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October / November Farm & Market Report

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CLASSIFIED

COMMISSIONER'S COLUMN



Greetings, Mass. Agriculture and all its friends,

I am delighted to report that we have a new Assistant Commissioner at MDAR! Ashley Sears Randle officially came on board on October 9th. After posting the position, interviews, background checks, and all the necessary internal signoffs, the last step was the statutory requirement that the Board of Agriculture approve my appointment, which it did at its meeting September 20th by unanimous vote.

Born and raised on her family's Western Mass. dairy farm, Ashley grew up breeding, raising and showing registered Guernsey and Holstein cattle. She's also been active in 4-H, and judges dairy cow competitions throughout the country. As many of you know, my background is on the plant side, so her livestock background is a great complement to our executive team.

Her most recent position was Member Services Director of the Northeast Dairy Producers Association, and previous to that, she served as Marketing Specialist at the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, where among other things, she managed the Maine Building at the Big E (MDAR manages the Mass. Building).

Additionally, she is a graduate of Cornell University, with a degree in Economics and Management (Agribusiness specialization) and a second degree in Animal Science. To complete her formal education, Ashley earned her JD from Western New England School of Law. Though a member of the Massachusetts bar, she will not be practicing law in her position.

Her responsibilities will evolve over time, but legislative liaison, senior management of our Food Safety program, policy analysis and development, oversight of federal ag issues, and constituent services are among what her initial key duties are.

Ashley brings tremendous real on-farm experience along with an equally strong agricultural public policy background to the position which I expect shall benefit MDAR, but much more importantly, all of you.

And one more thing-among the numerous activities and interests listed on her resume, I noted she included "Baking/Cooking". As the Commissioner of MDAR, the job requires I constantly think about food production and the consumption of both fresh and value-added products, so I thought it entirely appropriate during our first interview to ask several questions to identify exactly what her culinary specialties were. (Let's just say I'm seeing some custom baked cupcakes in my future, and leave it at that!)

Another piece of news is that our new offices in Lakeville are open. We are still in the "soft opening" phase as we continue to outfit the space, but we are open for business! Initially, our Food Safety program is headquartered there, but it's a spot in the southeast where staff can land when they're in the area. There's also a small conference room in which meetings can be held. Some type of Grand Opening is in the planning. It's a very convenient location, just off of I-495 at Exit 4 at 30 Riverside Dr., Suite 202. Main phone for the Lakeville office is 774-419-1800.

I don't think I previously reported to you, but in June I was elected President of the Northeastern Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NEASDA). Membership is composed of the departments from Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont; the Chiefs, Commissioners and Secretaries from these states are the Board of Directors. The ten of us frequently consult with each other on a wide range of issues. I am grateful for my colleagues' confidence by electing me.

One of the President's principal responsibilities and duties is to organize the organization's Annual Meeting. We are well into development of the meeting MDAR will be hosting in June, 2019. We have a venue in Brewster on Cape Cod and are developing our program. I look forward to both sharing some of what MA Ag does with my NEASDA colleagues and just showing off our state. More will follow as we get closer.

[NEASDA](#) is one of four regional associations within the organization of our national association, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA). Headquartered in Washington DC, members hear from NASDA almost daily on federal Ag issues and other important matters. NASDA provides us a very well managed support structure that keeps us informed and educated on a wide range of issues. Its policy team offers deep analysis in many subject areas where a state department may lack resources. NASDA is a very important tool for MDAR.

Though I knew that I was “in line” to become NEASDA President this year, I was very surprised when I was asked if I’d be interested to serve a one-year term on NASDA’s ten member Board of Directors. After expressing my interest, I was recently elected to the NASDA Board at the association’s Annual Meeting in Hartford in September.

I’m really excited about this opportunity to become more plugged into national, and also international Ag issues, and to get a deeper understanding of what the dynamics are in the large commodity states. Led by our President New Mexico Secretary/Director Jeff Witte, I’m serving with board colleagues from Connecticut, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and Texas. I expect to learn a lot from this group that will help me in my work.

MDAR, particularly our Agricultural Markets Division led by Mary Jordan, has a lot of responsibility at the Big E. The [Massachusetts Exposition Building](#) on the Avenue of States is owned by the Commonwealth and is under MDAR’s care and control. The Building’s mission is to promote Mass. agriculture, tourism, and commerce. Next year, we will celebrate the Building’s 100th Anniversary, and we look forward to appropriately honoring it and all who have contributed to its success.

