
April/May Farm & Market Report

4/14/22

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COMMISSIONER'S COLUMN



Greetings, Mass. Agriculture and all its friends,

Late March/early April is a time of tremendous activity in MA Agriculture. Similarly, it's a very busy time for MDAR, so let's get to it!

I hate to start with a couple worrisome topics, but circumstances dictate that I do.

Since last time, **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza** has been discovered in multiple states in both wild birds, and in commercial and backyard flocks. There have been discoveries in MA in wild birds and in a backyard flock.

This is an extremely dangerous threat to all poultry operations in MA regardless of size. Everyone raising poultry should be aware of the situation and should be actively practicing heightened biosecurity measures. MDAR works very closely with USDA on response measures. Please review [Avian Influenza | Mass.gov](#) and [USDA APHIS | Avian Influenza](#) for additional details.

On April 8th MDAR took necessary action to further protect our poultry and issued an [Order](#) requiring the cancelation or postponement of all competitions, exhibitions, shows, swaps or other in-person events encouraging the gathering or commingling of domestic fowl or poultry in Massachusetts until further notice.

I have mentioned in the past that we anticipated the arrival of the invasive pest known as **Spotted Lanternfly** (SLF) in MA. First detected in the US in PA in 2014, it's been spreading northward since then, and in late 2021/early 2022 two MA populations were identified, both in Central MA.

Though its preferred host is yet another invasive, the Tree-of-Heaven, SLF feeds on the sap of several agricultural crops, including grapes, hops, some fruit trees, and some nursery ornamentals. SLF also can cause a nuisance in late summer through production of sticky honeydew that coats surfaces and promotes fungal growth.

MDAR needs your help to identify populations to better attempt to slow the spread. Please review [Spotted Lanternfly | Mass.gov](#) to learn how to identify and report this pest.

Continuing on the topic of insects that adversely affect us, the [Mosquito Control for the Twenty-First Century Task Force](#) was created pursuant to Chapter 120 of the Acts of 2020. The task force concluded its work on March 31, 2022, upon filing of its recommendations with the Legislature. The recommendations may be reviewed through the link above.

As one of the Task Force's twenty-three members, I can report that there was a very diverse membership which expressed an extremely wide range of ideas about how mosquito control in MA should be conducted in the future. Subcommittees refined concepts and created draft recommendations which were voted on by the entire body.

As chair of the [State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board](#), the body that oversees those activities, I want to take a moment to recognize the consistently excellent work of the eleven regional mosquito control programs, all of which conduct their business effectively and efficiently, and within their existing legislative frameworks.

Since last time, it was [announced](#) that I was appointed by US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to the newly established twelve-member **Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Federal Advisory Committee** (UAIP-FAC). I look forward to working with my fellow members from throughout the US to examine these rapidly growing components of US Ag and making recommendations to Secretary Vilsack. It's also an opportunity to provide a national showcase for one of the best (if not the best) state [Urban Ag programs](#) in the nation.

There seems to have been a bit of confusion about this appointment that I'd like to try to clear. It's a new task, but not a new job. I'm on a USDA advisory committee, but I (very, very happily) remain at MDAR!

Deputy Commissioner Ashley Randle and I attended as many county Farm Bureau spring legislative events as we could: we met with Berkshire, Essex, Tri County (Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire), Plymouth and Bristol counties at both virtual and in person events. These events remain very informative to the legislators attending and to MDAR as well as we get a chance to better understand Farm Bureau priorities.

Once we turn the calendar to March, we start getting out into the field after three months mostly in the office (more accurately our son Ben's old bedroom for the last two years). I feel like the cow that's been finally let out of the barn after a long winter!

We attended several Maple events. We kicked off the season March 4th at Grand Maple Farms in New Braintree where EEA Undersecretary for Environmental Policy and Climate Resilience Beth Card presented Governor Baker's proclamation declaring March as [MA Maple Month](#) to farm owners Paul and Justin Schur. Beth also drilled the ceremonial first taphole, and the sap ran!

MA Maple Producers Association presented me with my very own sap bucket which I honestly shall treasure. Thank you, MMPA! It's nice and clean now, and is sitting at our Southborough office, but next year, well, there's this sugar maple off our driveway...

