

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

251 Causeway Street, Suite 500, Boston, MA 02114
617-626-1700 fax: 617-626-1850 www.mass.gov/agr



CHARLES D. BAKER
Governor

KARYN E. POLITO
Lt. Governor

MATTHEW A. BEATON
Secretary

JOHN LEBEAUX
Commissioner

FINAL

**Meeting Minutes Board of Agriculture
MDAR Office, 101 University Drive, Suite C4
Amherst, MA 01002
12/06/16**

Board Members in Attendance: Judy Leab, Michael Smolak, Laura Abrams, Donald Chase, Fred Dabney, Lydia Sisson, Laura Sapienza-Grabski, Alison Carr, Lucinda Williams and Commissioner John Lebeaux.

1. **Call to Order:** Chairwoman Leab called the meeting to order at 10:18am.
2. **Attendance:** Chairwoman Leab noted that the Board has a quorum.
3. **Minutes Summary:** The Board considered for approval the meeting minutes of 09/22/16.
Action Taken: Mr. Chase made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smolak and the minutes were unanimously voted for approval.
4. **Commissioner's Report:** Commissioner Lebeaux provided the Board a copy of his report (attached) and reported on the following items: the status of board member appointments, budget and staffing updates and the status of FY17 grants. The Commissioner provided updates on the plant nutrient management regulations and the Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program's (APR) regulations. Information on the FY16 APR closings and FY17 APR funding was also provided. The Commissioner's report concluded with the food action plan, the food safety modernization act (FSMA) and legislative updates.

Discussion: Board members discussed the status of board member appointments and after a consensus asked the Commissioner to communicate to the Governor's Office its recommendation that the two remaining vacancies on the Board be filled by representatives from two of these three commercial agricultural sectors which are currently not represented on the Board: apiary, aquaculture, and forestry. During the budget and staffing report the Commissioner notified the Board that General Counsel Tara Zadeh would be leaving the Department before the end of the year. The Commissioner went on to introduce a member of the Department's legal staff Michelle Bodian. The Commissioner paused during his report to introduce MDAR's Urban Agriculture Program Coordinator Rose Arruda. Out of respect for Rose's need to get back to Boston for a meeting the Board moved to agenda item #6 for a presentation on Urban Agriculture.

At this time, the Board moved on to agenda item #6.

Following the Urban Agriculture discussion; the Commissioner continued with his report to the Board beginning with status of FY17 state operating funds, trust funds, and capital budgets. After an overview of the downward trends in APR funding the Board discussed with staff the sources of funding for the program and how land cap is determined. The budget discussion concluded with the FY18 maintenance estimates for next year. As a follow up to the Board's last meeting regarding a question of unspent FY2016 earmarked funds; the Commissioner reported the final figures to the Board.

Commissioner Lebeaux referred the Board to his written report for information on grant awards announced back to the week of November 20th, 2016 to present. The Commissioner noted that an RFR with emergency grant funding to assist with drought relief was issued yesterday with a deadline for response proposals of January 6th, 2017. Ms. Sisson mentioned that perhaps the Board could assist in pushing out the grant opportunities to farmers and help promote these programs.

Continuing with his report the Commissioner updated the Board on the Plant Nutrient Management regulations, the Food Action Plan and the six priority goals set by the Food Policy Council. The Board briefly discussed composting and food waste. Assistant Commissioner Jason Wentworth provided an update on the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) briefing the Board that the program is being modeled as part of the Commonwealth Quality Program (CQP). Under this model, the market will help drive compliance as wholesalers and retailers such as Market Basket will require farmers be in compliance through CQP certification. This certification will in turn be a key opportunity for farmers to get market access. The Department is looking at developing a fee based program for voluntary inspections of non-covered farms. It is estimated that between 400 and 500 farms will be covered, and the program will also have to prepare for the smaller farms as well.

Action Taken: None.

Old Business:

- 5. Comments on Laura Sapienza-Grabski's APR Handout:** Ms. Sapienza-Grabski reminded the Board that at the August 11th, 2016 meeting she distributed a document (attached) regarding the APR Program to Board members. Ms. Sapienza-Grabski proceeded to provide the Board a document (attached) dated December 6th, 2016 regarding the APR Program. **Discussion:** Ms. Sapienza-Grabski noted the MA Farm Bureau issued an APR survey due in January that is available online and is being sent to APR owners. She further noted Farm Bureau will hold public meetings relative to the survey. **Action Taken:** Ms. Sapienza-Grabski made a motion that the Board recommend MDAR refrain from modifications to policies, procedures, processes and regulations of the APR Program until there is a conclusion of the Farm Bureau survey and the associated public meetings. **Discussion:** Commissioner Lebeaux commented that the Department cannot adhere to the motion because of the regulatory process but that MDAR will consider the results of the survey. The Commissioner further commented that this was Farm Bureau's project and that we made some comments to the draft and many of them were not incorporated. The Commissioner stated that he finds the survey to be leading. As far as the regulatory process we have to move ahead, as required. However, the Department can take comments during the comment period according to the regulatory process as we are moving ahead with Executive Order 562. The conversation continued with Board members, the Commissioner and staff as to when policies are updated and how the signed APR contract with the owner is the guiding document. **Action Taken:** Ms. Sapienza-Grabski made a motion to rescind her original motion and stated her new motion to "require" vs. "recommend." The new motion is: Ms. Sapienza-Grabski made a motion that the Board require MDAR refrain from modifications to policies, procedures, processes and regulations of the APR Program until there is a conclusion of the Farm Bureau survey and the associated public meetings. **Discussion:** Mr. Dabney stated he did not think it is fair until we see what happens. Responding to a question from Ms. Williams the Commissioner confirmed that the Department has taken all the comments from the appropriate process and noted that he cannot say that we will react to every comment received. Ms. Sapienza-Grabski reminded the Board that she made a motion to "require MDAR." Ms. Williams inquired if these regulations were handled any different than other regulations to which the Commissioner responded "no." The Board noted that perhaps an APR Newsletter would be helpful.

Action Taken: None.

6. **Urban Agriculture:** Rose Arruda, Program Coordinator for MDAR's Urban Agriculture (UA) program provided the Board an overview of the program, its focus on urban agriculture and background on urban farming. The Board was provided a handout the 2014 Environmental Bond Bill (attached). The legislation indicates how funds shall be expended for the purpose and the promotion of urban agriculture. Highlighted in the overview were three key areas of the program: grants, the urban farming conference and the municipal planner piece. Rose pointed to how elected officials and municipal planner in cities want to know how to handle the public demand for urban agriculture. Rose explained how urban farming is not just in Boston but places like Greenfield and other western MA communities that have reached out for assistance. Ms. Sisson assisted in providing examples where urban and traditional agriculture connect including: urban school districts buying from rural/large farms, cities demands for more local food, and how UA is helping to bring a new audience to the local food system thus increasing markets and opportunities for all farmers.

