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April / May Farm & Market Report

4/26/19

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COMMISSIONER'S COLUMN



Greetings, Mass. Agriculture and all its' friends,

Welcome to Spring!

Since last time, many of us attended Agricultural Day on Beacon Hill on March 27; and it was a very good day! Many farmers met with numerous legislators and their staffs to discuss relevant issues. Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito visited with many during the delicious Taste of

Massachusetts reception in the Hall of Flags in the State House. They then both proceeded to participate in the speaking program.

I was presented an Agriculture Day Award by the Mass. Agriculture Promotion Board along with State Representative Sarah Peake, UMass Professor Dr. Dan Lass, and retired UMass Educator Kathy Carroll. I am tremendously honored to receive the award; inclusion among the very distinguished other recipients is an award by itself. I accept it on behalf of all my colleagues at MDAR. Without them, I sincerely doubt I'd be in a position to receive any honor or award.

As I mentioned to those in attendance, as the grandson and son of farmers, I admit I wish they could have been there. I also told those assembled that I knew exactly what my dad would have said: "That's very nice, John...but now, let's get back to work." That's just what we're going to do!

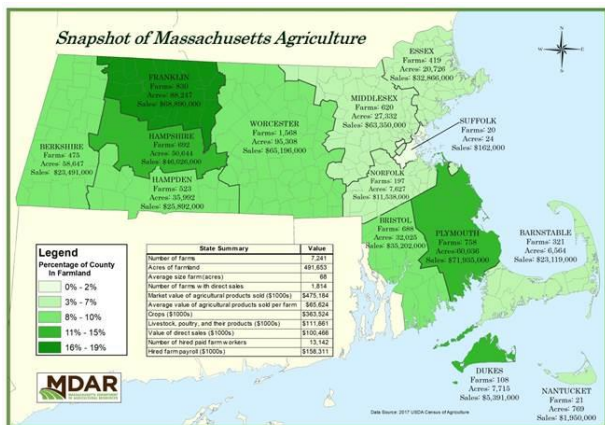
A great deal of time and effort go into organizing Ag Day-many, many thanks to the Ag Day Committee, the Ag Promotion Board, Farm Bureau, all the exhibitors, and everyone who took most of their day to attend! Mary Jordan and the Agricultural Markets Division, along with other MDAR staff, provided support and acted as liaison with the State House team.

As you may know, the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released the [2017 Census of Agriculture](#). These censuses are conducted every five years.

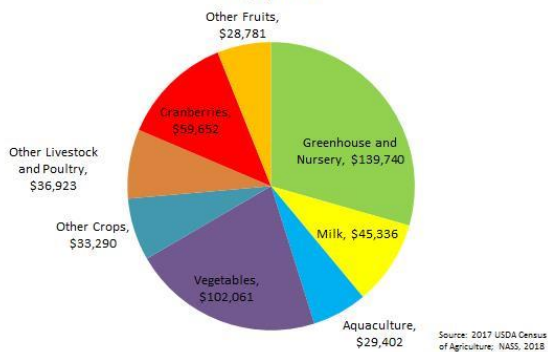
Massachusetts followed the national trend of reductions of both number of farms and acres in farmland. There was also a decline in annual market value. All the New England states fared similarly; in most cases MA performed at the high end in comparison to our New England neighbors.

Our response rate at 69.6% was just a hair less than national average of 71.8%. The census's definition of a farm is "any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year."

As a picture is worth 1,000 words, here are 2,000 words worth that express a lot of MA information in a very accessible manner:



Massachusetts 2017 Agricultural Economy in \$1,000s



There's much further analysis to do. I want to thank MDAR Agricultural Economist Myron Inglis and GIS Coordinator Dake Henderson for these excellent exhibits.