Just before Maple Weekend we toured Chestnut Hill Farm, Conway; Winston's Sugar House, Buckland; and Davenport Maple Farm, Shelburne, where we also had a delicious brunch. Later in the month we joined Congressman Jim McGovern and toured North Hadley Sugar Shack (this time a delicious breakfast); Brookledge Sugarhouse, Whately; and Boyden Bros. Maple, Conway.



We also snuck in an MDAR only "Learn about Maple" session at Hollis Hills Farm in Fitchburg (what do you know, another delicious breakfast!), and as a "civilian", Debbie and I took two couples to their first ever sugarhouse experience.

Also in March, I represented MDAR at the Joint Committee on Ways and Means annual budget hearing. MDAR has always received very fair consideration in the budget process during my tenure and we are grateful to the Administration and the General Court for their support.

Mid-month Ashley, MDAR's Market Development and Food System Planning Coordinator Bonita Oehlke and I attended the Seafood Expo North America/Seafood Processing North America conference at the Boston Convention Center. Commonly referred to as "The Boston Seafood Show", it is the largest event of its type in North America.

No one was sure just what would happen relative to a public event in the present world. I'm happy to report the event was well attended by exhibitors and attendees. Exhibitors were almost giddy that hall was very active, and there were many serious business discussions.

As I mentioned last time, domestically MDAR's seafood responsibilities are in aquaculture, but internationally, MDAR promotes export of all MA seafood. Fun fact: New Bedford is the #1 Fishing port in the US and has been for many years. As a result, MDAR has a lot of seafood export to support!

In late March, Ashley and I attended the Harold Grinspoon Foundation's [Local Farmer Awards](#) celebration at the beautiful Northampton train station. Funded by Harold Grinspoon along with several organizations and individuals, over seven years the program has awarded over two hundred Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire County farms almost a million dollars in grants to improve equipment and infrastructure. This is a tremendous private program and I encourage farmers in those four counties to learn about the program if you aren't aware of it.

Our most recent field trip was to [MA Association of Dairy Farmers](#) combined Annual Meeting with the [MA Dairy Promotion Board](#) at the Stone Cow Brewery at the Carter-Stevens Farm in Barre. Back in 2020, this was

the very last public event we attended before the pandemic. Like all ag sectors, there are always challenges and concerns in dairy, but all were pleased to hear that the price per hundredweight paid to farmers has improved over recent years

As observed at several recent public gatherings, there were a lot of people just very happy to be able to gather again (though it seems we still need to employ some caution.)

So, I need to get this to Rick, and I didn't even get to another topic I want to cover. I'll just keep that in my pocket for next time.

As the season starts to move into the spring craziness (many are already there), I want to reflect on a recent activity. I started some pepper seeds, and like a little kid, everyday I checked to see if anything popped. After about five days, one plant emerged, and a couple days later they all poked their heads out of the soil. There's just such wonder and beauty and hope to that process. I'm sure the animal ag people feel the same with their herds and flocks, but I'm a plant guy. Sometimes you just have to take a moment and think about what agriculture is at its essence, and how lucky so many are to be truly connected to that process.

Of course, after one takes that philosophical moment, one must get back to making a living!

Best wishes for the best season ever, everyone,



John Lebeaux

FOREFRONT

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Update

MDAR's Division of Animal Health Temporarily Halts Poultry Shows and Exhibitions Due to Increased HPAI Risk

April 8, 2022 - MDAR issued [Animal Health Order 958-AHO-22](#) to order the cancelation or postponement of all competitions, exhibitions, shows, swaps or other in-person events encouraging the gathering or commingling of domestic fowl or poultry in Massachusetts until further notice.

Wild water birds may be infected with HPAI without looking sick. Once exposed domestic poultry including chickens, turkeys, pheasants, and guinea fowl rapidly get sick or die suddenly. Domestic birds are exposed to HPAI through contact with infected birds, their droppings, or feathers. Pastures, yards, ponds, and pathways become contaminated, and your equipment, clothing and footwear, and vehicle tires can inadvertently move contaminated material into contact with your birds.

Once HPAI is detected in a domestic flock (backyard or commercial), state and federal emergency actions to contain the disease place movement restrictions on all poultry and poultry products nearby. This may have a significant business and financial impact on those neighboring flocks and businesses.