The Big E may last for seventeen incredibly busy days, but we spend all year lining up programs, reviewing applications from potential for-profit, non-profit and government exhibitors, and addressing building maintenance needs, all to make the experience the best it can be for our visitors.

The Building serves as quite an economic engine for exhibitors; for some it’s an opportunity to incubate a business and learn if a particular model is viable. For others, it’s a major part of the business’s annual revenue; and for some businesses, the seventeen days of Big E sales exceed sales for the entire rest of the year!

We try to mix up the exhibitor group every year adding new participants with old favorites. A major new participant this year was Valley Malt of Hadley that operated a Beer Garden on the lawn in the back of the building. As we all know craft brews are very popular, and the amount of people enjoying themselves on the back lawn reinforced just how popular they are!

Our new Building Manager is Fran Pearson, who just completed her first (and very successful) Big E. Fran started work only a couple months prior to the fair; it was a steep learning curve, but she did a great job! Many thanks also to Mary Jordan who was Acting Manager for quite some time while we were filling the vacancy, and Phu Mai, who organized several special events.

I was out there for four days out of the seventeen: Opening Day, Friday September 14 was Military Day, and we conducted a program in front of the Building along with Secretary of Veterans Services Francisco Ureña and local officials, veterans, and military personnel. The following Monday I had the opportunity to escort Lt. Governor Karyn Polito through the Mass. Building. The LG has made it a point to visit with Building exhibitors each year since she was elected, and has established relationships with many of them.

Thursday of the first full week was [Massachusetts Day](#). At that day’s program I was joined by State Senator Adam Hinds and Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Jay Ash. A highlight of the event was honoring longtime Building exhibitor Mitch Garabedian of Thorndike Mills in Palmer as this year’s entrant into the Building’s Hall of Fame. Mitch has served on the Building’s Advisory Council for many years. His award is very well deserved!

I came back Wednesday of week #2 to work the 9-3 shift in the MDAR booth in the Building. Having worked in the retail garden center business most of my professional life, I greatly enjoy the varied interactions one encounters in the retail environment, and that's exactly what you get working a booth at the Big E!

The Fair and Festival season continued. We hit three in one day starting in Blandford, then Three County in Northampton, and finished the day at the Spencer Fair-great fun! At the end of September, I was privileged to participate in the ceremonies honoring the 200th Anniversary of the founding of the Topsfield Fair. This was my fourth [visit to Topsfield](#) for its Opening Ceremonies and Parade, but my first when it wasn't cold and rainy! Congratulations to the Essex Agriculture Society, its President Lisa Colby, its Board of Directors, General Manager Jim O'Brien, Joy Nowak, and all the staff and volunteers who have made the Topsfield Fair such a great event!

We also visited the Wachusett Farm Fresh Fest in Princeton, CISA's Fall Harvest Celebration in Haydenville (later the same day that the Ag Board approved Ashley, so it was her first public introduction as Assistant Commissioner), and local food purveyor Dole and Bailey's 150th Anniversary Celebration in Dedham.

Another great late summer stop I visited is the [Boston Local Food Festival](#) on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. In just a few Sunday hours, fifty thousand attendees sample all sorts of fantastic locally produced food products. Congratulations and the thanks to the Sustainable Business Network of Mass. for a very successful and fun event!

The Southeastern Mass. Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP) hosted a [tour of Norfolk Aggie and five farms in Norfolk County](#). I really enjoyed getting out to the Medway Community Farm, Fairmont Fruit Farm, Grateful Farm, Terrapin Farm, and Hoffman Farm. What a range of operations we saw-organic fruits and vegetables to orchard to hemp to micro-dairy!

It was truly an honor to attend the celebration of the John Bettencourt Farm in Westport and Dartmouth. This multi-generational farm has adapted its operation over time to remain sustainable, and the family has done a beautiful job. John at age 95 remains very active on the farm. Though the term is widely and not always appropriately used, it is entirely appropriate to describe him as inspirational!