Discussion: Throughout and following Rose's presentation Board members asked a variety of questions and provided comments on different programs and ways to bring more people and education to the conversation to help with any misunderstandings or perception that urban agriculture takes away from traditional farmers. It was noted that other states look to Massachusetts as a model for urban agriculture to help address food deserts. Board members acknowledged the importance of the different agricultural sectors to work together. The Commissioner and staff explained the RFR process for grants and that the capital funding for urban agriculture can only be spent on this program and that does not take money away from other programs. **Action Taken:** None.

7. **Update, Drought Conditions and Long Term Economic Impact on MA Agriculture.** The Board was provided a handout (attached) on the status of drought conditions to-date. The Commissioner updated the Board on the Drought Management Task Force and reported on the various impacts to agriculture. The Commissioner advised the Board as to the ongoing activities to address drought related concerns for farmers. The Commissioner reiterated the release of the RFR for the Emergency Drought Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP) to fund water conservation projects that help mitigate the impacts of drought. **Discussion:** Mr. Dabney asked the Commissioner to report on who makes up the Drought Task Force and the Commissioner so advised. Board members further reported on the impacts of the drought in their various sectors of agriculture. **Action Taken:** None.
8. **Question #3, Animal Confinement Ballot Initiative: Impact of the "Yes" Vote.** Referring to the text of ballot question #3; Section 4 regarding the purpose of the Act, that a covered animal shall not be deemed to be 'confined in a cruel manner" the Commissioner reported to the Board that that Division of Animal Health has not received any inquiries from producers regarding how they would be affected by this change. There is only one egg producer in the state with a caged housing system that would be affected by the "yes" vote. Based on an inquiry from the Topsfield Fair regarding the poultry building the Department was asked if display cages at fairs are impacted in any way by the ballot question and the answer is "no." **Discussion:** Ms. Abrams asked how the Department is going to handle inspections. The Commissioner noted that the Division of Animal Health does not have any regulatory/authority over animal cruelty; rather we work with our partners the MSPCA and the Animal Rescue League of Boston on such matters. **Action Taken:** None.

New Business:

9. **MDAR's Input on Growing Marijuana and Hemp:** Mr. Chase commented that he would think the Department could weigh-in on hemp for agricultural purposes as Pennsylvania is working with farmers on a practice basis. Mr. Chase inquired with the Commissioner if there are any discussions on this. **Discussion:** The Commissioner reported that federal laws oversee marijuana but not hemp. Furthermore, the passage of Question 4 is twenty-four pages - nowhere is the word "agriculture" or the Department mentioned. The State Treasurer's Office has the authority over recreational marijuana. However, MDAR has authority over the regulation of pesticides and there

is no dispute to that fact. The Department may need to look at increasing its staffing of pesticide inspectors. Currently, MDAR is getting more inquiries regarding recreational marijuana vs. hemp. The Board briefly discussed the uses of hemp and the possible makeup of the Cannabis Commission. A discussion on the cost to grow marijuana indoors and outdoors relative to energy costs and other factors concluded between the Board and the Commissioner with much more information yet to be determined.

At this time, Board members needed to leave the meeting and a quorum would leave the room.

10. Other Business: At this time, the Board had no other business.

11. Date, Time and Location of next meeting:

- February 28th, 2017 at 10:00 AM at the Central MA Regional Planning Commission, at Union Station in Worcester.

12. Adjournment: Action Taken: The meeting adjourned at 1:30pm. Given that there was not a quorum in the room; the Board did not make a motion to adjourn.

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COMMISSIONER'S REPORT
MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF AGRICULTURE
Tuesday, December 6th, 2016
MA Dept. of Agricultural Resources
101 University Ave, Suite C4
Amherst, MA

1. Status of Board Member Appointments.

2. Budget and Staffing Updates:

FY2016 Budget: Follow up to the Board's last meeting regarding a question of unspent FY2016 earmark funds. U-Mass Amherst reverted \$1,680 for apiary research and education relative to honey bee mortality and also \$533 of a 4H earmark; SEMAP reverted \$600 and Central Ma. Grown reverted \$30 of their buy local contracts; Ma. Farm to School reverted \$244.

FY2017 Staffing/FTEs: MDAR's current full-time employee (FTE) level is 75, up from 74.2 at the start of the fiscal year. A hiring freeze implemented for budgetary accounts remains in effect and has prevented the backfilling of an Animal Health inspector. As per MDAR's FY17 Spending Plan, the agency has moved forward with posting/interviewing for the following federal and trust account funded positions.

- Dairy Promotion Board Program Coordinator (PCII) (trust)
- Regional Planner III (federal)
- Produce Safety Program Operations Coordinator (federal)
- Office Support Specialist (federal)

Additionally, MDAR has been processing a contract consultant conversion to an FTE in the Homeless Animal Prevention Trust Fund. All new hires will be contingent on pending 9C reductions.

FY2017 Budgetary (Operating Funds):

The agencies FY17 approved operating budget (GAA) is \$23,351,998. ANF has approved the agencies FY17 Spending Plan. Funding by appropriation is as follows:

➤ 2511-0100	Administration Account	\$ 5,629,445
➤ 2511-0105	Supplemental Food	\$17,665,000
➤ 2511-3002	Integrated Pest Mgmt	\$ 57,553

ANF has reserved \$49,961 in the Administration Account and \$170,000 in the Supplemental Food Account as part of a 1% set aside to generate savings and balance the FY17 budget.

Agencies are anticipating 9C reductions to their budgetary accounts this month. The 9C reductions would be based on year to date revenue not only being slightly below the fiscal year benchmark at the end of November, but more importantly specific revenue source trends. The amount of 9C reductions will not be

known until later this month. Section 9C of Chapter 29 of the Massachusetts General Laws requires that when projected revenue is less than projected spending, the Governor must act to ensure that the budget is brought into balance.

Trust Funds: Follow up to the Board's last meeting regarding a question of The Exposition Building (Big E) Maintenance Fund balance has grown primarily as a result of MDAR being able to shoulder a portion of varied costs during the years. The balance at the start of FY17 was \$213,625. In FY17 MDAR has collected revenue to date of \$76,037. This amount exceeds all prior year collections since FY10. Trust fund costs have also grown as DCAMM has taken on additional management of the building in recent years. The ISA for DCAMM this fiscal year is currently \$56,980. MDAR has also increased funding for improvements.

Capital Funds: MDAR's FY17 capital funding currently stands at \$7,180,600. This amount is slightly less than FY15 (\$7,240,000) and significantly less than FY16 (\$8,354,500) when Boston Public Market earmarked funding is removed. The FY17 reduction is primarily attributed to a \$2,300,500 decrease in Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) funding. The chart below displays MDAR's capital funding for the past three years.