Protect your flock, and your neighbors' flocks! Prevent the introduction of HPAI through good biosecurity procedures. Eliminate contact between wild birds and your flock. Use a disinfectant foot bath at the entrance to your poultry area. Wear dedicated clothes and shoes when tending to your flock. Avoid contact with other domestic or wild birds, do not allow any visitors to your flock, and do not share equipment with other flocks. If you have any questions, please call 617-626-1795.

Visit [MDAR's Poultry Page](#) for biosecurity resources available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, and Arabic.

Report sick or dead birds:

- Domestic Birds: 617-626-1795 or online - [Poultry Disease Reporting Form](#)
- Wild Birds: 508-389-6300

Resources:

1. [Biosecurity: Defend the Flock- USDA](#)
2. [Recent HPAI Detections: USDA](#)
3. [USDA HPAI Response Policy](#)

Notice To Nursery and Landscape Industry Regarding Spotted Lanternfly

Last year, MDAR detected populations of the invasive pest known as spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) in multiple locations throughout the state. Since this is the time of year that nurseries are receiving shipments of stock for the spring planting season, we are sending this notice to remind growers and landscapers to inspect any plant material coming from states where SLF has been found, to ensure it does not harbor SLF egg masses, and to report any finds to MDAR. This reminder is especially important as MDAR has recently received several reports that nursery stock from SLF-infested areas was sent to Massachusetts growers.

Spotted lanternfly is a sap-feeding insect that has caused significant impacts to vineyards, orchards, and other agricultural commodities in states where it has become established. SLF not only harms grapevines, maples, hops, blueberries, and over 100 other host plants, but has the potential to negatively impact any outdoor business through the swarming behavior that occurs when adults are looking to mate. MDAR has continued to monitor high-risk areas in the state, but needs all green industry representatives to be on the lookout for this pest.

Because SLF egg masses are flat and gray in color, they are difficult to detect, especially on tree bark. For examples, please see this [Pest ID Tool](#). If you find an egg mass or any other life stage of SLF, please report it to MDAR immediately [here](#). You can also use that link to find our [Best Management Practices for Nurseries and Landscapers](#) and other educational materials, including a [map](#) of where this pest has been found in Massachusetts and [elsewhere in the USA](#).

MDAR Seeks Orchards and Vineyards to Participate in Annual Invasive Pest Trapping Survey

MDAR is seeking orchards and vineyards to participate in this year's annual Invasive Pest Trapping Survey. This early detection survey is split into 2 parts: Orchard Commodity Survey and Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) Visual

Survey. For 2022, MDAR is especially interested in partnering with growers who have sweet cherry or other cherry varieties. The orchard survey involves site visits from May through October, with traps inspected by MDAR technicians every two weeks. The spotted lanternfly survey involves technicians visually inspecting perimeter trees and host stock for signs of SLF. Since SLF is a problematic pest of both grapes and hops, we are seeking to partner with as many vineyards or hops growers as possible.

If you are interested in participating in either of these surveys, please contact Astra Perkins at Astra.Perkins@mass.gov, or call 617-512-0738.

Energy News

Open Application Period for MDAR Grants

MDAR is now accepting applications from agricultural operations who wish to participate in the Department's Climate Smart Agricultural Program which includes the Agricultural Energy Grant Program. 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, and adopt renewable energy technologies. If interested in applying, applications must be submitted with any supporting documentation by the program's deadline.

Climate Smart Agriculture Program

The [Climate Smart Agriculture Program](#) (CSAP) links MDAR's water, energy and climate grants together into one application. This includes the Agricultural Climate Resiliency & Efficiencies (ACRE) Program, the Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP), and the Agricultural Energy Grant Program (ENER). This program continues the goals of the three individual grants by implementing projects that help the agricultural sector adapt to climate change, mitigate climate change, reducing or preventing impacts to natural resources that may result from agricultural practices, and that improve energy efficiency and facilitate adoption of alternative clean energy technologies

The CSAP grant is broken into two sections. Section I: Environment is for environmental projects such as soil health, water use efficiency, or other projects working towards reducing or limiting greenhouse gas emissions. Section II: Energy is Ag-Energy projects to improve energy efficiency or to facilitate clean energy adoption.