Some sad news: the Ziemba Family's Broadlawn (dairy) Farm in Adams suffered a devastating fire on September 23rd. Their barn which contained all their winter hay and was the shelter for their herd was destroyed. One animal, the bull, died. I was out there on September 25th. The fire was a major blow. My family's farm experienced three, two in my lifetime and recovery is a challenge. In addition to dealing with that, there were and are still all the normal demands of a dairy farm that need to be addressed, including the daily milkings. (Fortunately, the milking parlor was undamaged!) Friends of the farm have been busily fundraising. There is a [GoFundMe page](#) and a benefit [Spaghetti Dinner](#) planned for October 22nd. Please check the links if you'd like to participate.

We also received word of a devastating silo collapse at Cherry Hill Farm in Lunenburg on Sunday, October 14th. The MacMillan family farm suffered the complete loss of one silo, damage to their main barn where hay is stored and cattle are housed and milked, damage to the interior structure of the barn facilities, loss of feed/crops including 1,000 tons of corn and 20,000 bales of hay, and one cow that was injured and ultimately euthanized. In regards to fundraising initiatives, the Lunenburg Turkey Hill Family Lions Club has started a donation drive for the family. In addition, two GoFundMe campaigns have been launched, that can be found at: www.gofundme.com/cherry-hill-farm-barn-collapse?fbclid=IwAR1_gg8SXdTyeKomOKTZ2HfP6RtKgkEbvV9fzpvK5Hce9Yrn_bIXIfEQ and <https://www.gofundme.com/help-cherry-hill-farm-rebuild>. On November 3rd, Hollis Hills Farm, owned by the Lattanzi family, will be hosting a benefit event to raise funds for the recovery efforts at Cherry Hill Farm.

Occurrences such as this remind me to encourage you to annually review your coverages with your insurance agent and spend some time thinking about a disaster response plan.

Finally, for the first and probably last time, I have beaten Rick's deadline to submit my column! It had to be done as the Comm.-Mrs. and I are hitting the road for a few days for a wedding and a little travel.

Best regards,



John Lebeaux

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FOREFRONT

Energy News

[DOER SMART Program](#) Ready for Launch!!!

(The following from DOER's website)

SMART Program Launch

The SMART Program, the SREC replacement program, will begin accepting applications at 12:00 PM ET on November 26, 2018. All applications must be submitted through the CLEAResult website.

All applications received through 11:59 PM ET on November 30, 2018 will be considered as having been submitted at the same time for the purposes of determining placement in a Capacity Block.

- Applications for facilities less than or equal to 25 kW AC will be reviewed and placed into Capacity Blocks in the order that their contract was executed
- Applications for facilities greater than 25 kW AC will be reviewed and placed into Capacity Blocks in the order that their Interconnection Services Agreement was executed

All applications received on or after 12:00 AM ET December 1, 2018 will be reviewed and placed into Capacity Blocks on a first come, first served basis.

Information on the Program Launch, including SREC closure and transition, can be found in the following presentation:

[SMART Program Launch and Transition](#)

*Please also read the following related article regarding Dual use of Land Solar PV incentives in the new SMART Program.

SMART Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Units (ASTGUs) aka Dual Use of Land Solar PV – Pre-determination Requirements

One of the agricultural operations components of the SMART Program is the location based adder for Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Units (ASTGUs) also known as dual use of land projects.

One of the requirements to be approved for the ASTGU Location Based Adder is a Pre-Determination letter issued by the Department of Energy Resources (DOER), which is the initial step of the ASTGU SMART application process. In order to receive a Pre-Determination letter an applicant must submit a Pre-Determination request to DOER for the ASTGU Project demonstrating strict compliance with the relevant sections of the SMART Regulation and ASTGU Guidelines. If approved, eligible ASTGUs then may submit a Statement of Qualification Application and, if approved, are then issued a Statement of Qualification.

DOER and MDAR are creating a Pre-Determination Application Form specifically for ASTGUs that will be posted on DOER's SMART Program website. The essence of the Form will be for applicants to demonstrate strict compliance with

SMART Regulations Special Provisions Section 225 CMR 20.06(1)(d) and all of the Additional Provisions for ASTGUs found in the Guidelines. For those wanting to submit for a Pre-Determination ahead of the Form being posted, please submit demonstration your strict compliance with all of the aforementioned regulations and guidelines.

The below table, found in the [Statement of Qualification Reservation Period Guideline](#), summarizes the documentation for ASTGUs and other Location Based Adders.