MDAR Capital Budgets:

Program	FY15	FY16	FY17
Agricultural Environmental Enhancement	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00
Agricultural Project Operations	\$ 360,000.00	\$ 324,000.00	\$ 291,600.00
Farm Viability Enhancement Program	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 750,000.00
Boston Public Market	\$ 4,760,000.00	\$ 1,240,000.00	\$ -
EEA Agency Land Protection Program	\$ 5,000,000.00	\$ 5,900,500.00	\$ 3,600,000.00
Urban Agriculture	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00
Food Safety	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
Stewardship	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 180,000.00	\$ 339,000.00
Food Ventures Program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000.00
Drought Relief	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250,000.00
Totals	\$ 12,000,000.00	\$ 9,594,500.00	\$ 7,180,600.00

The agency's current capital programs are briefly described below.

Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP): AEEP supports agricultural operations that are looking to install conservation practices that prevent direct impacts on water quality, ensure efficient use of water, as well as address impacts on air quality.

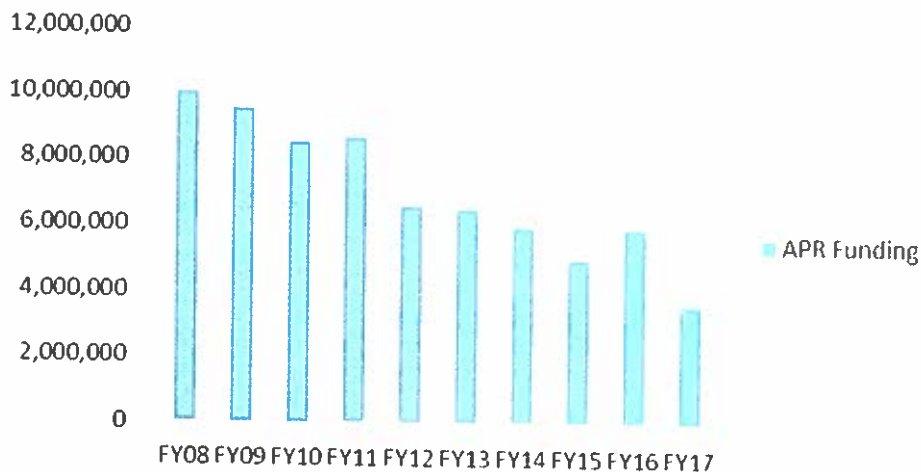
Agricultural Projects Operations: Provides partial funding for APR staff (currently 2½ FTEs). ANF's goal is to reduce/eliminate capital funding of payroll.

Farm Viability Enhancement Program: The Farm Viability Program seeks to improve the economic viability and environmental integrity of participating farms through the development and implementation of farm viability plans. The Program offers farmers environmental, technical and business planning assistance to expand, upgrade and modernize their existing operations. Capital for the implementation of the improvements recommended in the viability plan is available in exchange for an agricultural covenant on the farm property for a fixed term of five or ten years.

EEA Agency Land Protection (APR) Program: The Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program is a voluntary program which is intended to offer a non-development alternative to farmers and other owners of "prime" and "state important" agricultural land who are faced with a decision regarding future use and disposition of their farms. Towards this end, the program offers to pay farmland owners the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of their farmland in exchange for a

permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability. The USDA's Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) leverages the Commonwealth's funding with a 50% federal match on all approved APRs. MDAR utilizes these federal funds to do additional APRs when capital funds are not available. Capital funding for the APR program is displayed by fiscal year below.

APR Funding



Urban Agriculture: Urban agriculture is emerging as a critical component of an overall strategy to increase access to locally grown food for as many Massachusetts residents as possible. MDAR urban agricultural grants encourage and help facilitate cities to grow their own food. The program addresses some of the challenges facing urban farmers, such as suitable land, confined space, limited sunlight, nutrient-poor soils, high start-up costs, restrictive zoning rules and lack of farming experience and business training. The program is also designed to build community partnerships, increase access to fresh, nutritious food for urban residents at risk for diet-related chronic diseases and promote viable farming methods and local initiatives that other cities can replicate and benefit from.

Food Safety: The Agricultural Food Safety Improvement Program (AFSIP) supports agricultural operations that are looking to upgrade their food safety measures and thereby maintain or increase their competitive market access while reducing food safety risks.

Stewardship: Funding provides for a stewardship and monitoring program of MDAR's land acquisition program. A portion of the funds is utilized for a grant program for improvements that will help restore or enhance the protected resources on APR farm property.

Food Ventures: The Massachusetts Food Venture Program (MFVP) provides funding through grants to support food ventures, sited primarily in or near communities of low or moderate income, including Gateway cities and rural communities. The MFVP is helping implement the goals of the Ma. Local Food Action Plan. Completed projects will improve access to Ma. grown, harvested or caught food products through the development of collaborations with local agricultural enterprises and private/public entities. Key areas of investment include: food processing infrastructure to meet the needs of the expanding local food system; improved distribution systems to support opportunities for equitable access to fresh local food; and retail outlet strategies that enhance access to healthy food.

Drought Relief: Emergency grant funding for water conservation technologies to agricultural operations impacted by the drought. Grant funds will prioritize producers in areas hit hardest by the drought,

operations with the greatest crop loss, and water conservation practices with the greatest water savings (industry specific). **Drought/AEEP RFR posted on 11/30/16; closing date 1/6/2017.**

FY2018 H1 Maintenance Budget Estimates:

Based on ANF fiscal guidelines agencies have submitted FY18 "maintenance budget" requests. A "maintenance budget" projects cost for next fiscal year of maintaining the level of operations that exist at the end of the current fiscal year. Earmarks are removed from a "maintenance budget" request. The MDAR submission totals \$22,108,947.

➤ 2511-0100	MDAR Administration Account	\$ 5,453,613
➤ 2511-0105	Emergency Food Assistance	\$16,596,609
➤ 2511-3002	Integrated Pest Management	\$ 58,725

Agency submissions may be greatly impacted by 9C cuts in FY17 as these reductions will be annualized in FY18. The Governor is expected to release H1 on Wednesday, January 25th.

3. Status of FY17 Grants:

Grant Awards Announced Week Beginning November 20, 2016:

FY17 Buy Local Grant Awards Announced \$300,000: The following six projects have been funded.

