

mdar Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Helping to keep Massachusetts food supply safe and secure

Working to keep Massachusetts agriculture economically and environmentally sound

Who We Are – MDAR is comprised of four key organizational divisions tasked to support, regulate, and enhance the agricultural industry in Massachusetts:

Division of Agricultural Development – fosters sustainable agriculture through marketing, business, and educational initiatives implemented through Agricultural Fairs, Land Use, and Marketing Programs, working closely with over 50 agricultural and commodity organizations, sister state agencies, and other groups across the state on both regional and state wide projects.

Division of Agricultural Technical Assistance – works in concert with MDAR's other divisions to provide technical assistance to promote economically viable and environmentally sound agricultural practices by: helping to improve agricultural stewardship and use of natural resources; promoting energy efficiency and use of renewable energy; and ensuring economic competitiveness and profitability.

Division of Animal Health – focuses its efforts on ensuring the health and safety of the Commonwealth's companion and food-producing domestic animals and works closely with the Department of Public Health, the Animal Rescue League of Boston, the MSPCA, local veterinarians, local health departments, municipal animal inspectors and animal control officers when responding to possible disease situations.

Division of Crop and Pest Services – is responsible for the regulation of agricultural industries such as feed, fertilizer and consumer products, and the protection of the public health and the environment through the registration of pesticide products, licensing of application services and enforcement laws, regulations and orders.

Challenges and Opportunities for Agriculture – Rising energy costs, suburban sprawl, and global competition are continual threats to the long-term sustainability of Massachusetts agriculture. However the passion, collaboration, commitment, and ingenuity of the Massachusetts agricultural community has the Commonwealth well positioned to take advantage of further growth in the agricultural sector.

1st in New England for direct sales of farm products to consumers.
At \$42M, Massachusetts farmers were responsible for 40% of New England's total direct sales

2nd nationally in value of average
direct market sales at \$25,356 per farm

9th nationally in total value of direct sales, following
states such as California, New York, Pennsylvania,
Michigan, Ohio, and Washington

More than 80% of Massachusetts farms are family-owned.
Over 95% fit the category of "small farms" according to the
USDA definition of sales below \$250,000

1st in the U.S. for farmland value at \$12,202 per acre

Female farm operators account for 29% of the farm
operators in Massachusetts, up from 21% in 2002

Massachusetts increased the number of organic
farms from 129 in 2002 to 295 in 2007, and organic
sales from \$7.8M in sales in 2002 to \$17.5M in 2007

Agritourism income totaled \$5.3M, up from \$665,000 in 2002

Current Trends— look positive for Massachusetts agriculture. According to the USDA "2007 Ag Census", the number of farms in the Commonwealth has increased 27% with more than 7,600 farms totaling \$490M in the value of agricultural production. Employment indices indicate that the primary industries sector is the only sector that continues to enjoy job growth and opportunity. Food safety and sustainability of our energy systems point to continued growth opportunities for the Ag sector. And finally, MDAR continues to build strong partnerships with municipal and federal entities that will work well to support our continued successful cultivation of a thriving and diversified agricultural industry.