- i. The following documentation will be required for a Solar Tariff Generation Unit to qualify for Location Based and Solar Tracking Adders:

Location Based Adder	Required Documentation - Statement of Qualification Application	Required Documentation - Interconnection and Tariff Enrollment
Building Mounted	Site plan	Authorization to Interconnect
Floating Solar	Pre-determination letter, as issued by the Department	Authorization to Interconnect
Brownfield	Pre-determination letter, as issued by the Department	Authorization to Interconnect
Landfill	Post-closure use permit, as issued by the Department of Environmental Protection	Authorization to Interconnect
Canopy	Site plan	Authorization to Interconnect
Agricultural	Pre-determination letter, as issued by the Department	Authorization to Interconnect
Solar Tracker	Site Plan	Authorization to Interconnect

For more information and requirements on ASTGUs, please refer to the **SMART Regulations** - <https://www.mass.gov/regulations/225-CMR-20-solar-massachusetts-renewable-target-smart-program> and the corresponding **ASTGU Guideline** - <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/04/26/Agricultural%20Solar%20Tariff%20Generation%20Unit%20Guideline%20042518.pdf>

For any questions on the new SMART Program, please feel free to contact Gerry Palano at Gerald.Palano@mass.gov, 617-626-1706.

SMART Application Webinar

On October 24th, DOER, CLEAResult, and the EDCs will host a webinar on the SMART Statement of Qualification Application process. The webinar will be recorded and will include a detailed walkthrough of the application process. The webinar will take place from 3 – 5:00 pm. A registration link will be posted on both DOER’s website and www.masmartsolar.com for interested stakeholders. Questions on the webinar should be directed to DOER.SMART@mass.gov or MA.SMART@clearesult.com.

FY2019 AgEnergy Grant

MDAR received 60 applications totaling almost \$1.8 million in funding requests for both our Traditional and Special Projects Grant Programs, one of the, if not the, highest responses in the history of the AgEnergy Grant program – thank you! At the time of this publication, MDAR is working to publicize final awardees to be announced soon in an Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) press release.

[MDAR’s MA Farm Energy Program \(MFEP\)](#) - Energy Audits – Now is a BUSY time! MDAR’s Massachusetts Farm Energy Program (MFEP) has funds to help farms cover audits, energy efficient projects, and select renewable energy projects. Contact us now for more information through the Center for EcoTechnology (CET), our partner carrying out the MFEP. Phone: 413-727-3090 • E-mail: info@massfarmenergy.com, or visit www.massfarmenergy.com, submit a *Request Form*, and then you will be contacted.

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The Agricultural Climate Resiliency & Efficiencies (ACRE) Program Now Accepting Applications

Applications are now being accepted for the [Agricultural Climate Resiliency & Efficiencies \(ACRE\) program](#). ACRE is a competitive, reimbursement grant program that funds materials and labor for the implementation of practices that address the agricultural sector's vulnerability to climate change, improves economic resiliency and advances the general goals identified in the Massachusetts Local Action Food Plan. Innovative proposals are sought for practices that protect the environment, ensure food safety, improve soil health, protect water resources, increase energy efficiency and/or promote renewable energy.

Eligible Applicants: Agricultural operations engaged in production agriculture for commercial purposes as defined in Massachusetts law M.G.L c. 128, Sec. 1A. Responder must own, or be a Co-Responder with the owner, who has a legal interest in the land whether by deed or written agreement and approval to implement the Plan, of at least five (5) acres of land, which must be in active agricultural use and managed as a commercial enterprise by the Responder for at least the three (3) previous years. Massachusetts Conservation Districts are eligible to apply solely for no-till equipment that will be utilized by multiple agricultural operations. Produce operations applying for food safety upgrades must have an average annual value of produce sold during the previous three-year period of \$25,000 or more. Sales must be for produce covered under the Produce Safety Rule (PSR).

Deadline: Applications must be received by mail or hand delivered to MDAR's Boston office by 4:00 pm on November 16, 2018. To access the application please go to the ACRE's webpage: www.mass.gov/service-details/agricultural-climate-resiliency-efficiencies-acre-program.

Agricultural Composting Improvement Program

The MDAR is offering a new grant program to assist agricultural composters by funding projects and equipment to facilitate best management practices, utilize compost for agricultural purposes, and enhance overall management of agricultural composting operations. The Agricultural Composting Improvement Program is intended to help fund the purchase of equipment and materials to improve infrastructure, implement best management practices, or address impacts on the environment including air and water resources. Purchase of equipment to facilitate compost usage such as screeners and spreaders, mixers, etc. or projects such as the development of compost pads are acceptable under this program.