Applicants can apply to either or both sections.

Participants selected for funding under either section are provided with reimbursement grants for 80% of total project costs up to \$50,000.

[COMMBUYS - Bid Solicitation](#) - Applications due: 4:00PM on Friday, June 10, 2022

For more information contact:

- Section I: Environment - Laura Maul, 617-626-1739, Laura.Maul@mass.gov
- Section II: Energy - Gerry Palano, 617-626-1706, Gerald.Palano@mass.gov

MDAR's MA Farm Energy Program (MFEP) - Energy Audits - Technical Assistance – Be Prepared For the Upcoming Grant Programs

Remember, MDAR's [Farm Energy Program](#) has funds to help farms cover audits, energy efficient projects, and select renewable energy projects. We are still providing these services remotely.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Now is the time to have a technical assessment completed for any energy project you are considering in preparation for upcoming energy grants! You will need a technical assessment to file an energy grant application whether with MDAR or USDA. Start planning now. If you wait too long you may not be able to have one scheduled in time! Remember our MFEP pays 75% of the technical assessment, first come, first served. Our MFEP is providing tele-assessments during this trying time.

Contact MFEP now for more information through the Center for EcoTechnology (CET), our partner carrying out the MFEP: 413-727-3090, info@massfarmenergy.com, or visit www.massfarmenergy.com, submit a *Request Form*, and then you will be contacted.

Revised Dual Use Solar (ASTGU) Guidelines Finalized and Posted

The Department of Energy Resources (DOER) has posted a finalized, revised set of Guidelines for the SMART Program's Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Unit (ASTGU) option, also known as Dual Use Solar. Noted revisions include:

- Sets a program goal of 80MW AC capacity for Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Units (ASTGU)
- Clarifies requirements for compatible sunlight
- Sets the maximum AC rated capacity to 5 MW
- Sets a DC to AC capacity ratio of 2:1 and caps projects to 7.5MW DC
- Establishes requirements on newly created farmland including:
 - Must be in agricultural production prior to applying
 - Defining and allowing conversion of fallow farmland for ASTGU
 - Prohibiting the clearing or conversion of forest land
- Establishes requirements for Agricultural Plans including:
 - Production requirements for hay and grazing of animals
- Enabling transition to new commodities
- Establishes a waiver process if anticipated yields are decreased
- Clarifies requirements for failure to submit annual reports
- Sets an effective date of May 15, 2022 for the guidelines on all initial requests for pre-determination

Please visit [SMART Guideline Regarding the Definition of ASTGU | Mass.gov](#) for more information, including a link to the Guidelines and a history of the Guidelines development.

Apiary Program

Do You Have a Dead-Out or Unexpected Hive Death? Get an Inspection: The Apiary Program Team offers health inspections and sampling if warranted of hives through the Winter months. To schedule an inspection for these hives, please submit the [electronic form](#).

Submit a Sample: Request FREE kits from MDAR and submit samples from your own hives. These FREE kits are easy to use by following the provided instructions and materials. Samples are analyzed and results provided directly to the beekeeper from the [USDA-ARS Bee Research Laboratory](#) in Beltsville, MD within a few weeks

after receipt. There is no fee to process samples so you only need to pay for postage to mail each kit. These kits are great to use on hives that die during winter and throughout the season to aid in troubleshooting health issues.

Note that each kit contains materials to sample 1 hive so request multiple kits if your apiary contains multiple hives. To request simply send your name, mailing address and quantity requested via email to bees@mass.gov with the subject line "Bee Kits".

To find out more about the lab and sample processing visit their [website](#). Apiary [Spring Newsletter](#).

Three new fliers and schedules updated:

- **2022 Honey Bee Education Days at State Apiaries** – In person only - [Flyer here](#).
- **2022 New England Honey Bee Update, Lunch and Learn Series** - Virtual only - [Flyer here](#).

[Complete details here.](#)

Voluntarily Register Your Apiary Now - Almost 1000 beekeepers have voluntarily registered their apiaries with MDAR since April, 2017 by using the [new online form](#). Please consider taking a moment to register your apiary today so that we can best communicate with beekeepers and investigate honey bee health issues in your area.