Earth Day, April 22 Assistant Commissioner Randle, Agricultural Markets Division Director Mary Jordan, and Ag Markets Outreach Coordinator Katie Rozenas toured greenhouse and nursery operations. We first visited Little Leaf Farms in Devens, a state-of-the-art year-round lettuce growing greenhouse operation. Little Leaf produces 3,000-4,000 tons of baby little leaf lettuce every day through a highly automated operation. It was quite remarkable to observe this facility at work. CEO Paul Sellev and I have nursery connections. His dad Peter

established a large grower in Lebanon CT, Prides Corner Farms, with whom we dealt for 30 years or so. His brother Mark runs Prides Corner now, and it was a treat to tour their nursery and see him as part of our national association's tours last September.

Next stop was Cavicchio Greenhouses in Sudbury. They have grown very much since I started dealing with them in the 1980's, Paul Cavicchio, and my old MNLA Board colleague Tom Cottens, and the team there grow consistently beautiful greenhouse plants and wholesale them along with nursery stock and landscape supplies. Two big takeaways from the Cavicchio visit was the technology and efficiency: the custom soil on demand system, the mechanized seedling planting equipment, floor flooding irrigation system. Second was their commitment to integrated pest management and highly satisfactory use of a lot of biological pest controls.

Last stop on our tour was Weston Nurseries in Hopkinton. Our families have been colleagues and friends since the 50's. Owned by the Mezitt family for four generations, Weston is world renowned for developing numerous Rhododendron hybrids, most particularly the PJM Rhododendron. President Peter Mezitt showed us how the Weston team plans for a changing marketplace. We saw the beautiful new display greenhouse, an old friend Commercial Sales Director Bob Wall in the new landscape sales building, a very clean compost operation, and a lot of beautiful nursery stock! I loved the very impressive history display they've created.

I want to remind everyone that we are hosting [public hearings](#) on proposed changes to the APR Regulations from 5:30-7:30 pm on May 8 (Greenfield) and May 9th (Shrewsbury). Testimony may be presented orally or in writing at the hearing. Written testimonies or comments will be accepted until 5:00 pm on Friday, May 10, 2019 by email to Dorothy.Du@mass.gov, or by mail to Dorothy Du, 251 Causeway Street, 5th floor, Boston, MA 02114-2151.

I raked off the garlic; it sprouted out of the ground very nicely. It's also always a pleasure to watch the rhubarb emerge. I haven't seen a lot of winter damage to ornamentals, but I do see some on some broadleaf evergreens. I'm delighted that a pretty big hand-dug Seven Sons Flower I transplanted last spring seems to have overwintered well. There's always a wonderful joy watching Spring emerge winter dormancy.

That's all for now-it's a busy time for all of us. Like my dad said, it's time for me to get back to work.

Best regards,



John Lebeaux

FOREFRONT

APR Program Accepting Applications

The Department is currently accepting applications for the [Agricultural Preservation Restriction \(APR\) Program](#). The Program purchases the non-agricultural value of the farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which prevents uses and activities that may impact the present or future agricultural use and viability of the property.

Through purchases of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions, the APR Program preserves and protects agricultural land, including designated farmland soils, which are a finite natural resource, from being built upon for non-agricultural purposes or used for any activity detrimental to agriculture. It is a voluntary program which offers 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. To date, the program has protected over 900 farm properties across the Commonwealth.

Applications will be considered for funding through the APR Program and the federal USDA Agricultural Lands Easement (ALE) Program.

Applications must be received by 4:00 P.M. on June 28, 2019. Applications may be mailed, hand-delivered or sent electronically; those sent by fax will NOT be accepted. Postmarks will NOT be considered.

Please note that the basic thresholds for APR eligibility are:

- 1) at least 5 open acres of agricultural land, and
- 2) the land has been in active agricultural use for at least the past two years.

Instructions:

If you are interested in applying to sell an APR on your farm land, please complete the following steps:

1. Review the [APR Application Instructions](#).
2. Review and download the [APR Application](#).
3. Contact the APR Program if you have any questions or to discuss the next steps in the application process.

