

## February / March Farm & Market Report

2/25/19

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- [The Deadline for Disaster Coverage is March 15<sup>th</sup>](#)

### CLASSIFIED

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## COMMISSIONER'S COLUMN



Greetings, Mass. Agriculture and all its friends,

1919 was a big year for Massachusetts Agriculture: it's when the MA Department of Agriculture was established in 1919 according to [MDAR's history page](#), and it's also the 100th Anniversary of Lieutenant Governor Channing H. Cox's dedication of the Massachusetts State Exposition Building on the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition in West

Springfield-the home of the Big E! We're planning some type of joint commemoration during the fair this fall. Details will follow as we get closer.



It gets pretty quiet for public events after the Christmas Tree Cutting Event on Green Friday in November, but there's been a few I should report to you that took place since then. MDAR annually supports the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Event at the State House, working with local food producers to show off their wares.

Also in December I had the privilege to again attend the [Local Farmer Awards](#) Celebration at Smith College. Sponsored by the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation, along with multiple co-sponsors, these awards provide grants up to \$2,500 to farmers in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire Counties. The Celebration event does just that-it celebrates farmers and farming and lets many farmers share their stories of clever and innovative problem solving along with a few "It seemed like a good idea at the time," practices. It makes for an evening full of humanity-warmth, humor, sometimes some sadness, and reflects the hard but rewarding work of our farmers. Harold is an inspiration and leader by example-these awards are only one program of the many good works that his Charitable Foundation supports.

In January, Ashley and I attended the Livestock Institute of Southern New England's annual Livestock Conference at Bristol County Agricultural High School. This event, supporting protein farmers, is rapidly gaining stature both regionally and nationally because of its excellent program of speakers and seminars that provide insight into best management practices in an all facets of this sector.

Ashley and I visited Bowe Elementary School in Chicopee to learn about its Breakfast After the Bell program. It's another one of those "win-win" situations. Kids get a healthy meal to start the school day, and that meal contains locally grown and sourced ag products as much as possible. Thanks to the Eos Foundation for its support of Universal Free Breakfast in the Classroom.

I continue to serve on the Cannabis Advisory Board which provides the Cannabis Control Commission its opinions and recommendations on a host of topics related to this new industry. I confess I didn't expect this to be part of the job when I assumed my position, but it's fascinating to watch how a newly legalized practice evolves. It's not often that one starts with the proverbial blank piece of paper and creates a regulatory structure where there was none before.

At the same time, MDAR continues to refine its [Hemp Program](#). There were 13 licensees in 2018. I expect that number will increase greatly in 2019. That's largely due to the Federal Farm Bill's classification of Hemp as an agricultural product and not a controlled drug. It has also led to some short-term uncertainty while the Federal government develops its rules. Anyone interested in getting involved in this business should understand that the MA program may need to make modifications to be compliant with federal guidance once it becomes available.

Similarly, MDAR's Pesticide Program is learning in real-time what it needs to do to in what I frequently hear referred to as the "Cannabis space". Please see our [Policy](#) to understand what is and isn't permissible relative to pesticide use on any Cannabis (by Cannabis, I mean both Marijuana and Hemp.)

In mid-February, a team from MDAR attended and presented at the combined Annual Meeting of the MA Association of Dairy Farmers and the MA Dairy Promotion Board at the Bluebonnet in Northampton. Joining Ashley, Agricultural Markets Director Mary Jordan, and me to provide detailed information about MDAR programs that assist dairy were Senior Agricultural Economist Myron Inglis speaking about the Dairy Tax Credit, Ag-Business Training Coordinator Melissa Adams speaking about MDAR grant and technical assistance programs, Alternative Energy Specialist Gerry Palano speaking on our Ag Energy Programs, and our newly hired MA Dairy Promotion Board/Ag Markets Outreach Coordinator Katie Rozenas who spoke on both aspects of her position.

I really enjoy my opportunities to interact with this great collection of farmers who need to see that the work gets done every single day regardless of weather, holidays, and whatever else might be going on in their lives.

Among Myron's responsibilities is doing the necessary computations to determine the rate at which the Dairy Tax Credit is apportioned. Farmer after farmer tell me how this program allows them to survive in periods like now when many small dairy farms are placed in a very tough financial situation because of the Federal Milk pricing program.

Every January and February Myron needs to collect information from every MA dairy farmer for the previous calendar year. That translates to me asking him almost every day for status updates, and strategizing how we can get those few stragglers to comply.