Note the NEW Apiary Program Message Line phone number: 508-281-6784. This will replace the existing message line number: 617-626-1801. [Apiary Program here](#). Questions, send to bees@mass.gov.

The Buzz About Honeybee Keeping on Martha's Vineyard – [May 5th](#)!

APR Updates

APR Program Raises Spending Cap for Acquiring Farmland Restrictions

The Agricultural Lands Preservation Committee (ALPC) voted to raise the spending cap for purchasing an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) from \$10,000 to \$17,000 per acre at its October 27, 2021 meeting. Committee members also voted to raise the over the cap maximum from \$20,000 to \$34,000 per acre. This policy is found on the APR Program's website at: [Agricultural Preservation Restriction \(APR\) Program | Mass.gov](#).

Since 1983 the ALPC has had a policy to limit how much the APR Program offers towards APR purchases. The limit has always been \$10,000 per acre or the appraised value, whichever is less. The intent of the cap has been to stretch APR dollars and encourage local match funding. In 2003, the ALPC changed its policy to allow for going over the cap to as high as \$20,000 per acre when a property represented a critical agricultural resource for the Commonwealth.

The APR Program recognized that those values were no longer reflective of current market values and that in some areas of the state it has become a barrier and disincentive to landowners enrolling in the program. Based on an analysis of appraised APR values, the APR Program made a recommendation to the ALPC for the following change:

- 1) Raise the cap from \$10,000 to \$17,000 per acre and the over the cap maximum from \$20,000 to \$34,000 per acre.
- 2) Review the “APR Cap Policy” a minimum of every 3 years.

The ALPC approved this recommended change, which went in effect for new APR applications and for those APR projects which receive offers on or after January 1, 2022.

APR Program Reduces Local Match Funding Requirements

The APR Program has reduced its local match requirement from 20% down to 10% for farmland protection projects with the APR program.

A requirement that a local funding source contributes a minimum percent towards an APR purchase was initiated in 1988. At that time Department staff and the Agricultural Lands Preservation Committee (ALPC) encouraged Municipalities to contribute funding towards APR purchases to stretch limited state funding and demonstrate local support for farmland protection and farm economies. Match funding sources could include any combination of funds or in-kind services from a municipality, land trust, another non-government partner, or a landowner donation.

Under the new policy APR projects with an appraised restriction value at the \$17,000 per acre program spending cap or less will require a minimum local match of 10% with the exception that this 10% requirement can be reduced to 5% for communities that have implemented the principal of a Right to Farm bylaw.

For projects eligible to go over the spending cap of \$17,000 per acre, there is a fixed minimum local match of 10%. The revisions to the Local Match Funds policy went into effect for new APR applications and for those APR projects which receive offers on or after January 1, 2022.

The APR Program’s “APR Local Matching Funds Policy”, spending cap policy, and other policies and guidelines can be found [here](#).

APR Program Applications Due June 30, 2022

The APR program protects agricultural land for farming and from development. It’s a voluntary program for landowners that helps pay farmland owners the difference between the fair market value and the fair market agricultural land value of their farms. In exchange, landowners grant a permanent deed restriction to the Commonwealth that preserves the farmland. The landowner keeps ownership of the land and can pass it down to future generations or sell it to another farmer. To date the program has protected over 930 farms.

While applications are accepted year round, the deadline to be considered for the next funding cycle is June 30, 2022. Enrolling your land into APR is a significant decision and process that takes careful thought, planning and time. Most enrollments can take 1.5 years or more to complete so **you are highly encouraged to start the planning and application process as early as possible.**

If you would like to protect your farmland or learn more about the APR program, reach out to the APR staff contacts below and read the [APR Program Guide](#) and [APR Resource Guide](#) to learn about APR eligibility, the application process, the financials, and the APR program requirements. Applications and additional information can be found [here](#).