Additional information and an application can be found at: www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/10/05/RFR%20AGR-COMPOST-19.pdf.

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Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training

Monday, October 29th - Brigham Hill Community Farm, 37 Wheeler Rd, North Grafton, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

REGISTER HERE: <https://umasscafe.irisregistration.com/Form/PSAGrafton18>

This is your last opportunity to attend a PSA training in Massachusetts this year. Another series of trainings in several locations around the state will be held early 2019.

Fruit and vegetable growers! Wondering where to begin with food safety? Start here! The [PSA Grower Training](#) is currently the only FDA-recognized produce safety training to help growers implement Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and understand their responsibilities under new Federal regulations. Whether you have a farm that is fully covered by the law or a small, exempt farm and you're just looking for information, this training is for you.

The PSA Grower Training Course satisfies the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirement outlined in §112.22(c) that requires 'At least one supervisor or responsible party for your farm must have successfully completed food safety

training at least equivalent to that received under standardized curriculum recognized as adequate by the Food and Drug Administration.'

The training is also required for participation in Massachusetts' Commonwealth Quality Program.

Cost is \$40 and includes the required PSA Grower Manual (\$50 value), a Certificate of Course attendance from AFDO (\$35 value), and lunch and refreshments. The course will be presented by Lisa McKeag, of the UMASS Agricultural Extension, and Michael Botelho, from the MDAR. Questions: contact Lisa McKeag, lmckeag@umass.edu, or Michael.Botelho@mass.gov.

MDAR Creates New Craft Beverage Online Map



MDAR's new MA Craft Beverage Map features breweries, cideries, distilleries and wineries with tasting rooms open to the public. Check to see if your business is listed, or check to be sure that your favorite local beverage company is included.

The new [Massachusetts Craft Beverage Map](#) features craft beverage businesses in a single, easy to navigate, map. A click on the icon identifies if local ingredients are used. The map can identify your current location to show which craft beverage businesses are close by. It's also possible to search by any of the four beverage categories, business name or region.

Complementary [beverage guides](#) for craft beer, hard cider, distilleries and wineries have separate listings by region for each of the categories. For additions, updates or changes, contact Bonita.Oehlke@state.ma.us.

CISA's Emergency Farm Fund is Open



[CISA's Emergency Farm Fund](#) offers zero-interest loans to assist farmers and farm businesses struggling to meet their immediate needs in the aftermath of extreme weather events. The Fund is open for applications from Pioneer

Valley farms that have been affected by extreme weather events during the 2018 growing season, including the excessive rainfall in July and August. If your farm suffered damage this season you are eligible to apply for a zero-interest loan of \$5,000 to \$10,000. Applications will be accepted until October 31, 2018. To learn more or apply for a loan, [click here](#). Please call the CISA office at 413-665-7100 with additional questions.

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Harvest New England Ag. Marketing Conference Seeks Exhibitors

The biennial Harvest New England Ag. Marketing Conference and Trade Show will return to Sturbridge, February 27-28, 2019! SIGN UP FOR THE TRADE SHOW NOW! Early Registration Deadline: Friday, November 30, 2018

The New England State Departments of Agriculture, in cooperation with agricultural organizations across the region, graciously invite you to participate as an exhibitor in the upcoming Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show. Whether you provide a product or service to farmers in New England or have a unique product for a roadside stand, this is the show for you. Over 800 attendees joined us for our conference in March, 2017!

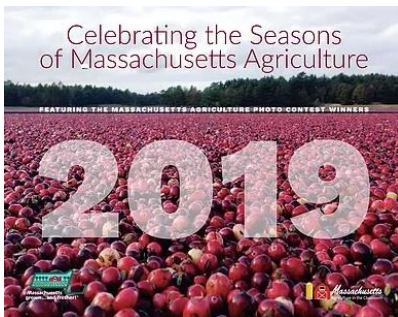
Growers from across the Northeast will convene in scenic Sturbridge, Massachusetts on February 27 and 28 at the Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center. Booth set up is on Tuesday, February 26 from 1:00 pm – 6:00 pm or

February 27 from 7:00 am - 9:00 am. Trade Show hours are Wednesday, February 27, 9:30 am – 6:30 pm, and Thursday, February 28, 7:00 am – 3:15 pm.