- 1.) Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP) - \$74,738:** The funding will be used to enhance and strengthen the market position of local farmers and fishermen in Barnstable, Bristol, Dukes, Nantucket, Norfolk, and Plymouth counties through a collaborative project. The project will include holding networking events for local food buyers and producers; distributing printed regional Local Food Guides; expanding the existing local food curriculum at 16 K-12 Martha's Vineyard schools to include hydroponics, aquaponics, aquaculture, mycology, and urban farming; sponsoring a one-day regional training event focused on local food sourcing strategies and education for the Cape, Islands, and South Coast regions; and designing and implementing an effective grower-to-restaurant delivery service for Nantucket.
- 2.) Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) - \$60,000:** The funding will be used to increase cash receipts for local farmers, CISA plans to expand and refine their "Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown" marketing campaign. CISA will distribute their Farm Products Guide, provide special promotions and educational opportunities, increase market research, and enhance their current advertising methods.
- 3.) Central Mass Grown (CMG) - \$60,000:** The funding will be used to hire a full-time Director who will lead the organization towards goals determined by its Board of Directors. Only in its third year of service, CMG will expand upon its marketing and print media campaign to increase visibility and awareness.
- 4.) Northeast Harvest - \$35,251:** The funding will be used to promote agriculture, aquaculture, and farmers' markets in Essex and Middlesex Counties; plan and execute an industry conference and two educational events for students at the Topsfield Fairgrounds; increase the recognition of Massachusetts agriculture and aquaculture via a monthly electronic newsletter and social media campaign; enhance the Northeast Harvest website to include a section on aquaculture and a search function; and collaborate with other Massachusetts regional "buy local" groups through the Massachusetts Coalition for Local Food and Farms.
- 5.) Sustainable Business Network (SBN) - \$40,010:** The funding will be used to plan, execute, and manage the 8th annual Boston Local Food Festival in September 2017. SBN has also decided to expand with the "Massachusetts 'Eat Local' Week," to be held in August of 2017.
- 6.) Berkshire Grown - \$30,000:** The funding will be used to develop a new, multifaceted media campaign that will increase the visibility of locally grown and produced products from primarily local ingredients grown or made in the Berkshires. A special focus on restaurants as buyers of locally produced food will be

achieved through “Sourcing Local” workshops. Berkshire Grown will also provide business assistance for Berkshire County farmers and markets.

Grant Awards Announced Week Beginning October 16, 2016:

FY17 MA Food Ventures Program (MFVP) Grant Awards \$920,000 to Local Food Ventures: awarded \$920,700 to five agricultural groups through the Massachusetts Food Ventures Program (MFVP), a new grant program intended to address food access and expansion of economic opportunities through new food ventures and enterprises throughout the state. The following groups received grants:

1.) Commonwealth Kitchen (Dorchester - \$170,000):

Commonwealth Kitchen will use their award to invest in specialized equipment and infrastructure improvements in order to expand their contract manufacturing enterprise to produce value-added products to serve Boston’s institutional markets. They will also process gleaned and surplus and produce simple, minimally-processed products to feed low-income and food insecure families.

2.) Franklin County Community Development Corporation (Greenfield - \$250,000):

Franklin Country Community Development Corporation will use their award to expand capacity at their food processing center and create infrastructure by constructing a cold storage unit and purchasing additional equipment needed to increase opportunities for food businesses to start and grow. This infrastructure will increase the amount of locally grown vegetables that are frozen right after harvest and will be sold and distributed during the off season months.

3.) Nuestras Raices (Holyoke - \$174,000):

Nuestra Raices will use their award for the construction and launch of a handicapped-accessible Mobile Market with refrigeration and freezer, a food transport truck and a commercial wash station. The increased infrastructure is anticipated to spur economic opportunity regionally, increase market opportunities for local farmers and create 50 new jobs, as well as additional training opportunities.

4.) The Livestock Institute of Southern New England (Westport - \$250,000):

The Livestock Institute of Southern New England will use their award for construction costs associated with building of a state-of-the-art slaughter house and process facility. The project will also provide educational, job creation and training opportunities for residents with regards to safe and humane handling and slaughtering techniques as well as job training for butchering.

5.) World Farmers (Lancaster - \$76,700):

World Farmers will use their award to improve access to established farming infrastructure for the 250 immigrant and refugee farmers at Flats Mentor Farm and in turn increase agricultural production and marketing capacity. The funding for this project will purchase a walk-in cooler and refrigerated trailer, a commercial food hydrator, vacuum-sealed packaging unit and corn miller and a refrigerated van, thus providing opportunities for farmers to increase access to regionally produced foods and increased market distribution.

FY17 Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP) Grant Awards \$250,000: awarded 15 grants totaling \$250,000 to Massachusetts farmers for the installation of conservation practices that prevent or mitigate direct impacts on water and air quality and ensure efficient water use.

The following 16 farms received grants:

Farm Name	City	County	Award	Project Type
Agawam Cranberry Co., Inc.	Wareham	Plymouth	\$18,500	Three Automated Irrigation Systems

Cape Cod Cranberry Realty Trust	West Barnstable	Barnstable	\$17,500	Two Automated Irrigation Systems and Piping
Cowipa Mills Cranberries	Halifax	Plymouth	\$13,500	Two Automated Irrigation Systems
Decas Cranberry Co., Inc.	Carver	Plymouth	\$18,500	Tailwater Recovery Pump; Flume
Eagle Holt Co., Inc.	West Wareham	Plymouth	\$25,000	Lift Pump for Tailwater Recovery
Ferry Farm	Rehoboth	Bristol	\$15,000	Manure Storage
Green Gardens, LLC	Rutland	Worcester	\$10,000	Irrigation
Johnson Cranberries, LTD	Middleboro	Plymouth	\$15,000	Five Flumes
Lilac Hedge Farm, LLC	Berlin	Worcester	\$25,000	Fencing
Little Farm	Williamstown	Berkshire	\$7,500	Heavy Use Area
Maple Shade Farm, Inc.	Sheffield	Berkshire	\$25,000	Manure Storage
Rocky Maple Bogs	Carver	Plymouth	\$7,500	Irrrometer
Slocum Gibbs Cranberry Co., Inc.	Carver	Plymouth	\$25,000	Bypass Canal; Two Automated Irrigation Systems
Southers Marsh Cranberry Bogs, Inc.	Plymouth	Plymouth	\$13,500	Tailwater Recovery System
Willows Cranberries	Wareham	Plymouth	\$13,500	Flume

Grant Awards Announced Week Beginning September 25, 2016:

FY17 Urban Agriculture Grant Awards \$350,000: Urban Agriculture Program to support the growth of the emergent urban agriculture sector and provide city residents access to fresh food. The purpose of MDAR's Urban Agriculture Program, funded by the 2014 Massachusetts Five-Year Capital Plan, is to advance policies, leverage

collective resources and support commercial projects designed to increase the production, processing, and marketing of produce grown in urban centers across the Commonwealth.

The successful demonstration of these projects has ranged from expanding production space, creation of innovative aquaponics and hydroponics facilities and investment in market opportunities within under-served communities. The current awardees' listing is as follows:

CommonWealth Kitchen, Dorchester, MA - \$70,000: CommonWealth Kitchen will use the grant funding to purchase specialized manufacturing equipment needed to improve our ability to affordably and efficiently provide small-batch, value added production services for local urban farms. The equipment will also expand their capacity to take larger processing work focused on farm-to-school and farm-to-institution initiatives.