[APR Staff Contacts:](#)

- Ron Hall, APR Program Coordinator, Hampshire County Ronald.Hall@mass.gov, 413-726-2002
- Barbara Hopson, Berkshire and Hampden Counties Barbara.Hopston@mass.gov, 413-726-2003
- Michele Padula, Worcester and Franklin Counties, Michele.Padula@mass.gov, 617-921-0051
- Ashley Davies, Eastern MA, Ashley.Davies@mass.gov, 617-645-6772

The Markets Corner

Application Period Open for Agricultural Fair Economic Recovery Grant Program

MDAR is accepting applications from Massachusetts nonprofit agricultural fair organizations with 501(c) status that meet the definition of a fair as set forth in this RFR. Agricultural Fair Economic Recovery Grant Program is funded at \$4,000,000 through the [American Rescue Plan](#) (ARPA). MDAR Grant Program FY22- The Agricultural Fair Economic Recovery Grant Program, AGERGP, funded by the Massachusetts Legislature is to provide economic recovery related to the 2019 novel coronavirus pandemic for Massachusetts Fairs.

For complete information on criteria and RFR application, visit COMMBUYS - [Bid Solicitation: BD-22-1002-1003-001-73241](#). Responses must be received by 4:00pm on Friday, May 6, 2022. Questions, contact Fran Pearson at Frances.Pearson@mass.gov, 617-655-3511.

The MassGrown Map

Flower Growers and Nurseries – Are you listed on the [MassGrown map](#)? Be sure your website and description are up to date. If you have updates or edits, please send to Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov. If you are not on the map and want to be included, please fill out our easy [two page survey \(.doc\)](#).



Posters and price cards available [here](#).



Hosting special events or music this

Spring and Summer at your farm? Send web link or details to Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov, and we'll add to our [Culinary and Events Calendar](#).

The MassGrown Exchange - Connecting farms, flower growers, fisheries, food suppliers and buyers.

The Exchange includes many types of listings: Recent ones include [Spinach](#) by Red Fire Farm, [Noodles by Nature](#) by Joe Czajkowski Farm, Wise Mouth [Looking for Farm Partner](#), as well as Franklin County CDC posting a job position: [MA Agriculture Innovation Center Director](#). All current products and services can be found and [here](#).

CSA Farms looking to add crops or products to your offerings for 2022? Do a [Search](#), or [Register](#) and add a "Looking For" Listing.



Feel free to [register](#) and post today! Quick and easy registration. Even if you have nothing to post today, register and create “Alerts” for yourself. **Buyers** - Be notified automatically for crops or products of interest are posted. Over 370 businesses have registered to date.

Last week MDAR’s Rebecca Davidson, Bonita Oehlke and Rick LeBlanc visited the [NE Food Show](#) at the Boston Convention Center to speak with vendors, distributors, and buyers and to share information and updates on MDAR’s MassGrown Exchange.



Questions, or if you’d like one-on-one support with the MassGrown Exchange, contact Richard.LeBlanc@Mass.gov. You can also watch the [demonstration video](#) for a tour of the platform.

Register Now for The Massachusetts Farm & Sea to School Conference

During the week of May 16 – 21, [Mass. Farm to School](#) will hold the 6th statewide Massachusetts Farm & Sea to School Conference. The conference will feature both virtual sessions and in-person field trips. This year’s theme is Seeding the Future, and is centered on youth leadership and empowerment in farm to school. The workshops will touch upon a wide variety of farm to school themes, such as, food systems education, student voice in school meals, youth-led programming, school garden tours, and racial equity in the food system. All events will be free of charge. [Learn more & register here](#).

Certification Period for Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program is Now Open

Returning farmers do not need to complete a re-certification until spring 2023. [Farmstand operators](#) and [market managers](#) need to renew annually.

Market managers – please ensure that any new fruit and vegetable (or honey) producers are familiar with the [Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program](#). Interested farmers, market managers, and farmstand operators who are new to the program will need to attend a training and complete appropriate forms:

- 1) Attend an online webinar trainings offered during the following dates/times:
 - May 16th - 10:00am - 10:30am
 - June 1st - 6:00pm - 6:30 pm
 - June 15th - 12:00pm - 12:30pm

The webinar training will be on **Microsoft Teams** and participants will receive a confirmation and meeting invite once signed up.

- 2) Complete the agreement form:
 - a. For market managers, please complete [this form](#) only.
 - b. For all new farmers (selling at farmers’ markets and farmstands), please complete [this form](#).
 - c. For farmers also selling at farmstands, please complete [this form](#). *Farmers who will accept coupons at their farmstand must submit the Farmer Agreement **and** the Farmstand Agreement.*

If you would like to sign up for a training, or if you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Davidson at Rebecca.Davidson@Mass.gov or 857-202-7699.