Once Myron completes his work (which I'm pleased to say, he has accomplished for 2018), that information gets transmitted to Commissioner Harding's team at the Department of Revenue so that the Credit can be properly applied to qualifying dairy farmers' income tax returns, so checks can then be issued.

Few states have programs like this and many of my peers from other states ask me about it and express their wish for a similar program. The General Court and the Governor enacted legislation that increased the overall amount of the Dairy Tax Credit from \$4 million to \$6 million for farmers' benefit for the 2018 tax year. That is a tremendous boost to this critical component of our agricultural economy, open space, and our heritage.

I hope to establish a regular program of MDAR employees participating in certain volunteer opportunities that in some way ties back to our mission. To that end, Ashley organized a half day volunteer event for employees based in our W MA office to help out at The Food Bank of Western MA. MDAR administers the MA Emergency Food Assistance Program which provides support to our food banks.

Barbara Hopson, Nick Pitel, Kim Skyrms, Ashley and I spent a half day packing over 4,000 loaves of bread into small lots to be distributed to food pantries. It was good to break the normal routine, do some team building, and support the Food Bank's important work!

I write this column from the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture's annual Winter Policy Conference in Arlington, VA. I'm here Sunday to Wednesday with Secretaries, Commissioners, Directors and Chiefs from all 50 states and 4 territories. In addition to detailed discussion on a wide range of topics of mutual interest, we have the opportunity to interact with senior federal personnel from USDA and other agencies. It's very important that the voice of the of the smaller ag producing states is heard along with those of the giant commodity producing states. That's why in addition to our national organization, we also have 4 regional groups and our 10 state northeast association makes sure that our priorities are heard and considered.

The Federal shutdown has delayed the results of the 5 year Ag Census coming out. We are anxiously waiting to see what went on in the US but particularly in MA from 2012 to 2017. I hope to be able to report on that next column.

It's time to close this out-I've got a meeting to get to. Isn't it nice that the days are getting longer? I see my houseplants reacting to the longer days and the better quality of sunlight. I'm still relatively new to this Boston commuting world. It was so nice to notice one day in late January that I could once again walk to my end of day train in daylight, not darkness. It's still dark when I get off, but soon it'll be Daylight Savings-yes, Spring is coming!

Best regards,



John Lebeaux

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## FOREFRONT

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### State Agricultural Officials Urge Residents to Check Plants for Spotted Lanternfly



MDAR recently [announced](#) that a single dead specimen of spotted lanternfly, an invasive pest, was reported and confirmed at a private residence in Boston. As a result, MDAR urges the public to check for signs of spotted lanternfly adults in any potted plants that they may have received over the holiday season and to report any potential sightings of this pest on MDAR's [online reporting form](#) by taking photographs and collecting a specimen if possible. Residents should look for large, gray insects, about one inch long, with black spots and red underwings.

"Early detection plays an important role in the protection of the economic and ecological resources of our state from invasive species," said MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux. "We ask all residents who have received potted

plants this past December to help us protect Massachusetts' environment and agricultural industries by checking for and reporting signs of spotted lanternfly."

[Complete release here.](#)

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## Healthy Incentive Program (HIP) Update

[The Department of Transitional Assistance \(DTA\)](#) wants to let you know that Novo Dia Group, a company that processes most SNAP and HIP transactions at farmers markets, has [recently announced](#) that they have secured an investment that will allow them to remain viable and continue to process transactions.

**Additionally, the current HIP season ends February 28, 2019 and is planned to resume on May 25, 2019.** For the latest retailer information on the HIP program, visit [DTA's HIP page for vendors](#). Please remember that clients can use their SNAP benefits at farmers markets all year. Thank you for continuing to serve SNAP and HIP clients.

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## Hemp Informational Session

Please join us for an introduction to the [Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Hemp Program](#). This information session will cover the basics of the hemp program, including policies and requirements. This is a FREE event, and all are welcome! However, seating for this event is limited, so you must register here to guarantee your spot. Each attendant must register separately.

- **Where:** The Lantana; 43 Scanlon Dr, Randolph, MA 02368
- **When:** Monday March 4, 2019, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- There will be a 45 minute presentation followed by a Q&A session with the MDAR Hemp Program. Registration link: [www.bit.ly/randolph\\_hemp](http://www.bit.ly/randolph_hemp).

Can't make it? Don't worry! If you're unable to attend [this session](#), we have another in the works! Registration for the April session will be opening soon, and will be located in Western, MA. The same information will be provided.

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## File Taxes. Help Animals.



Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources is encouraging Massachusetts taxpayers to help animals in need by donating to the Massachusetts Animal Fund on [Line 33f](#) of their Massachusetts income tax returns for homeless animal prevention and care. Since the Fund's inception in 2014, the [Mass Animal Fund](#) has spent over \$1.1 million dollars to sterilize and vaccinate over 10,000 local animals in over 300 Massachusetts municipalities. The Voucher Program turns donations into a resource that local animal control officers (ACO) can 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 provide uniform enforcement of animal control laws. Follow the Fund on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/massanimalfund](http://www.facebook.com/massanimalfund)) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/line33f>) for the most up-to-date information about ending animal homelessness in the Commonwealth. Questions, contact [Sheri.Gustafson@mass.gov](mailto:Sheri.Gustafson@mass.gov).

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## Energy News

### FY2019 AgEnergy Grant

The Baker-Polito Administration and MDAR have awarded 40 agricultural energy grants totaling \$954,803 to Massachusetts farmers to implement renewable energy systems and improve energy efficiency on farms. The awarded farms are projected to save over \$195,000 annually and reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) by 780 tons each year.

Awarded through the MDAR's Agricultural Energy Traditional and Special Projects Grant Programs in partnership with the MA Department of Energy Resources (DOER), funding was provided to farms in the towns of Amherst, Boston, Bridgewater, Charlton, Chesterfield, Colrain, Dalton, East Bridgewater, Harwich, Holliston, Hyde Park, Lakeville, Lanesborough, Leverett, Lincoln, Milton, Needham, Northborough, Pittsfield, Plymouth, Raynham, Royalston, Salisbury, Seekonk, Sheffield, South Deerfield, Stockbridge, Tyngsboro, Vineyard Haven, Wareham, West Barnstable, Westhampton, Westport, Winchendon and Worthington.

The grants are part of two agricultural energy programs, namely Traditional and Special Projects. Traditional projects focus on conventional energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies while Special Projects focuses on technologies that typically require higher capital cost but could potentially yield greater savings and/or positive agricultural impacts in an effort to improve the farm's energy efficiency and to facilitate adoption of less conventional, alternative clean energy technology applications.

This year's Traditional AgEnergy Program will fund thirty-one (31) projects, a combination of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects including: a compost heat recovery project for a large-scale, dairy composting operation; a centralized chip wood boiler plant to serve multiple farm structures including greenhouses, maple sugar house, a farm stand replacing fossil fuels and an older cord wood boiler; a vertical well geothermal system for a new construction apiary production facility; maple syrup operations with new reverse osmosis, evaporators, pre-heaters and steam hoods; energy efficiency improvements for greenhouse operations including insulation and thermal curtains; an add-on battery storage system to an existing PV installation; HVAC and walk-in cooler energy efficiency improvements for a newly renovated aquaculture production facility; and nineteen roof- and ground-mounted photovoltaic systems for a variety of farm sector operations including vegetable, fruit & berry, cranberry, livestock, mushroom, aquaculture and quail operations as well as for a new construction apiary production building.

This year's Special Projects Program, now in its third year, will fund nine (9) projects, including: a zero net energy greenhouse operation utilizing a centralized wood chip boiler plant and an add-on to an existing PV array, replacing propane and conventional electric; a centralized wood chip boiler heating plant serving a greenhouse operation, replacing an old inefficient outdoor wood boiler; a super-efficient urban greenhouse, with claims to be the first commercial agricultural operation under the City of Boston's new agricultural zoning regulations, and



includes solar PV glazing integrated in the greenhouse roof, also a first use of this technology in MA; and six (6) projects are for walk-in coolers or freezers upgrades.

The [Agricultural Energy Grant Program](#) is one of several within DAR's Division of Agricultural Conservation and Technical Assistance (DACTA). The division's mission is to provide technical assistance, training, conservation, and funding to promote economically viable and environmentally sound agricultural practices in Massachusetts.

Including this year both programs has now awarded over 225 projects statewide since 2009, providing growers and producers more than \$3.6 million to address energy issues on their farms. This year, 60 total applicants submitted a variety of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects totaling just under \$1,800,000 in requests, a record year for the program.

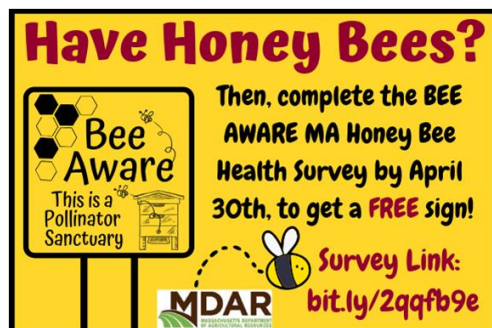
MDAR received 60 applications totaling almost \$1.8 million in funding requests for both our Traditional and Special Projects Grant Programs, one of the, if not the, highest responses in the history of the AgEnergy Grant program – thank you!

