Stir well.
5. Bring the liquid to a low boil. Then, reduce the heat (low to medium-low) to gently simmer the chili, uncovered, for 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. Remove the pot from the heat. Let the chili rest for 5-10 minutes before serving.



New Year, New Congress

By: Zippy Duvall, AFBF President

Recently, the 118th Congress was sworn in. These elected officials, chosen by the American people in November, will spend the next two years debating the issues that matter most to all of us. Voters sent 81 people to Congress for the first time. They'll have to learn the ropes and put in extra time to understand the issues.

Part of our responsibility as Farm Bureau, and as farmers and ranchers, is to reach out and engage with these new members about the work happening on farms and ranches in their districts, their states, and across the country. We have our work cut out for us. There are fewer people representing rural America than ever before, making it more important than ever before to reach out to new members representing urban districts, too.

Our work in every Congress is important, and it's even more important when it's time to renew the farm bill. Programs in this legislation are critical to American agriculture. One of our greatest challenges this year is ensuring members understand these programs and why they are essential. Almost half of Congress, 260 members, were not in Congress when the 2018 farm bill was passed. We have to

put in the extra work to ensure they understand the importance of farm bill programs that help farmers and ranchers manage risk, why conservation programs are and should continue to be voluntary and science-based, and why it's critical that farm policy and nutrition policy remain united in the farm bill, among many other priorities.

One of the greatest limiting factors American agriculture faces is the lack of workers. Across farm country and in the windows of businesses large and small, you'll see help wanted signs. Farmers need Congress to fix the H-2A visa program to provide more accessibility and affordability. We also need a new year-round farmworker program for jobs that are done every day – like milking cows. As with any other issue, and especially with this Congress, a meaningful and bipartisan policy solution must be the outcome that we strive to achieve sooner rather than later.

There are many other important issues farmers and ranchers are counting on Congress and the executive branch to advance

this year. Broadband must be expanded and access improved in rural communities. Programs to advance climate-smart farming practices must be science-based and market-driven. And



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

Congress and the Administration must understand that the only way to meet big goals related to sustainability and

addressing hunger is by ensuring farmers continue to have a variety of crop protection tools. The Administration must also step up in a bigger way to pursue trade deals that will open markets to U.S. farmers and ranchers. And we'll hold the Administration's feet to the fire when it comes to enforcing trade deals like the USMCA.

We're looking forward to working with this Congress to deliver solutions to the challenges farmers and ranchers face. I hope that our elected officials will come together, set politics aside, and engage in meaningful discussions about these issues. We need them to do just that - because the challenges we face now, and the ones that lay ahead, will take buy-in from both parties to solve in a manner that will stand the test of time.

**Zippy Duvall**  
AFBF President

USDA Announces Additional Assistance For Dairy Farmers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the details of additional assistance for dairy producers, including a second round of payments through the Pandemic Market Volatility Assistance Program (PMVAP) and a new Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program (ODMAP). The update to PMVAP and the new ODMAP will enable USDA to better support small- and medium-sized dairy operations who weathered the pandemic and now face other challenges.

"The Biden-Harris administration continues to fulfill its commitments to fill gaps in pandemic assistance for producers. USDA is announcing a second set of payments of nearly \$100 million to close-out the \$350 million commitment under PMVAP through partnerships with dairy handlers and cooperatives to deliver the payments," said USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Jenny Lester Moffitt. "USDA is also announcing new assistance targeted to small to

medium size organic dairy farmers to help with anticipated marketing costs as they face a variety of challenges from weather to supply-chain challenges."

Pandemic Market Volatility Assistance Program

PMVAP assists producers who received a lower value due to market abnormalities caused by the pandemic and ensuing Federal policies. As a result of the production cap increase, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will make PMVAP payments to eligible dairy farmers for fluid milk sales between 5 million and 9 million pounds from July through December 2020. This level of production was not eligible for payment under the first round of the PMVAP. Payment rates will be identical to the first round of payments, 80 percent of the revenue difference per month, on fluid milk sales from 5 million to 9 million pounds from July through December 2020. USDA will again distribute monies through agreements with independent

handlers and cooperatives, with reimbursement to handlers for allowed administrative costs. USDA will contact handlers with eligible producers to notify them of the opportunity to participate. As part of the first round, PMVAP paid eligible dairy farmers on up to 5 million pounds of fluid milk sales from July through December 2020. The first round of payments distributed over \$250 million in payments to over 25,000 eligible dairy farmers. These dairy farmers received the full allowable reimbursement on fluid milk sales up to 5 million pounds.

More information about the PMVAP production cap increase is available at [www.ams.usda.gov/pmvap](http://www.ams.usda.gov/pmvap).

Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program

The new ODMAP, to be administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), is intended to help smaller organic dairy farms that have faced a unique set of challenges and higher costs over

*Continued on Page 15*



# MFBF Members' Classifieds

## HELP WANTED

**NOW HIRING:** World Farmers is Hiring! We have multiple positions available, both year-round and seasonal. Check out more on our website: [www.worldfarmers.org/job-opportunities](http://www.worldfarmers.org/job-opportunities).