The Food Project, Dorchester, MA - \$56,385: The Food Project will use the grant funding to perform necessary repairs and refurbishments to the Dudley Greenhouse, the anchor of their operations. The refurbishment will extend the list of the greenhouse, generate more revenue, improve energy efficiency and contribute to greater fertile vegetable production.

Gardening the Community, Springfield, MA - \$55,000: Gardening the Community will use the grant funding to continue the transformation of the first community-controlled urban agriculture site in Springfield. This is phase two of infrastructure improvements, which include soil regeneration, an irrigation system and its instillation. The investment will add to the permanent farm site designed to provide locally grown produce directly to low income urban residents.

NUBIA, Roxbury, MA - \$7,540: NUBIA will use the grant funding to acquire a walk-in storage cooler to use for their fresh produce. As the organization has grown and their commercial food production has increased, this additional infrastructure will be key to keeping their produce at the highest quality.

Shape Up Somerville, Somerville, MA - \$23,656: Shape-Up Somerville will use the grant funding to implement the next phase of "ARTFarm", a 2.2 acre former waste transfer station that is in the midst of being transformed into Somerville's community art and commercial urban growing center. The grant will be used to purchase outdoor walk-in cooler, materials for a 50' X 20' raised bed, as well as the instillation of both.

Urban Farming Institute, Dorchester MA - \$12,733: The Urban Farming Institute will use the grant funding to upgrade their tools and purchase equipment to increase the productivity on their farms. Their urban farmers will also teach trainees how to use equipment and become more efficient in their farming practice.

New Entry Sustainable Farm Project, Lowell, MA - \$30,016: New Entry will use their grant funding to purchase Food Hub Aggregation and distribution management software re-usable crates and ice packs for their produce distribution and packing needs as well as marketing materials. The equipment and infrastructure improvements are projected to increase CSA participation by 20% in food insecure communities on the North Shore.

UMass Lowell, Lowell, MA - \$40,000: UMass Lowell, in partnership with Mill City Grows, will use the grant funding to invest in capital infrastructure with the purchase and installation of commercial greenhouse. The establishment of the greenhouse will provide opportunities for work study programs as well as expanding the food production capacity of Mill City Grows with this year-round facility.

Haley House, Roxbury, MA - \$19,600: Haley House will use the grant funding to improve the production space of the Thornton Street farm with additional soil and drip irrigation infrastructure, purchase and utilize low tunnels for season extension and will farm equipment. This award will also be used for the removal of several large invasive trees to increase productive growing space on the farm.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL), Boston, MA - \$35,500: TPL will use the grant funding to acquire a pre-fabricated greenhouse, a perimeter fence, as well as the installation of the perimeter fence and greenhouse. The addition of the Greenhouse will increase agricultural production and enable a more efficient supply to the significant demand of locally grown food through TPL's partnership with the Urban Farming Institute.

Grants Awards Currently Under Review:

- Stewardship Assistance and Restoration for APRs (SARA)
- APR Improvement Program
- Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture
- Agricultural Food Safety Incentive Program
- Urban Ag Round 2

4. Plant Nutrient Management Regulations: Review of written comments from the public hearing has been completed. The hearing officer's report is in the process of being written. Most of the comments were regarding the following:

- Wetland as part of the definition of surface water; comments indicate that this would take a lot of farmland out of production.
- Compost, Organic Fertilizer, and Biosolids being treated the same as Synthetic fertilizer; comments suggest that they should be treated differently.
- Confusion and clarity in the regulations; comments indicate there is confusion based on the definitions and where things are placed in the regulations.

MDAR is developing a plan of action to address the comments received which will include discussions with DEP on the Organics and Wetlands issue; conducting additional research on the organics piece and working to clean up and clarify the regulations.

5. Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program (APR): The public hearing for the regulations were held on September 21st, 2016. MDAR received 13 comments: 2 from landowners/ farmers; 3 from legislators; 1 from a non-farmer; 7 from member organizations. On November 9th, 2016 MDAR held an APR Program Regulatory Information Session. Currently the Department is reviewing comments and incorporating where appropriate.

APR FY2016 closings:

# of farms	Acres	Funds expended	Additional
10	838.4	\$6,709,000	1 gift APR

APR FY2017 Funding: Capital is \$3.6 million, a reduction of almost \$3m over previous year funding.

6. Food Action Plan: At the November 10th Food Policy Council meeting the FPC voted on six priorities to be sent along to the Governor and the Legislature. On November 23rd Commissioner Lebeaux hand delivered a letter to the Governor's Office and Legislators indicating the FPC's six priorities. The letters noted the FPC's appreciation for the Administration's leadership and commitment to the Plan's vision and asks that consideration be given to these priorities as it relates to the development of an relevant legislation or regulatory actions. (The six FPC goals may be referenced in the 9/22/16 Commissioner's Report).

7. Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA): Currently, interviews are being conducted for the Office Support Specialist II position and the Produce Safety Program Operations Coordinator. HRD received 89 applications for the Coordinator position and 1475 for the Office Support Specialist position. Currently, the Department is working on the development of language to provide MDAR with statutory authority.

8. Legislative Updates: At this time, there is no movement on any agriculture priority bills. The inauguration for newly elected Legislators is expected to take place on January 4th, 2017. Bills are timely-filed during the following week.

To: Massachusetts Board of Agriculture
From: Board Member Laura Sapienza-Grabski
Subject: Agricultural Preservation Restrictions Program (APR)
Date: August 11, 2016

Per a request for comment in the Board's agenda for today, on a topic discussed at the last meeting of the Board of Agriculture on June 6th, 2016, regarding a presentation on the Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program, I wish to provide my comments.

The presentation was very well done and anyone not deeply familiar with this program would have thought it was a flawless program. However, there are several problems with the program, as it was presented that I wish to list.

1. **The current interpretation of the APR program exceeds the intention of the enabling legislation.**

The original intention of the program was to preserve prime agricultural soils from development in accordance with M.G.L. c. 184 §§ 31-32. Section 31 defines the restriction and Section 32 has the effects, enforcement, acquisition and release of restrictions.

To preserve the prime soils, the Agricultural Lands Preservation Committee was created via Chapter 20, to review projects submitted to the department and in accordance to Section 24 of this chapter with (i) the suitability of land as to the soil classifications and other criteria for agricultural use;(ii) the fair market value of the land and the fair market value of the land when used for agricultural purposes as determined by independent appraisals; and (iii) the degree to which the acquisition would serve to preserve the agricultural potential of the Commonwealth.

2. **The current interpretation has been modified by internal MDAR Regulations, Policies and Procedures that are not transparent.** The Policies and Procedures for the APR program have changed internally in MDAR while the enabling legislation has not changed and have become more onerous to the farmers ability for the overall "agricultural potential" of the farm business and less friendly to agribusiness.

Recommendation: All changes in APR Regulations, Policy and Procedures need to be documented with the relevance to the enabling legislation, include a revision number, effective change date and submitted to the Chair of the Board of Agriculture to be present at the next scheduled board meeting for public discussion.