Massachusetts State Exposition Building Seeking Applicants for Special Days During The Big E

MDAR invites Massachusetts organizations and businesses to apply for the opportunity to exhibit on Military Appreciation Day (September 16), Massachusetts Day (September 22), and Harvest New England Day (September 30), at the Massachusetts State Exposition Building at the Big E Fair.

The mission of the Massachusetts Building is to showcase agriculture, commerce, culture, and tourism through informational, educational, promotional, and retail exhibits. The Massachusetts Building is located at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield, Massachusetts.

The 2022 Big E Fair runs from September 16, 2022, through October 2, 2022. More information and all three applications are available [here](#).

MA Pavilion at the Summer Fancy Food Show, June 12 - 14, 2022

Everyone's ready to meet buyers and get back to business, live and in-person! Consider exhibiting in the Massachusetts Pavilion at the [Summer Fancy Food Show](#), June 12 - 14, New York City. USDA supported cost share can offset 50% of eligible costs including the booth space for products with at least 50% US grown content. For more information, contact Bonita.Oehlke@mass.gov.

Last Minute Tax Filers – Still Time to Help Animals!

MDAR is encouraging taxpayers to help animals in need by donating to the Massachusetts Animal Fund for homeless animal prevention and care on [Line 33f](#) of their Massachusetts income tax returns.

Since the Fund's inception in 2014, the Mass Animal Fund has spent over two million dollars to sterilize and vaccinate over 15,600 local animals in over 315 Massachusetts cities and towns. This year the Fund could really use your support, as many families across the Commonwealth are still struggling financially during the ongoing pandemic, making basic veterinary care for their pets unattainable. In 2021, one out of every 6 of the animals the Fund assisted needed urgent medical care for life-threatening conditions or other services to ensure they could stay with their families. Your donations will help us provide emergency care when needed, but will also improve access to basic care which significantly decreases the likelihood that emergencies will occur at all.

The Fund's Voucher Program turns donations into a resource that local animal control officers (ACO) utilize to get assistance for animals in their community. The Mass Animal Fund also provides free training opportunities and support to Massachusetts ACOs so they can effectively enforce animal control laws. Follow the Fund on [Facebook](#) and visit our [webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information about ending animal homelessness in the Commonwealth.



UPCOMING EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

April

- **April 16 - Nuestros Finqueros: Planting Considerations Workshop** - 10am - 1pm - Nuestras Raices welcomes socially disadvantaged beginner farmers to join us for the first *Nuestros Finqueros Training Enterprises* workshop of 2022! The workshop will demonstrate methods of soil improvement and weed control during Spring planting. Interested parties can find an [online application here](#), or visit 329 Main St, Holyoke to fill out an application in person. Encourage low-income individuals, at-risk youth, elders, veterans, and BIPOC to apply.
- **April 22 - Application: Making a Livelihood on the Land** – 9am - 5pm - On-site workshop for new or aspiring farmers at Seeds of Solidarity Farm and Education Center, Orange MA. Application required (due 4/1), space limited, sliding scale. [Detail here.](#)
- **April 23 - Occupational Agriculture / Agricultura Ocupacional** - 24 Jones Ferry Rd, Holyoke - 12:00pm - 3:00pm - When you think of agriculture, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Someone harvesting produce in a field? Or maybe caring for farm animals, like cows and chickens? Well there's so much MORE! Nuestras Raices' Occupational Agriculture Youth Lecture and Career Exploration aims to introduce a wide array of agricultural careers to youth ages 14 and older. [Details here.](#)
- **April 30 - Explore Farming Workshop at Moraine Farm** – 733 Cabot St., Beverly, MA. Free and open to all. [Details and registration here.](#)