Ron Hall – Eastern Massachusetts and Hampshire County - 413-548-1903 - ronald.hall@mass.gov

Barbara Hopson – Berkshire and Hampden Counties - 413-548-1906 - barbara.hopson@mass.gov

Michele Padula – Worcester and Franklin Counties - 617-626-1758 - michele.padula@mass.gov

Open Application Period for MDAR Grants

MDAR is now accepting applications from agricultural operations who wish to participate in the Department's grant programs. Grants are available to help agricultural operations make farm improvements that enhance their economic viability, help prevent negative impacts to environmental resource, adapt and mitigate climate change, improve energy efficiency, adopt renewable energy, and improve on-farm produce safety. Interested farm operators are encouraged to review the information and applications on each program's webpage. If interested in applying, applications must be submitted with any supporting documentation by the program's deadline. All funding is subject to appropriation.

Below are brief descriptions of each program. For more information (including applications) please visit the program's website.

Agricultural Climate Resiliency & Efficiencies (ACRE) Program

Reimbursement grant program that funds the implementation of projects that help the agricultural sector adapt to climate change, mitigate climate change, and improve economic resiliency.

The ACRE program is broken into two categories. The first category is for climate adaptation and/or mitigation projects such as soil health, water use efficiency, or other projects working towards reducing or limiting greenhouse gas emissions. The second category is ag-energy projects to improve energy efficiency or to facilitate clean energy adoption.

Participants selected in the program are provided with reimbursement grants up to \$25,000.

www.mass.gov/service-details/agricultural-climate-resiliency-efficiencies-acre-program

Application due: Friday, May 31, 2019.

For more information contact: Adaptation/Mitigation: Laura Maul at 617-626-1739 or at Laura.Maul@mass.gov.
Energy: Gerry Palano at 617-626-1706 or at Gerald.Palano@mass.gov.

Agricultural Energy Program (ENER)

Now included in the Agricultural Climate Resiliency & Efficiencies (ACRE) program! Reimbursement grant program that funds agricultural energy projects in an effort to improve energy efficiency and the adoption of alternative energy by Massachusetts farms. The goal of the program is that farms can become more sustainable and the Commonwealth can maximize the environmental and economic benefits from these technologies.

www.mass.gov/service-details/agricultural-climate-resiliency-efficiencies-acre-program

Application due: Friday, May 31, 2019.

For more information contact Gerry Palano at 617-626-1706 or at Gerald.Palano@mass.gov.

Agricultural Food Safety Improvement Program (AFSIP)

Reimbursement grant program that supports agricultural produce operations that are looking to improve their food safety practices that help minimize the risk of microbial contamination and food-borne illnesses and, in addition, increase competitive market access by meeting buyer demands for demonstrated practices that work towards protecting public health and food safety. Some examples of projects include wildlife fencing, packing shed walls, ceilings and light fixtures, field harvest systems, hand washing sinks, portable restrooms, drainage systems, and water systems. Participants selected to participate in the program will be reimbursed up to 75% of total project costs up to \$25,000. www.mass.gov/service-details/agricultural-food-safety-improvement-program-afsip

Application due: Friday, May 31, 2019.

For more information contact Laura Maul at 617-626-1739 or at Laura.Maul@mass.gov.

Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP)

Reimbursement grant program that funds materials and labor for conservation practices that mitigate or prevent negative impacts to the state's natural resources that may result from agricultural practices. Practices funded include those that prevent direct impacts on water quality, ensure efficient use of water, and address agricultural impacts on air quality. Reimbursement grants up to \$25,000 for materials and labor will be awarded on a competitive basis. www.mass.gov/service-details/agricultural-environmental-enhancement-program-aEEP

Application due: Friday, May 31, 2019. For more information contact Laura Maul at 617-626-1739 or at Laura.Maul@mass.gov.