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- 6 and 10-inch PVC irrigation pipe. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693
- Berkley 12-inch flow pump \$1200. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693
- Used aluminum water control flumes 36/30/15-inch outlets. 508-866-1149 or 508-269-3693
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## Additional Assistance For Dairy Farmers

*Continued From Page 14*  
the past several years that have been compounded by the ongoing pandemic and drought conditions across the country. Many small organic dairy operations are now struggling to stay in business and FSA plans to provide payments to cover a portion of their estimated marketing costs for 2023. Final spending will depend on enrollment and each producers projected production, but ODMAP has been allocated up to \$100 million.

The assistance provided by ODMAP will be provided through unused Commodity Credit Corporation

funds remaining from earlier pandemic assistance programs. The assistance will help eligible organic dairy producers with up to 75 percent of their future projected marketing costs in 2023, based on national estimates of marketing costs. This assistance will be provided through a streamlined application process based on a national per hundredweight payment. The payments will be capped at the first five million pounds of anticipated production, in alignment with preexisting dairy programs that target assistance to those smaller dairies that are most vulnerable to marketing

challenges. This program is still in development.

Details about the Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program will be available and updated at [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov) as more details are released in a Notice of Funds Availability later this year.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets

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



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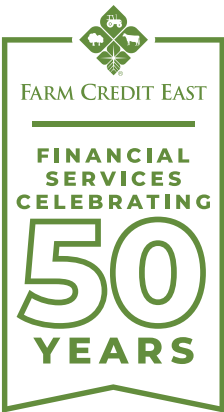


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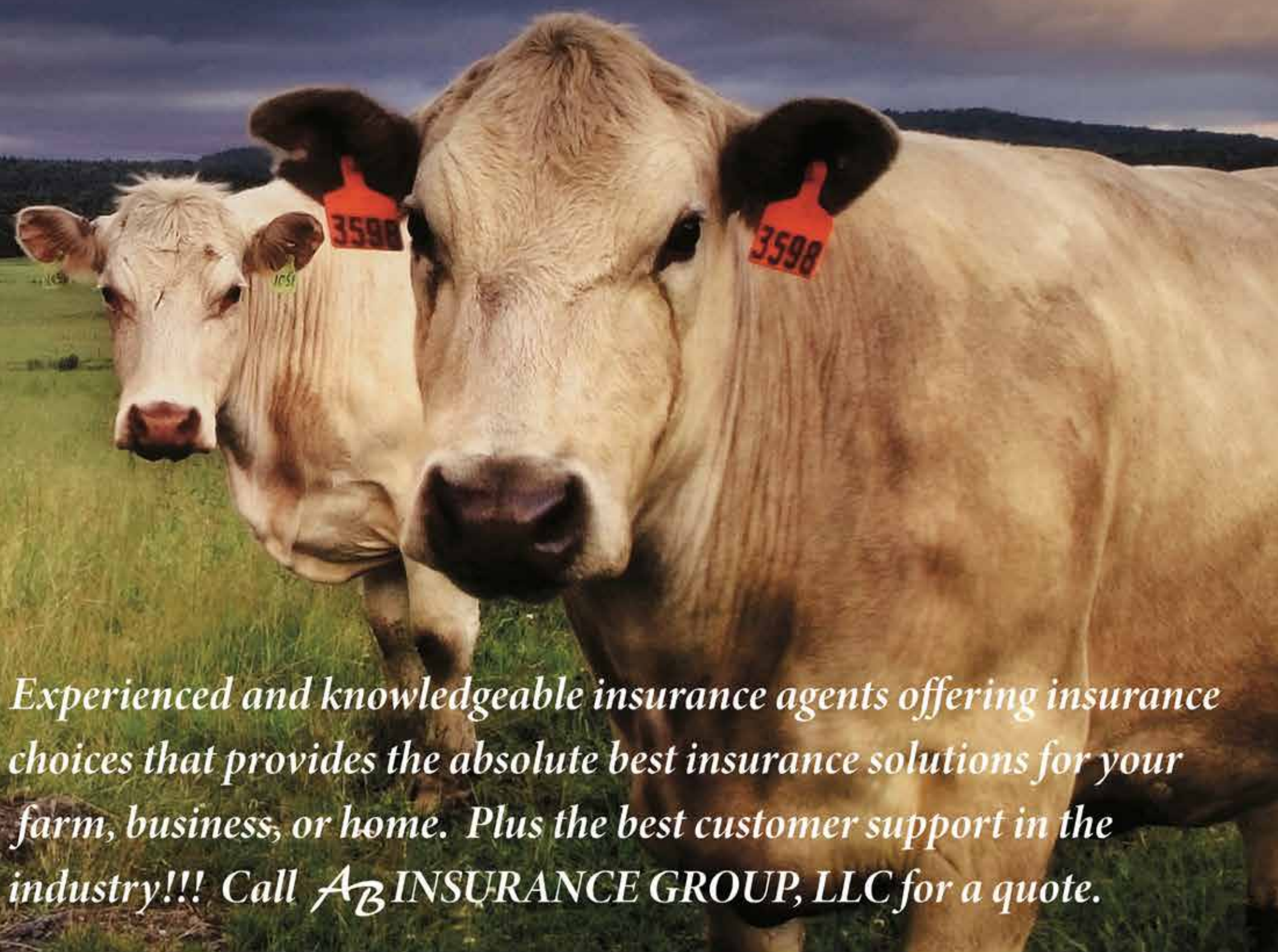




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