

## APR Improvement Program (AIP)

This MDAR program provides business planning, technical assistance, and grants to commercial farms with land that has already been protected through MDAR's Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program to help sustain active commercial farming on the land.

Grants are provided on a cost reimbursement basis, for capital infrastructure improvements on the farm identified through the AIP planning process. Last year, grants awarded ranged from \$60,000 - \$120,000, with a 25% required match. Please check the current Request for Response, which should be available on the MDAR website in the coming weeks, for current program details including eligibility requirements, grant levels and match requirements, timeline, and a current application. A copy can also be mailed to you upon request.

Examples of uses of grant funds include new or improved agricultural buildings, such as barns, livestock housing, farmstands and processing facilities; or resource improvements, such as wells, establishing perennial crops, or fencing.

The program also provides additional technical assistance in identified areas of need such as family succession, marketing, or financial tracking to help increase farm viability. To date, 106 APR farms have benefited from AIP, receiving a total of \$7,425,000 in grant funds and \$591,503 in technical and business assistance.

**For more information, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/apr-improvement-program-aip> or contact Diego Irizarry-Gerould at [Diego.Irizarry-Gerould@mass.gov](mailto:Diego.Irizarry-Gerould@mass.gov) or 857-248-1671**



*Dick's Market Garden is a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation family farm on 260 acres in Lunenburg, MA that grows vegetables, fruit, and flowers for retail sale at their farm store and multiple farmers markets throughout eastern Massachusetts. In fiscal year 2019, owner Stephen Violette participated in the APR Improvement Program (AIP) to address their need to increase the efficiency and food safety of their wash-pack operations. The farm had been washing and packing a high volume of produce in a cramped open-air wash area. Violette received technical and business planning assistance as well as a \$100,000 AIP grant towards the construction of a new 1,800 square foot wash-pack and storage facility.*

*Participation in AIP helped Dick's Market Garden achieve their goal of a produce washing facility that meets the standards of both the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and the Commonwealth Quality Program (CQP) certification. The new structure allows the farm to efficiently process, cool, and store produce.*

*Dick's Market Garden also received a \$25,000 Agricultural Food Safety Improvement Program grant from MDAR in fiscal year 2019 for furnishing the inside of the structure with compliant equipment, including a Brush Washer, Rinse Conveyor, and stainless steel sinks and washing surfaces.*