APR Improvement Program (AIP)

AIP provides business planning and technical assistance to farms with land that has already been protected through MDAR's Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program. The program assists with issues of financial viability, resource conservation, family succession, modernization of infrastructure and other issues that by addressing may enhance the long term continued use of the agricultural resource. Grant funds of \$25,000 - \$100,000 may be available on a reimbursement basis to participants for capital infrastructure improvements on the farm identified through the planning process including resource management, new or improved barns, farmstands or other agricultural buildings, or processing facilities. www.mass.gov/service-details/apr-improvement-program-aip

Application due: 4:00pm on May 7, 2019 in the MDAR Amherst office at 101 University Drive, Suite C4, Amherst, MA 01002.

For more information contact Melissa Adams at 413-548-1904 or Melissa.L.Adams@mass.gov.

Farm Viability Enhancement Program (FVEP)

FVEP provides business planning and technical assistance program to help established farms identify strategies to increase farm viability such as new or expanded enterprises, increased productivity, marketing, and/or environmental sustainability. Participants selected to participate in the program may be offered grant funds of \$25,000 to \$125,000 to implement strategies identified during the planning process in return for signing an agricultural covenant on the farm property to keep it in agricultural use for a 5 or 10-year term. Eligible uses of funds are capital projects on the farm such as building or repairing barns, farmstands or other agricultural buildings, modernizing equipment, or improving food processing capacity. www.mass.gov/service-details/farm-viability-enhancement-program-fvep

Application due: 4:00pm on May 7, 2019 in the MDAR Amherst office at 101 University Drive, Suite C4, Amherst, MA 01002.

For more information contact Melissa Adams at 413-548-1904 or Melissa.L.Adams@mass.gov.

Matching Enterprise Grants Program (MEGA)

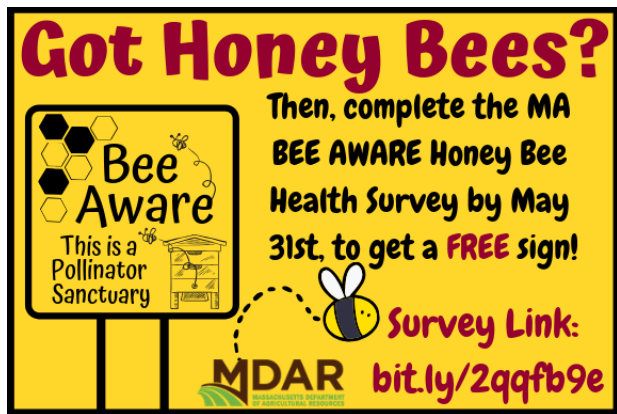
MEGA is a reimbursement grant program that assists farmers who are between 1 and 5 years in business by providing technical and business planning and grant funds for farm improvement strategies. Grant funds of up to \$10,000 with a 1:1 match to assist farmers whose goal is to raise agricultural products and who aspire to develop their farms into commercially viable operations. Funds are typically used for equipment, infrastructure, or other capital improvements to implement strategies that are identified during the planning process to help the business grow. www.mass.gov/service-details/matching-enterprise-grants-for-agriculture-mega

Application due: 4:00pm on May 7, 2019 in the MDAR Amherst office at 101 University Drive, Suite C4, Amherst, MA 01002.

For more information contact Deanna Levanti at 339-235-0859 or beginningfarmercoordinator@gmail.com.

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Apiary Updates



BEE AWARE – Survey Date Extended to May 31st!

[Complete the MA Honey Bee Health Survey!](#) Given the HUGE interest in the survey this year combined with delayed Spring weather, we have extended the date for submissions to May 31, 2019. This survey serves as a tool for Massachusetts honey beekeepers to share data on colony health for the current bee season: April 2018 - May 2019. Participation in this [survey](#) is voluntary. After the completion, participants will be mailed a FREE – [Bee Aware](#) sign at the mailing address they provide. Note, that given higher than expected response rate to the survey this year, new signs had to be ordered and will be sent to

participants after they come in on July 1, 2019.