3. **The APR program originally used a very simple restriction, separating out the build lot and paying for the restriction on the portion with soils to be preserved. It did not buy the control of the building lot other than to link it to the farm and the farmer was paid for that relationship.** The restrictions were very simple in nature at the early inception with less than 10

pages and did not incur the legal costs for farmer or the department associated with the present processing of the restrictions that can be at a minimum of 30 pages and some are 80 plus pages, while the MDAR legal department has expanded staff from 1 to 6 and the processing time for a new restriction has exceeded two years.

Recommendation: Return to the original restriction format that is in keeping with the enabling legislation.

4. **Early restrictions did not include a “Right of First Refusal” and this “right” is not included in the enabling legislation.** It was created by an internal MDAR Regulations, Policy and Procedural changes. There is a value for this “right” to the original land owner that exceeds the value to the agricultural land portion.

Several farmers who have APR farms that did not have a “Right of First Refusal” included in their restrictions have complained that when they sought improvement funds offered via MDAR for their farms, they have been told that they needed to “update” their APR, which included adding in this “right” to MDAR without compensation.

This issue was discussed at the Ag Board meeting but the practice was denied during the MDAR presentation. Farmers have complained that they are intimidated and often in fear of retaliation if they do not sign over the “Right of First Refusal”. Farmers have been confused over this practice and often they are very vulnerable when they sign over this “right” and often they are without their own legal counsel. The complaints on this issue have escalated in the last 10 years.

Recommendation: Post a disclosure statement on the MDAR site that states options for how to file complaints on the APR Program to the Chair of the Board of Agriculture. Review all APR’s for compensation value of the “Right of First Refusal”.

5. **The current interpretation of the APR program would value two APR farms side by side with the same soils and acreage as “equal in value” even though one farmer (A) may choose to invest in agribusiness improvements in the building envelope with a farm stand, saw mill, dairy processing facility, cheese processing, fish farming, green houses, produce processing, maple processing, aquiculture processing, farm restaurant, farm winery, farm brewery and other improvements to their agricultural business.**

Should Farmer (A) wish to sell his APR farm with “Right of First Refusal” language in their restriction, the department would intercede if they do not like the buyer or the sale price; force a reduction in price to equal the value of the agricultural soils; or “assign” the sale to another party.

The claim is that the department wants to make the purchase of the farm more accessible to the next farmer, but they have forgotten how they reduce the business value for a farmer

looking for loans and that the value of the land with the “prime” soils have already been reduced.

This practice was created by MDAR Regulations, Policy and Procedure changes and not by the enabling legislation.

Recommendation: Remove this practice and enable farmers to invest in their farm business which will increase the “agricultural potential of the Commonwealth”.

- 6. If APR farmers invest in “agribusiness improvements” in their building envelope, many are blocked from working with other farmers which is counter to the enabling legislative goal of supporting “agricultural potential of the Commonwealth”.**

This practice puts non APR farmers and non-profit land trust farmers at an advantage over APR farmers in their agribusiness.

Recommendation: Remove this practice and enable farmers to invest in their farm business which will increase the “agricultural potential of the Commonwealth”.

- 7. The “building envelope” and the restrictions that have arrived via the MDAR Policy and Procedure have changed dramatically since the inception of the program. Farmers with building envelopes for their residence have been in legal battles with the department over issues like putting in a swimming pool; building farm breweries; building farm housing, saw mill, farm restaurant and other improvements that a farmer may wish to do in their building envelope. Some of these legal battles have exceeded 10 years with a number having had legislative decisions that the department has not enacted upon.**

Recommendation: The Board of Agriculture to review the legal and legislative decisions in open or in Executive Session in accordance with M.G.L Chapter 39, §23B.

- 8. Older APR’s were created without land surveys and inventories for farm structures. The Department and ALPC authorized the APR purchase, as is for these farms. The MDAR Policy at that time was to “preserve as much prime agricultural soils and farms as possible”.**

In recent years, many older APR farms have allowed MDAR land surveys and inventories for farm structures. Several APR’s have had discrepancies that have resulted in MDAR legal battles against the farmers to move lot lines and remove structures and these battles have also included legislators. The Department has ordered structures to be torn down and has forced farmers to rewrite their APR’s taking more land to fix the Department’s documentation error.

Farmers that decide to fight the Department's actions are also faced with legal fees, long waits in the legal or legislative process and intimidation from the Department.

This issue was discussed during the APR presentation and the Board was assured that this issue when discovered by the Department worked to be the least disruptive to the farmer. This reply is false.

Recommendation: The Board of Agriculture to review the legal and legislative concerns in open or in Executive Session in accordance with M.G.L Chapter 39, §23B for APR Deed Discrepancies. **In other land transfers, the burden is on the purchaser to correct the deed and not the current land owner.**

- 9. USDA and other programs are offering funding opportunities to increase the "agricultural potential" that the MA APR farmers cannot access, while non APR farmers and Non-profit farmers can.**

The present MDAR Regulations, Policies and Practices hinder APR farms from accessing funding opportunities.

Recommendation: The Board of Agriculture to review the MDAR Regulations, Policies and Procedures of the APR Program.

Conclusion: The APR program needs to be reviewed; farmers need to be treated with more respect and MDAR needs to correct its errors. This process may need to have legislative involvement to correct the errors and to move forward.

The APR Programs warrants further discussion with the Board of Agriculture and members of the agricultural community to return to the original legislative goals of "preserving prime agricultural soils" and "preserve the agricultural potential of the Commonwealth".

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Sapienza-Grabski

Board of Agriculture Member

To: Massachusetts Board of Agriculture
From: Board Member Laura Sapienza-Grabski
Subject: Agricultural Preservation Restrictions Program (APR)
Date: December 6, 2016

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) is in the process of a questionnaire focused on the Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program that is also open to none MFBF members. Attached is a copy of the questionnaire.

The general results of the questionnaire will be shared broadly, including with MDAR and the appropriate boards the ALPC and the Board of Agriculture while the names and individual surveys of the respondents will be kept confidential.

MFBF will hold a public meeting to present the general results with an invitation to all stake holders including the land owners, Secretary Beaton, MDAR, ALPC and the Board of Agriculture, Congressman McGovern, various legislators and others who have expressed concerns over the program.

Therefore, I recommend and **I will make a motion that the Board of Agriculture requires MDAR to refrain from modifications to Policies, Procedures, Processes and Regulations of the Agricultural Perseveration Restriction Program until there is a conclusion of the MFBF survey and the associated public meetings.**

The APR comments and problems that I presented to the Board of Agriculture on August 11th of this year have not subsided in the APR community. In fact, at an APR listening session presented by MDAR at Farm Bureau's Annual meeting on December 1st, which was widely attended, additional problems and concerns surfaced. I asked at that meeting if Commissioner Lebeaux could promise not to implement changes to APR program until the survey with public meetings concludes. I reverentially resubmit my request to the Commissioner and to the Board of Agriculture for support in this request.