### [MDAR's MA Farm Energy Program \(MFEP\) - Energy Audits](#)

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](mailto:info@massfarmenergy.com), or visit [www.massfarmenergy.com](http://www.massfarmenergy.com), submit a *Request Form*, and then you will be contacted.

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## Apiary Updates



**BEE AWARE!** [Complete the MA Honey Bee Health Survey](#): This survey has been created by the MDAR to serve as a tool for Massachusetts honey beekeepers to share data on colony health for the current bee season: April 2018 - April 2019. Participation in this [survey](#) is voluntary. After the completion of this survey, a FREE - BEE AWARE sign will be sent to participants at the mailing address provided.

### 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 (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](http://www.mass.gov/service-details/mdar-state-apiaries). [Education Day Flyer](#).

### Voluntarily Register Your Apiary

The Apiary Registration Process is easier than ever with the online form: <https://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)!

## What's Your Varroa Mite Count? Find Out With a FREE Alcohol Wash Jar!

Get a FREE alcohol wash jar and a brochure that contains basic information about Varroa mites along with an overview of the most current Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Strategies by requesting via email to MDAR [bees@mass.gov](mailto:bees@mass.gov). This practical sampling kit will either be sent directly to you or distributed by your county beekeeping organization. Each kit can be used for multiple hives. Limited quantities of these kits are available, so request yours today. After receiving your kit, please take the following [survey: bit.ly/2Q5ElmV](https://bit.ly/2Q5ElmV) and input your mite count results into the MiteCheck map: <https://bip2.beeinformed.org/mitecheck>.

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## Worker Protection Standard (WPS) Train the Trainer Course

MDAR is offering two training dates, [March 6 - East Wareham](#) or [March 11 – Springfield](#).

FIFRA 40 CFR Part 170, requires farmers that use pesticides (organic or traditional), are required to follow the [Worker Protection Standards \(WPS\)](#). It contains requirements that allow for the protection of farm workers that either work in areas that pesticides are used in or workers that apply pesticides as part of their employment. One of the main requirements of WPS is for workers to be trained in WPS. This can be done by either holding a Private Certification Pesticide License or by having taken the “Train the Trainer” course. The Department along with EPA Region I is offering two opportunities for individuals to take the WPS “Train the Trainer” course in order to train agricultural workers and be in compliance with WPS. This course is free of charge and will offer three (3) Continuing Education Units.

Please fill out the [registration form](#) and mail or email the application no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> to MDAR, 251 Causeway Street Suite 500 Boston, MA 02114-2151, Attn: Lauri Rocco [Laurie.Rocco@mass.gov](mailto:Laurie.Rocco@mass.gov).

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## MDAR Seeks to Assist CSA Farms

MDAR's Division of Agricultural Markets, in its ongoing efforts to increase sales to farms, is developing a directory of CSA farmers that are interested in partnering with corporate headquarters in Massachusetts as drop off sties. Across the country, office parks are already [incorporating CSAs into their employee offerings](#).

If you are a CSA farm, please take 2 minutes to complete [this survey](#). This will help us to begin building a directory of CSA farmers that are interested in partnering with businesses. Questions, contact [Rebecca.Davidson@mass.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Davidson@mass.gov) or [Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov](mailto:Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov).

Want to learn more? We will be hosting a workshop on CSAs in the workplace at the upcoming [Harvest New England Conference](#) at [10am, Thursday](#). You will hear from farmers and businesses to learn if this is a good fit for your business.



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## Time to Update Your Farm on “Massgrown” Map



In between snow and ice storms, it is a good time to update your farm information. 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.

If you market crops and products thru wholesale channels, please fill out our [marketing survey](#).

Are you already listed on the [Massgrown map](#)? Please send edits to [Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov](mailto:Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov). If a new farm, please fill out our [survey](#). Be sure to list only products you grown and produce.

Host events on the farm? Be sure to get them listed on our Massgrown [Culinary and Ag Events Calendar](#). Contact Katie Rozenas at [Katelyn.Rozenas@mass.gov](mailto:Katelyn.Rozenas@mass.gov).