2019 Honey Bee Education Days at the State Apiaries

Join State the MDAR Apiary Program Bee Team to get a tour of live working honey bee colonies, hands-on demonstrations of hive management techniques, and exposure to the latest knowledge on how to best sustain healthy honey bee colonies. [These events](#) are free and open to the public, but focus on beekeepers. Registration is not necessary to attend. Participants must bring protective clothing as it will not be provided and is required to enter an apiary. The same program will be offered from 10am-noon on each date at both apiary locations, unless specified otherwise (UMass Agricultural Learning Center Farm, 911 North Pleasant St., Amherst, and at the Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical High School 565 Maples St., Hathorne). Alternate dates will be provided in the event of inclement weather. For more information visit: www.mass.gov/service-details/mdar-state-apiaries-Education-Day-Flyer.

Check Out [MAPL – Massachusetts Apiary and Pesticide Locator](#)

Visit the new [interactive map](#) that was created to facilitate real time communication between beekeepers and pesticide applicators. Locate honey bee colonies and pesticide applications near you by voluntarily registering as either a Honey Beekeeper or Pesticide Applicator. Participation in the map is voluntary and the information shared is not verified.

Voluntarily Register Your Apiary

The Apiary Registration Process is easier than ever with the online form: www.mass.gov/forms/apiary-and-colony-registration-form. Please consider taking a quick second to register your apiary today so that the MDAR Apiary Program Bee Team can better inform beekeepers when investigating apiaries in the vicinity of those discovered to have infectious disease(s)!

It's Pesticide License Renewal Time

Please be reminded that your Massachusetts Pesticide Licenses expires each calendar year. The MDAR is now using a new publicly accessible online system known as the ePLACE Portal and will NOT be sending the usual renewal via U.S. Mail. Please renew your license online using this new system. You should have received an email reminder last October 2018 asking you to renew your pesticide license. If you have not done so, please visit the EEA ePLACE Portal, log into your account and complete your renewal. If you forgot your password or security questions or otherwise need help logging into your account, please contact the ePLACE Help Desk at 844-733-7522. If you have other questions or issues about renewing your pesticide license, please contact Steve Kenyon at 617-626-1784 or steve.kenyon2@mass.gov.

EEA ePLACE Portal - <https://permitting.state.ma.us/citizenaccess/>

MassGrown Marketing Opportunities to Think About this Spring



Spring is here and so is the rain. A rainy day is a good time to work on marketing ideas and update your farm information.

1) Are you already listed on the [Massgrown map](#)? Please send edits to Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov. If you are not currently mapped, please fill out our [marketing survey](#). Be sure to list only crops and products you grow and produce. If you only market crops and products thru

wholesale channels, please fill out our [survey](#) as well. We are often asked for specific lists of farms, and who does what. Be sure you are included!

We have made some updates to the [MassGrown map](#). It is mobile-friendly and designed to show farms, farmers markets, and fairs near you. Our analytic reports show that more than 50% of our users visit using their cell phone. This map continues to be our top resource for people looking for farms. Keep in mind, this map is only for farm locations open to the public.

2) Looking for free farm publicity? Send us your best farm photos, by entering our Annual Photo Contest. In collaboration w/Mass. Ag in the Classroom, we are starting to think about the 2020 [Massachusetts Agriculture Calendar](#). [Rules and guidelines here](#). Be sure to send out contest link to your friends, family, and customers!

3) Host events on the farm? Be sure to get them listed on our Massgrown [Culinary and Ag Events Calendar](#). One of our top viewed webpage! Send details to Katie Rozenas at Katelyn.Rozenas@mass.gov.

2019 Single Day Applications Now Available for Massachusetts Building at The Big E

In 2019, the Massachusetts Building will be celebrating its 100th anniversary. MDAR invites Massachusetts businesses and organizations to apply for the opportunity to exhibit during Military Day (9/13), Massachusetts Day (9/19), and Harvest New England Day (9/27) at The Big E, September 13 – September 29, 2019. The mission of the Massachusetts State Exposition Building is to showcase Massachusetts agriculture, culture, commerce and tourism through informational, educational, promotional and retail exhibits. It is an opportunity to showcase and sell to over a million attendees that come through the Massachusetts Building.