Sincerely,

Laura Sapienza-Grabski

Board of Agriculture Member

MA Farm Bureau Federation
APR Owner Survey
RESPONSES DUE BY JANUARY 15, 2017

In recent years, MA Farm Bureau has received a number of complaints and criticisms from owners of land on which there is an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR). The complaints have largely focused on how the state deals with APR owners, and how it manages its interest in existing APR properties. Compared to the number of APR properties in the Commonwealth, the number of complaints has been small. While anecdotal, neither the number nor nature of the complaints has been insignificant. MA Farm Bureau does not feel these complaints can be ignored.

As part of an effort to explore the scope and validity of these criticisms, MA Farm Bureau is asking all APR land owners to complete the survey below. Very simply, the results will be used to help identify problems, if any. Identifying the presence, scope and nature of a problem is of course the first step in solving it.

You do not have to be a Farm Bureau Member to participate in this survey.

While the general results of the survey will be shared broadly, individual surveys along with names of respondents will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside of MA Farm Bureau. **No one outside of Farm Bureau will know who responded, or see individual survey forms.** Unfortunately, if you do not provide your contact information, we cannot consider the information provided as part of this survey. Completely anonymous

****IF POSSIBLE WE WOULD PREFER YOU TO USE THE FOLLOWING LINK TO COMPLETE THE APR SURVEY**:**

goo.gl/bk6L8A

If you own more than one APR parcel, please complete a separate survey for each parcel.

Name:

Contact Information:

Email:

Phone Number:

1. Did you yourself enter into an APR agreement with the state or did you purchase an existing APR parcel?
2. What year did you enter into the APR agreement/purchase the APR?
3. What do you produce on your farm?
4. What activities take place on your farm, other than the production of an agricultural product?
 - a. Agricultural Production
 - b. Retail sales of farm product

- c. Value-added processing
- d. Agritourism
- e. Other

4a. If activities on your farm go beyond agricultural production please describe briefly

5. How many acres do you have in APR?

6. If you or your family put the land into APR do you think you received a fair and full payment for the rights you granted to the state?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. In purchasing the APR property, or putting it into the APR program, were you represented by an attorney?

- a. Yes
- b. No

8. Do you feel that the restrictions the state is enforcing or attempting to enforce on your property exceed those to which you agreed?

- a. Yes
- b. No

8a. If "yes", please describe briefly.

9. Has anyone at the state ever approached you to amend an existing APR contract? *

- a. Yes
- b. no

9a. If "yes", what were the circumstances?

- a. Change of ownership
- b. Approval of a Special Permit or Certificate of Approval
- c. Other (please describe)

10. Has someone from the state ever told you to stop an activity on your APR land or farm, or prevented you from doing something on your land/farm that you wanted to do?

- a. Yes
- b. No

10a. If "yes", please describe the circumstances.

11. Is there a dwelling on your APR land?

- a. Yes
- b. No

12. If there is not a dwelling, have you had any difficulty in securing farmer or labor housing?

- a. Yes
- b. No

13. Has the restriction on your land ever limited your ability to borrow funds necessary to run or expand your operation?

- a. Yes
- b. No

13a. If "yes", please describe the circumstances.

14. If you or your family entered the APR agreement, for what purpose did you use the money?

- a. Pay off debt
- b. Invest money back into the farm
- c. Settle family obligations relative to transfer of ownership
- d. I'd prefer not to divulge this information
- e. Other (please describe briefly)

15. If your land had not been put into APR, do you believe it would currently be :

- a. In agriculture
- b. Developed for non-agricultural use
- c. Don't know

16. As a farmer, what are the main drawbacks of the APR program you have experienced?

17. As a farmer, what are the main benefits of the APR program you have experienced?

18. If you or your family put your land into an APR, would you describe the process of doing so (discussions, legal proceedings, signing) as a positive experience?

- a. Yes
- b. No

18a. If "No" please briefly describe how/why.

19. Do you feel like the state has treated you fairly in their oversight of the APR land since you've signed the contract/purchased the APR land?

- a. Yes
- b. No

19a. If "No", please describe how/why.

20. If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, do you think your operation would be more profitable if there were not a restriction on the land?

- a. More

- b. Less
- c. Same

20a. If you answered "More" or "Less", please briefly explain why.

21. Please feel free to add any other comments you feel which are pertinent to this effort.

Please Return Survey to:
APR Survey
MFBF
249 Lakeside Avenue
Marlborough, MA

2014 ENVIRONMENTAL BOND BILL
PAGE No. 4375

983 2300-7026 For the planning, engineering, design, construction, construction inspection,
984 acquisition, development and reconstruction of existing and new coastal and inland access sites
985 including, but not limited to, boat launching facilities, fishermen boat access facilities, car-top
986 boat launching facilities, canoe and kayak access facilities, sport fishing piers and shore fishing
987 areas including, but not limited to, ramps, docks, floats and appurtenant facilities throughout the
988 commonwealth including, but not limited to, construction of signage and informational kiosks
989 and the implementation of coastal projects developed jointly with the Marine Recreational
990 Fisheries Development Fund; provided, that \$200,000 shall be expended for the repair,
991 enhancement and associated parking for the Amesbury boat ramp in the city known as the town
992 of Amesbury; provided further, that the dock system at Fallon Pier shall be compliant with the
993 Americans with Disabilities Act; provided further, that \$100,000 shall be expended for handicap
994 access improvements at the Dick and Paula Woodward Fisherman's Access Area and public
995 dock, at South Pond in the town of Brookfield; provided further, that \$350,000 shall be made
996 available to the town of Dartmouth for the reconstruction and improvements to the
997 Apponagansett Point boat ramp, also known as the Arthur F. Dias landing, in said town;
998 provided further, that \$575,000 be expended to the town of Falmouth for the construction of
999 Whites Landing roadway and boat ramp construction consisting of 700' of roadway and a boat
1000 launch ramp consisting of dewatering techniques, drainage structures, 2 outfalls, a new boat
1001 ramp, 5-foot wide sidewalks, retaining wall section, new asphalt roadway pavement and side
1002 slope grading; provided further, that \$4,100,000 shall be expended for the reconstruction of and
1003 improvements to Pope's Island marina in New Bedford Harbor; provided further, that \$75,000
1004 shall be expended for the design and engineering cost for a boat ramp in the city of Quincy at the
1005 Squantum Point Park; and provided further, that \$400,000 shall be expended to reconstruct the
1006 Sabbatia Lake boat ramp and rebuild the boat ramp parking area in the city of
1007 Taunton..... \$22,175,000