The conference is sponsored by all six New England State Departments of Agriculture and Harvest New England, in cooperation with agricultural associations from across the region. This unique marketing conference targets New England growers interested in learning new marketing ideas or fine-tuning strategies for business success. There will be multiple educational and networking opportunities. The conference schedule will allow specific times for attendees to visit the trade show to maximize your exposure.

Space is limited; return your registration form with payment as soon as possible for the best space selection. Trade show registration received by November 30 costs \$425, after November 30, 2018, \$525. Register online at: <https://harvestnewengland.regfox.com/hne-agricultural-marketing-conference-trade-show>, or contact Rick LeBlanc, Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov, 617-626-1759. For sponsorship opportunities, contact Jess Wozniak, 508-410-3903, jesswozniak@gmail.com. Workshops and complete agenda will be announced soon. Keep an eye [here](#), for updates.

2019 Massachusetts Agriculture Calendar Now Available



Now available is the is the [2019 Massachusetts Agriculture Calendar](#)! Each year the calendar, *Celebrating the Seasons of Massachusetts Agriculture*, features winning photos from this years' public photo contest. Each photograph is selected that best spotlights crops and farms across the Commonwealth. The Calendar's goal is to showcase the beautiful diversity of crops grown in Massachusetts as well as be a learning tool for teachers and educators, as each month includes "Fun Facts" and "Teaching Tips."

The annual Calendar is produced in collaboration with [Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom \(MAC\)](#), the [MA State Grange](#), and the [Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources](#), along with the many great sponsoring associations: [MA Farm Bureau](#), [MA Maple Association](#), [MA Flower Growers Association](#), [MA Fruit Growers](#), [MA Fairs Association](#), [Cape Cod Cranberry Association](#), [MA Dairy Promotion Board](#), [School Nutrition Association of Massachusetts](#), and the [MA Christmas Tree Association](#).

We congratulate the winners of the annual photo contest. We received over 375 photos! We invited the winning photographers this year to Massachusetts Day at the Big E for an award ceremony.

Month	Winner	Photograph subject
January	Maryann Gubala, Wilbraham - Freeman Farm at Old Sturbridge Village	
February	Jonathan T. Parrott, Chesterfield - daughter Sophie Parrott with her 4H registered highland heifer (Izzy) at the Cummington Fair	
March	Warren Boyden, Erving - Poplar Mountain Maple Farm	
April	Tom Smiarowski, Belchertown - D.A. Smiarowski Farms	
May	Chris Graziano, East Longmeadow - Graziano's Garden Center	
June	Nancy Hubbard, Princeton - Hubbards Farm, Princeton	
July	Vivien Venskowski, Gill - Peace & Plenty Farm, Leverett	
August	Kimberly Beckham, West Boylston - Sterling Fair	
September	Lauren Piotrowski, Pittsfield - Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield	
October	Allison Bell, Whately - Quonquont Farm, Whately	
November	Brian Wick, Plymouth - A.D. Makepeace Company, Wareham	
December	Cynthia Cranston, Ashfield - Cranston's Christmas Tree Farm	



Honorable Mentions (small photos in the calendar): Stacie Warcewicz, Salisbury; Laurie Cuevas, Sunderland; Lauren Wetherbee, Rutland; Deanna Elliot, Lakeville; Tina Bemis, Spencer; Courtney Babcock, Greenfield; Nel Sogoloff, Ipswich; Jess Bloomer, Somerville; David Pease, Templeton; Peter Lowy, Lincoln; Shirley LeMay, North Grafton.

Details and ordering information [here](#). Learn more about MAC and what they offer educators across the Commonwealth [here](#). Get out there this fall and take pictures for the 2019 Photo Contest!

UPCOMING EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

October 24 – Bringing Visitors to the Farm – Warner Farm, Sunderland, 3:30 - 5:30 pm. Known for its creative corn maze that draws thousands to Sunderland each year, Warner Farm offers a whole lot more fun on the farm, including pick-your-own, hosting Kitchen Garden Farm's Annual Chilifest, and other activities throughout the year. The farm also runs a CSA and sells wholesale fruits and vegetables. Hear from the Wissemanns how they balance several enterprises and coordinate multiple public activities, as well as some of the lessons they've learned running an "agritourism" farm. [Details here](#). Questions, Stevie Schafenacker, stevie@buylocalfood.org.