Interested applicants are encouraged to review the single day exhibitor guidelines and applications located on the MDAR website at www.mass.gov/massachusetts-state-exposition-building-0.

Applications deadlines are: Massachusetts Day - June 14, 2019, Military and Harvest New England Days - July 15, 2019

For more information, please contact Bonita Oehlke (Harvest New England Day) at Bonita.Oehlke@mass.gov, 617-626-1753, or Phu Mai (Military & Massachusetts Day) at Phu.Mai@mass.gov, 617-626-1746.

Rainfall Totals Posted on MDAR Weather Website

MDAR will now be posting a statewide map with weekly rainfall totals. It was started as a tool for mosquito control board purposes, but we thought farms and others might be interested to see which parts of the state might be getting more or less each week throughout the year.

Weekly maps will be posted here, www.mass.gov/service-details/mdar-weather-resources, under section “**Agri-Weather Resources and Tools.**”

Soon, monthly departure from normal precipitation maps will be posted there as well. Questions, contact Dake.Henderson@mass.gov.

Massachusetts Farm to School News

The Massachusetts Farm to School Institute Application Deadline Extended

The Massachusetts Farm to School Institute is a year-long professional learning opportunity for school (or school district) teams from across Massachusetts. The Institute will kick-off with a Fall Retreat held at Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, October 18-19, 2019.

Benefits of participation include:

- Farm to School Program Development
- Opportunity to apply for Farm to School grant funding
- School-Year Technical Assistance
- Networking
- Teacher & Nutrition Staff Professional Development

Spaces are limited. To be considered, please submit an application by April 30, 2019. Please [click here](#) to read more about the Institute and to submit an application. The MA FTS Institute is presented with generous support from the Henry P. Kendall Foundation. Questions, contact [Massachusetts Farm to School](http://MassachusettsFarmtoSchool.org), 413-253-3844, info@massfarmtoschool.org.

Massachusetts Farm to School Network Stakeholder Gathering

Please join us for a full day gathering to contribute to a shared vision for the MA farm to school movement, identify priority goals for the next year of work together, learn more about the [Network](#), and share with us how a MA farm to school professional network can best serve you.

Friday, May 10, 2019 : 9:00 - 2:30 pm - Greendale People's Church, 25 Francis Street, Worcester, MA -- Meeting Details ([View the Agenda](#))

The Stakeholder Gathering will bring together farmers/producers, educators, food service professionals, wellness & public health professionals, community organizers, policy makers, parent advocates and more. All are welcome. The event is free and open to the public. For planning purposes please register to reserve your spot. Lunch & snacks will be provided. Your unique perspective will be incredibly valuable. Hope to see you there!

[Register Here.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

April 27 - 2019 MA Open Space Conference - Mt. Wachusett Community College. 4th state-wide gathering for municipal open space committees, volunteers, and others involved in the development and implementation of community-based conservation planning and projects. Event is intended to be a casual opportunity for those interested in protecting open space to gain practical skills, share experiences, build partnerships, and return home with an increased capacity to facilitate successful land conservation projects be it through planning, outreach, or stewardship. [More here.](#)

April 27 - Leicester Agricultural Commission Composting Workshop - 1:30 pm - Little Bit Farm, 26 Charles Street, Leicester. Free of charge; light refreshments to be provided. Speakers: Bruce Provencher, Owner of Little Bit Farm, Sean Bowen, MDAR Agricultural Compost Coordinator. For more info., contact Dianna Provencher at Littlebitfarm2004@charter.net.