1008 Department of Agricultural Resources.

1009 2500-7023 For the purpose of developing and implementing programs designed to
1010 address agricultural economic and environmental sustainability, research, industry promotion,
1011 technology transfer and education and to facilitate improvements to agricultural infrastructure,
1012 energy conservation and efficiency, including the development and implementation of farm
1013 viability plans and other technical and engineering assistance to enhance the economic and
1014 environmental viability of farms; provided, that funds shall be available to promote urban
1015 agriculture, to provide for shorter-term land covenants and for the undertaking of markets for
1016 agricultural products to assist in agricultural business enhancement and transition; provided
1017 further, that a grant program shall be established to provide grants to public and nonpublic
1018 entities for the development and implementation of new procedures for energy conservation and
1019 efficiency and for renewable and alternative energy sources to assist the agricultural community
1020 to grow and develop; provided further, that there shall be established a program to assist in the
1021 preservation and rehabilitation of facilities and land resources of agricultural fairs through short-

URBAN

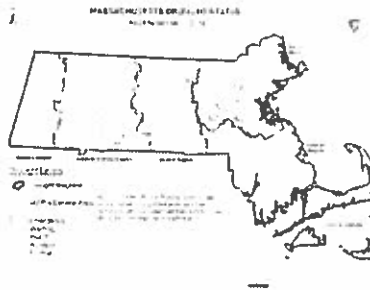
1022 term preservation covenants, grants, demonstration projects and other means under section 38C
1023 of chapter 128 of the General Laws; provided further, that funds in this item may be allocated by
1024 the commissioner through competitive grants; provided further, that the commissioner may adopt
1025 regulations relative to these grants; provided further, that \$35,000 shall be expended as a grant
1026 for increasing the head start capacity and greater separation of animals as part of the bio-security
1027 protocol of the Natural Resources Management Program at the Bristol County Agricultural High
1028 School in the town of Dighton; provided further, that \$2,000,000 shall be expended to support
1029 food ventures, primarily in communities of low or moderate income, including but not limited to
1030 community kitchens, food truck commissaries, greenhouses, farmers markets, infrastructure for
1031 community-supported agriculture businesses; provided further, that \$8,000,000 shall be
1032 expended on programs for the purpose to promote urban agriculture, including, grants to
1033 municipalities and nonprofit organizations to acquire land for urban agriculture and for related
1034 infrastructure, equipments and technical assistance, subject to the requirement that such
1035 expenditures benefit recipient communities by promoting community, access to locally grown
1036 food, job creation, small business development, agricultural training and youth development;
1037 provided further, that \$350,000 shall be expended for the purpose of the Massachusetts farm
1038 energy program to implement programs to improve farm viability and reduce greenhouse gases
1039 by providing technical assistance, energy audits and financial grants related to energy efficiency
1040 conservation improvements and on-site production of renewable and alternate energy on farms;
1041 provided further, that not less than \$2,100,000 shall be expended for upgrades to Powers Farm in
1042 the town of Randolph.....\$15,485,000

1043 Department of Conservation and Recreation.

1044 2840-7024 For the design, construction, reconstruction, removal, improvement or
1045 rehabilitation of department reservations, forests, parks, harbor islands, skating rinks, swimming
1046 pools, golf courses, tennis courts, basketball courts, playgrounds, other recreational facilities,
1047 beaches and related facilities, storage buildings, office buildings and other parks' buildings and
1048 equipment and for the planning, design, construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation or
1049 improvement of department bike paths, greenways, recreational trails and related facilities and
1050 equipment; provided further, that \$5,000,000 shall be expended for the construction of the
1051 Greylock Glen Outdoor Center in the town of Adams; provided further, that \$1,000,000 shall be
1052 expended for the design, permitting, remediation, and reconstruction of the bulkhead wall along
1053 the Powwow and Back Rivers at Heritage Park in the city known as the town of Amesbury;
1054 provided further, that not less than \$150,000 shall be expended to improve water quality and lake
1055 restoration at Lake Attitash in the city known as the town of Amesbury; provided further, that
1056 \$30,000 shall be expended to the towns of Athol, Erving, Orange and Wendell for the
1057 construction of signage and informational kiosks along the Millers River; provided further, that
1058 \$350,000 shall be expended to the town of Auburn to expand the parking lot at the West Street
1059 state boat ramp access at Dark Brook Reservoir and to relocate the adjacent fire tower training
1060 facility and construct a new fire tower training facility within the town of Auburn to allow for

12/06/2016

Update, Drought Conditions and Long Term Economic Impact on MA Agriculture: As of November 1st, with the exception of the Cape and the Islands, all of Massachusetts is in a Drought Warning (as determined by the MA Drought Management Task Force (DMTF)).



Next meeting of the DMTF is scheduled for December 7th and will evaluate how the hydrological conditions have changed in the last month and make recommendations for drought levels moving forward

As of November 22nd the US Drought Monitor shows portions of the state in D3 Extreme Drought.



Impacts on Agriculture: With the fall harvest now complete or wrapping up short term concerns have been minimized, though still present on an industry specific and case by case basis. In general, the past few months impacted farmers with increased costs and reduced revenues. Industry highlights:

- Cranberry: The harvest is now complete. Growers saw increased costs from running irrigation pumps and decreased revenues from lower yields and a decrease in premiums because of the reduced quality of berries as a result of the drought.
- Livestock: The loss of forage as a result of the drought is the major impact on livestock growers. Livestock farmers had to purchase feed far in advance of usual, which has resulted in huge cost increases. This impact will be felt throughout the winter.
- Produce/Apiary/Greenhouse/Nursery: Short term impacts were felt during the summer and fall, but now that the harvest is complete impacts are not actively being felt.

Long term impacts of the drought: In general, if drought conditions don't improve over the winter months and before the growing season, there will be long term impacts on all agricultural sectors. Aquifers need to be replenished or else conditions will worsen for farmers. If conditions do worsen, growers that are able may make decisions to use less water intensive crops, however this option will not be available for farmers growing perennial crops (trees, orchards, cranberries). Tree growers will feel the impact of the drought in future years because of the loss of this year's seedlings. Livestock farmers will feel the impact through increased costs over the winter. Cranberry growers are concerned with the availability of water over the winter for use in frost protection. Many growers are looking to water conservation technologies and strategies to deal with future drought scenarios.

Work in Progress: MDAR is actively working with EEA, on the MA Drought Management Task Force, and with our federal partners to address drought related concerns for farmers and provide resources. On November 29th MDAR posted a new round of funding for the Emergency Drought AEEP program to fund water conservation technologies.

Quantifying Long Term Economic Impacts: This is very complex, especially since impacts were often case specific. We could theoretically quantify losses in each industry, for example if we were to look at the livestock industry and compare feed costs this year and last year (costs in a drought vs. costs without drought), we could get at dollars lost. Same with cranberry, average yields could be compared. Other industries such as produce would be FAR more difficult. This data would need to be collected by MDAR and require a survey to farmers.