October 26 – FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food Certification Training BLENDED COURSE - UMass, Amherst, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. The Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis, and Risk-based Preventive Controls for Human Food FDA regulation is intended to ensure safe manufacturing/processing, packing and holding of food products for human consumption in the US. The regulation requires that certain activities must be completed by a "preventive controls qualified individual" who has "successfully completed training in the development and application of risk-based preventive controls." This course developed by the FSPCA is the "standardized curriculum" recognized by FDA; successfully completing this course is one way to meet the requirements for a "preventive controls qualified individual." To complete the course, a participant must be present for the entire workshop and actively participate in all of the presented exercises. [More here](#).

October 29 - Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training - Brigham Hill Community Farm, 37 Wheeler Rd, North Grafton, 9-5:00 pm. Fruit and vegetable growers. Wondering where to begin with food safety? Start here! The [PSA Grower Training](#) is currently the only FDA-recognized produce safety training to help growers implement Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and understand their responsibilities under new Federal regulations. Whether you have a farm that is fully covered by the law or a small, exempt farm and you're just looking for information, this training is for you. [Register here](#).

November 2 - Agricultural Lands Preservation Committee (ALPC) Meeting - 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, 10 am - 1 pm. [Details here](#).

November 4 - MA Cultivated Blueberry Grower's Association Winter Seminar - Harvey's Conference Center, Westborough at 12:00 pm. Subject: Spotted Wing Drosophila Update and New Research. Please RSVP for this seminar by emailing Elisabeth Patt at eap1226@verizon.net by Friday, October 26th.

November 7 & 8 - Northeast Greenhouse Conference and Expo - Boxborough Regency Hotel, Boxborough. The biennial Conference & Expo is co-sponsored by New England Floriculture, Inc., a group of grower representatives from the Northeast, augmented by University and Cooperative Extension staff in each state who specialize in greenhouse crops and management. Don't miss this great opportunity to learn, share and connect with other industry professionals. [Details here](#).

November 8 – 11 - Equine Affaire – Eastern State Exposition, W. Springfield. Learn from and mingle with many of the foremost trainers, coaches, competitors, judges, and experts in the horse industry. Meet and appreciate dozens of breeds of horses from around the world. Buy a horse—or sell one. Discover the right stallion for your mare or the ideal boarding, training, or breeding facility for you and your horse. Experience the excitement of the Versatile Horse & Rider

Competition (Equine Affaire's ultimate test of horsemanship) and the drama of the Fantasia (Equine Affaire's signature musical celebration of the horse.) Interface with all facets of the horse industry while sharing your passion for horses with friends, family, and fellow horse people. [Details here.](#)

November 14 - Massachusetts Board of Agriculture Meeting - 30 Riverside Dr. , Suite 202, Lakeville, 10 am - 1 pm. [Updates here.](#)

November 15 - Fourth Annual Massachusetts Sustainable Business Awards – The Center for Arts at the Armory, Somerville, MA, 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm. This lively venue will provide the perfect backdrop for a true celebration of all things local. Five businesses will be recognized for their work toward a local, green & fair economy! Look forward to live music, a delicious locally sourced dinner, beverages, live and silent auctions with exciting new items, and so much more! [Details here.](#)

November 29 & 30 - Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation's (MFBF's) Annual Meeting - Sheraton Framingham Hotel & Conference Center - co-hosted by Norfolk and Plymouth County Farm Bureau's. Meteorologist Eric Fisher is set to lead a general session workshop. During his session, Fisher will discuss overall climate trends, winter 2019 and other weather topics that farmers should be aware of. [Details here.](#)

Save The Dates:

- **December 7 - Greater Quabbin Food Alliance Winter Gathering** - Orange Innovation Center. [More here.](#)
- **December 12 - MA Food System Forum** - registration info. available soon – [Updates here.](#)
- **January 12, 2019 - 32nd NOFA/Mass Winter Conference** - Worcester State University. [Details here.](#)
- **February 27 – 28, 2019 – Harvest New England Ag Marketing Conference and Trade Show** - Sturbridge Host Hotel. [Updates here.](#) Sponsors and Exhibitors [register here.](#)

More events here: [MDAR Events Calendar.](#)

USDA News

Massachusetts Farm and Forest Land Owners and Managers: Sign up for USDA Conservation Assistance by November 16th