April 28 - "Practical No-Till" - Laughing Dog Farm, Gill, 10 am-1:00 pm. How does the concept of "no-till" translate practically speaking for the backyard gardener, foody or landscape/horticulture fan? Workshop offers an intensive introduction to the idea and practice of growing food, etc, without annual plowing, turning or "tilling" of the soil. [More here.](#)

April 28 - Tour and Forage Walk - 5 - 7:00 pm. Fletcher Farm, Southampton. Specialists will discuss wet pasture challenges, plant identification, manure storage and handling, and many other topics. [Click here to register.](#)

April 29 - Nutritional Management of Pasture Raised Animals - 8:30 am - 1:00 pm, Nutritional management of pasture raised animals Topics: Pasturing versus confinement systems, nutritional challenges of raising animals on pasture, multi species grazing, forage quality. Register for any or all of the workshops at <https://goo.gl/forms/sFlqmM2oxieDkTdg2> or by emailing jean.king@uconn.edu.

May 2 - Worker Protection Standard Train-the-Trainer - UMass Cranberry Station, E. Wareham, 8am-12:30pm. All farmworkers must be trained under the [EPA Worker Protection Standard \(WPS\)](#) if a farm uses any pesticides, including, those approved for organic production and other general use pesticides. The agricultural worker employer is responsible for complying with all components of WPS including the training of farmworkers. [Details here.](#)

May 8 - Notice of Public Hearing - 5:30 – 7:30 pm. John W. Olver Transit Center, 1st floor, 12 Olive Street, Greenfield. Notice is hereby given that MDAR, under its authority pursuant to M.G.L. c. 184, §§ 31 through 33; M.G.L. c. 20, §§ 23 through 26; M.G.L. c. 61A, §§ 1 through 5 and M.G.L. c. 40A, § 3 and in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, will hold two public hearings on amendment of 330 CMR 22.00. The Dept. is proposing changes to address the transfer and sale of a parcel protected by an APR. The revised regulations will provide APR landowners with a clearer understanding of their requirements at the time of transfer, the Dept.'s process for review and their rights to withdraw and appeal the Dept.'s decision. Testimony may be presented orally or in writing at the hearing. Written testimonies or comments will be accepted until 5:00 P.M. on Friday, May 10, 2019 by email to dorothy.du@mass.gov. Proposed regulation and a redline comparison version are here: [330 CMR 22:00 Proposed Regulations](#), [330 CMR 22:00 Redline](#), or may be obtained by calling Dorothy Du at 617-626-1741. For special accommodations for this event or to obtain this information in an alternative format, you may contact the ADA coordinator at 617-626-1710.

May 9 - Notice of Public Hearing - 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Board of Selectmen’s Meeting Room, 100 Maple Ave, Richard D Carney Municipal Office Building, Shrewsbury, MA. Parking is available on-site. Details above in May 8th listing.

May 11 – Honey Bee Education Day at State Apiaries - Spring Management Part 2 - Danvers and Amherst. Hands-on demonstrations of hive management techniques, and exposure to the latest knowledge on how to best sustain healthy honey bee colonies. [Details here.](#) Complete list of 2019 dates [here.](#)

May 18 – Honey Bee Education Days at State Apiary - Queen Workshop I - Amherst only. Hands-on demonstrations of hive management techniques, and exposure to the latest knowledge on how to best sustain healthy honey bee colonies. [Details here.](#) Complete list of 2019 dates [here.](#)

May 17 - MA Food Policy Council Meeting - 9:30 am - 12:30 pm. MassWildlife Field Headquarters, Rm 108, Westborough. [Updates here.](#)

May 22 - Webinar - How to Use “The Farmer’s Office” Templates - 3 pm. If you purchased **The Farmer’s Office**, then you probably already downloaded the zip file with all the templates. Now what? While these templates can be a great resource to get you started with managing your farm financials, they can also be overwhelming if you’re not used to these kinds of tools. In this webinar, we will review the following templates: Labor; Depreciation, Balance Sheet, Debt Service. [Register here.](#)