May

- **May 2 - Monthly Min Till Farmers Call** - 7-8pm - Take some time to chat with fellow farmers and farm advisors about tillage reduction and soil health in an open, roundtable environment. No pre-registration required, this will be a free-form space with minimal moderation & with the goal of farmers being able to pose questions to each other and share resources, suggestions, and ideas about tillage reduction. [Details here.](#)
- **May 4 - CISA's SNAP Training for Farm Employees** - 2-3pm - Does your farm stand or farmers' market accept SNAP? Make sure your staff are ready to accept SNAP this summer by having them attend either of these SNAP employee trainings. This training is for employees who will be processing SNAP transactions and is open to all staff of farm businesses that accept SNAP. Employees will learn SNAP basics including what EBT cards look like, what items are SNAP eligible, and how to run a SNAP transaction. Attendees will come away knowing how SNAP works and how to run a transaction successfully and legally on Conduent and TotilPay machines. [Register here.](#)
- **May 5 - Online Explore Farming Workshop** - Free and open to all. [Details and registration here.](#)
- **May 7 - Honey Bee Education Days at State Apiaries** – In-person - 10am - 12pm. Join the Bee Team from MDAR's Apiary Program to get a tour of live working honey bee colonies, hands-on demonstrations of colony management techniques, and exposure to the latest knowledge on how to best sustain honey bee health in the Commonwealth. 2 locations. [Details here.](#)

- **May 10-12 - Preventive Controls Qualified Individuals Course (PCQI)** - UMass Amherst. In-person 3-day course. Discount code for small processors is '2022PCQI' for \$100 off the registration fee. Registration deadline is Friday, April 29th. [Details here](#). Questions, contact Christina Wormald, cwormald@umass.edu.
- **May 13 - Massachusetts Food Policy Council Meeting** - 9:30am - 11:30am. [Details and agenda here](#).
- **May 14 – Hands-on Crop Production Course** - For those interested in digging deeper into the enthralling world of sustainable agriculture, New Entry Sustainable Farming Project is offering this 8-week Crop Production Course at Moraine Farm this year. The course will include an abundance of resources and activities to help learners increase their ability to work with nature to grow good food, and it will cover topics including: fostering soil health, greenhouse management, irrigation, nutrient management, cover cropping, pest and disease management, and more! [Details here](#).
- **May 16– 21 - 6th Massachusetts Farm & Sea to School Conference** - Conference will feature both virtual sessions and in-person field trips. This year's theme is Seeding the Future, and is centered on youth leadership and empowerment in farm to school. The workshops will touch upon a wide variety of farm to school themes, such as, food systems education, student voice in school meals, youth-led programming, school garden tours, and racial equity in the food system. All events will be free of charge. [Learn more & register here](#).
- **May 18 - Spotted lanternfly in Massachusetts: Quarterly Update** - 10am - virtual - Quarterly series of webinars, hosted by MDAR, to provide the green industry, environmental groups, and other interested parties with the latest information about spotted lanternfly occurrences, survey updates, and more. 1 MA pesticide license credit available. [Register here](#).
- **May 19 - CISA's SNAP Training for Farm Employees** - 10-11am - Does your farm stand or farmers' market accept SNAP? Make sure your staff are ready to accept SNAP this summer by having them attend either of these SNAP employee trainings. This training is for employees who will be processing SNAP transactions and is open to all staff of farm businesses that accept SNAP. Employees will learn SNAP basics including what EBT cards look like, what items are SNAP eligible, and how to run a SNAP transaction. Attendees will come away knowing how SNAP works and how to run a transaction successfully and legally on Conduent and TotilPay machines. [Register here](#).

[MDAR Calendar](#)

Classified

- **Farmers Markets Seek Vendors** - MDAR keeps an updated list of farmers markets looking for vendors and has begun collecting information for the 2022 summer season. You can find the list [here](#). Contact information for all farmers markets is posted [here](#). Questions, contact David.Webber@mass.gov.

Looking to buy or sell, visit and register on the [MassGrown Exchange!](#)

About the *Farm & Market Report*

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Complete staff directory [here](#). Next issue to be published in June. Please send news, events, or classified information by June 10th to Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov. To unsubscribe, or change your email address, contact Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov.

MDAR's mission is to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance, Agricultural Markets, Animal Health, and Crop and Pest Services – MDAR strives to support, regulate and enhance the rich diversity of the Commonwealth's agricultural community to promote economically and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture's role in energy conservation and production. For more information, visit MDAR's website at www.mass.gov/agr.