Do you own or manage farmland or forest land in Massachusetts? Could you use some technical and financial help in managing it more effectively? The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) encourages you to sign up for conservation assistance through the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) by **November 16, 2018.**

You may apply for NRCS conservation programs at any time; complete applications are ranked for funding in batches periodically throughout the year. In Massachusetts, applications for assistance with high tunnels and conservation activity plans – as well as for projects under the National On-Farm Energy Initiative and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program – received by Nov. 16th, will be evaluated by Jan. 31, 2019. Applications for practices to treat natural resource concerns not mentioned above will be accepted, but those applications will be processed after February 2019. A later cutoff date will be identified for those applications and will be posted on the Massachusetts NRCS website at www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov.

"If you operate a farm or manage forest land and want to improve your land, we can help," said Christine Clarke, State Conservationist for NRCS in Massachusetts. "A planner will discuss with you your vision for your land and will explain the conservation planning process and how to apply for financial assistance."

EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers and forest land owners to address natural resource concerns through an array of conservation practices. Assistance is available to support private land owners and managers in addressing farm, field, forest, wildlife, water, and/or plant management issues.

For more information, contact the NRCS field office at your local USDA service center. USDA Service Center locations are listed on-line at <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Some of the EQIP funding will be provided to farmers and forest landowners via the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which encourages partner organizations to join in efforts with producers to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales. Through the RCPP program, NRCS and its partners help producers install and maintain conservation activities in selected project areas.

Sales Closing Date for Crop Insurance - Apples, Cranberries, Grapes & Peaches

November 20, 2018 - Sales Closing Date

It's that time of the year when you need to review your crop insurance options! A crop insurance policy is a tool that may get you through an extreme weather event. These policies have a variety of options on both price and yield. A grower can insure 50 to 75% of her/his average yield and 55% up to 100% of the established price. Growers, working with their crop insurance agent, can develop a policy that works for them.

Crop insurance is sold by private crop insurance agents and is subsidized by USDA to make them affordable to growers. You can find an agent www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent

If these policies are not available in your county you can request coverage via "written agreement" or you can get coverage through the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) which is sold by the USDA Farm Service Agency. Growers can also contact the [UMass Extension Risk Management Education Team](#) for assistance in understanding these programs.

Pasture, Rangeland and Forage Insurance

November 15, 2018 - Sales Closing Date

A new crop insurance policy can provide livestock and hay producers with protection against drought. The Pasture, Rangeland and Forage is a single peril policy that is designed to provide protection based on rainfall near your farm in two month periods. The grower can insure up to 100% of his pasture and hay acres at a productivity factor from 60% to 150% of the county base value. This production will be distributed in 2 month intervals as determined by the grower. If precipitation falls below the selected trigger level in a 2-month period, your crop insurance company will issue an indemnity payment based on the % of production selected for that period.

The grower does not have to keep records, report production, losses etc.

The Rainfall Index uses NOAA data for a 17 X 17-mile grid that encompasses your farm. You can review the performance of this program here: <http://maps.agforceusa.com/prf/ri/>.

Pasture, Rangeland & Forage performance in 2016, 2017 & 2018

Year	Policies Sold	Units Insured	Acres Covered	Grower Premiums	Indemnities
2016	5	24	306	\$ 7,082	\$ 26,926
2017	14	48	1,458	\$30,666	\$39,694
2018	18	61	2,046	\$38,356	\$5,092

Crop insurance is sold and delivered through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers, or on the RMA website at: <https://prodwebnlb.rma.usda.gov/apps/AgentLocator/#/>

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Classified

- **Farmers Markets Seeking Vendors** - Check back periodically for updates to this list. **If updates, please send to David.Webber@state.ma.us.**
- **Job posting** - Hemp Inspector Inspector at MDAR. [Details here](#). Please note that requisitions (former Posting IDs) will remain open for 90 days; however, first consideration will be given to those applicants that apply within the first 14 days of the posting. The Department of Agricultural Resources is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.
- Northeast SARE is accepting Farmer Grants until Nov. 27th this year. Information on how to apply: <https://www.nesare.org/Grants/Get-a-Grant/Farmer-Grant>.

About the *Farm & Market Report*

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Next issue to be published in August. Please send news, events, or classified information by December 3 to Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov. To unsubscribe, or change your email address, contact Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov or call 617-626-1759.

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.