May 23 - Know the Soil, Know the Land 2019 Massachusetts Soils Conference - 8:30 am - 4:00 pm, NORCO Sportsman's Club, Princeton. This one-day conference will focus on investigating soils across a landscape in the field as well as soil information resources available through the USDA Soil Survey. Updates on recent changes to the data and help you understand how to use it. The day will include classroom workshops and field demonstrations. Who should attend? Natural resource management and environmental protection professionals; agricultural commission and conservation commission members; farmers and other land owners and managers can all benefit from this worthwhile event. [Details here.](#)

May 25 – Honey Bee Education Day at State Apiary - Queen Workshop II - Amherst only. Hands-on demonstrations of hive management techniques, and exposure to the latest knowledge on how to best sustain healthy honey bee colonies. [Details here.](#) Complete list of 2019 dates [here.](#)

May 25 - No-Till For Life Workshop – 1 – 4 pm. Seeds of Solidarity founder and farmer Ricky teaches regenerative, soil building techniques for low maintenance, highly productive gardens. Treating the soil as sacred results in nourishing food, mitigates impacts of climate change, and inspires a deeper relationship with that which sustains life. [More here.](#) Email solidarity@seedsofsolidarity.org to register.

May 31 - SBN's 30th Annual Conference: Building a Local, Green, & Fair Economy Now! – 8 am - 2:30 pm, Natixis Investment Management, 888 Boylston Street. Opportunity to join SBN and like-minded allies in a collaborative effort to make practical and positive changes in our community and local economy. Believe that all of us are stronger through partnerships and collaborations. Includes keynote speakers, breakout sessions, ignite- five minute presentations, networking, catered lunch (as part of the cost of the Conference), and a tour of one of the greenest buildings in Massachusetts. [More here.](#)

Updates made here: [MDAR Events Calendar.](#)

USDA Announces \$23 Million in Grants Available to Local and Regional Food Systems

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced \$23 million in competitive grant funding to support the development and expansion of local and regional food markets, enterprises and producer-to-consumer marketing.

The Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP), authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill under the Local Agriculture Marketing Program (LAMP), covers both the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) and Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP). Applications for both FMPP and LFPP must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on June 18, 2019.

FMPP funds projects that develop, coordinate and expand direct producer-to-consumer markets to help increase access to and availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products. FMPP offers two types of projects: Capacity Building and Community Development Training and Technical Assistance. Both have a three-year performance period. Funding ranges from \$50,000 to \$500,000.

[Full release here.](#)

USDA Announces Sign-up Period for Updated Conservation Stewardship Program

USDA has recently announced that the next deadline for [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#) applications to be considered for funding in fiscal year 2019 is May 10, 2019. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) plans to invest up to \$700 million nationwide for new enrollments and contract extensions in fiscal year 2019.

"CSP continues to be a very effective tool for private landowners working to achieve their conservation and management goals," said Christine Clarke, NRCS Massachusetts State Conservationist. "It is the largest conservation program in the United States with more than 70 million acres of productive agricultural and forest land enrolled."

While applications are accepted throughout the year, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by May 10, 2019, to ensure their applications are considered for 2019 funding.

[Full release here.](#)

Classified

- [Farmers Markets Seeking Vendors](#) - Check back periodically for updates to this list. If you have updates, please send to David.Webber@mass.gov.
- **Farm for Sale in West Barnstable.** Aquaculture/ Hydroponic. For details, contact Ed@eandtfarmsinc.com

- **Agricultural Excavation – Grading Services** - Provide earth moving, drainage, land/pasture reclamation, greenhouse preparation, and rock raking services. Includes but not limited to orchards/equine facilities/cranberry bogs/nurseries. Chris Merrill Excavating merrilltrucks@comcast.net, 978-897-9977.

About the *Farm & Market Report*

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Next issue to be published in June. Please send news, events, or classified information by June 12th to Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov. To unsubscribe, or change your email address, contact Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov or call 617-626-1759.

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