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## Agricultural Business Training 2019 Courses and Workshops

***Exploring the Small Farm Dream*** course still has a few spots available. The course is a 5-week program (developed by NESFI) designed to guide aspiring farmers through the decision-making process of starting a farm. It will be held on **Tuesdays, 6pm - 9pm, March 5<sup>th</sup> to April 2<sup>nd</sup> in Amherst, at the Bangs Community Center**. Participants will assess their skills and knowledge related to starting a farm and running a business, clarify their farming vision, and analyze the feasibility of their idea. Cost is \$100 per farm. Applications will be accepted on a first come first serve basis until the course is filled. For application and more information, please visit [www.mass.gov/service-details/agricultural-business-training-program-abtp](http://www.mass.gov/service-details/agricultural-business-training-program-abtp).

Send *Exploring the Small Farm Dream* applications to: Deanna Levanti at [BeginningFarmerCoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:BeginningFarmerCoordinator@gmail.com)

***Planning for the Next Generation on your Farm*** workshops - MDAR is offering these sessions for farmers to better understand what is involved in succession planning. Experts from Land for Good and MDAR will provide tools and resources - including the state's Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program - to help you identify the next owner of the farm and take steps towards making the transition.

- **Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>** - Fidelity Bank, Leominster, 5:00 – 7:00pm

To register for a Planning for the Next Generation workshop session email Dorothy Du at [Dorothy.Du@mass.gov](mailto:Dorothy.Du@mass.gov) Please include which date/location you will attend and how many people will be attending from your farm.

Courses and workshops are sponsored by Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources' (MDAR) [Agricultural Business Training Program](#).

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## MDAR Seeks Qualified Applicants for Massachusetts State Exposition Building during the 2019 Big E Fair, September 13 – 29

The Massachusetts Building will be celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

MDAR invites Massachusetts businesses and organizations to apply for the opportunity to exhibit in the Massachusetts State Exposition Building 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 exhibitor guidelines and application, and **submit a completed application by Wednesday, March 13, 2019.**

Applications are available on the MDAR [website here](#). For more information, please contact Fran Pearson, Building Manager at [Frances.Pearson@mass.gov](mailto:Frances.Pearson@mass.gov) or at 617-616-1748.

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## Summer Fancy Food Show Opportunity

The Summer Fancy Food Show is the largest specialty food industry event in North America, held at the Jacob Javits Center in NYC, scheduled this year for Sunday, June 23 through Tuesday, June 25. The 2018 Summer Fancy Food Show featured more than 2,600 exhibitors, with representation from 54 countries.

MDAR is again coordinating a Massachusetts Pavilion at the 2019 Summer Fancy Food Show. This trade event helps to connect food and ag businesses with regional, national and international buyers. The USDA [Branded Program](#), offered through our partnership with Food Export USA, provides 50% reimbursement the cost of the booth, the display, point of sale material and other eligible expenses. In addition, a buyer's mission with one-on-one meetings will be an option the day before the show begins. Over 50% of the booths are already filled! If you're interested or have questions, contact Bonita Oehlke at [Bonita.Oehlke@mass.gov](mailto:Bonita.Oehlke@mass.gov).

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## Last Call for Vendors - 8th Local Food and Specialty Crop Trade Show

If you are seeking to sell or purchase more local food, the 8th Local Food and Specialty Crop Trade Show is for you. Tuesday March 5, 2019 at the Curry Student Center, Northeastern University from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. It is designed to stimulate trade between local food producers and buyers. Few exhibitor booths left! Seek livestock, seafood, farmers, and other specialty crop vendors. To register, visit [bostonlocalfood.com/our-events/buy-local-trade-show/](http://bostonlocalfood.com/our-events/buy-local-trade-show/).

Maria Moreira, Executive Director and Co-Founder of World Farmers will be the keynote speaker. As a farmer, businesswoman, mother, mentor and an advocate, Maria has mentored beginning farmers since 1984. Maria has been a leading force in identifying and establishing market opportunities for ethnic crops in Massachusetts, increasing access to culturally appropriate crops for immigrant and refugee communities. Maria always prioritizes bringing the voice of the farmer to the table.

Workshops include:

- Getting In and Staying In: Marketing Strategies and Tools to Get Your Products Into Food Services/Stores and Sell Successfully Once You're in!
- Buyers Only Panel - Success Stories from the Field
- Strategies for Building Equity in One's Business

The Local Food Trade Show will feature open floor trading between wholesale buyers and producers of locally grown food as well as expert panel workshops led by industry leaders. Free one-one technical assistance sessions will be offered to vendors on a first come first served basis. To see a current list of vendors and buyers to be featured at this year's trade show, visit [www.bostonlocalfood.org](http://www.bostonlocalfood.org). For more information, contact [Sustainable Business Network \(SBN\)](#) at 617-395-0250.

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## Second Date Added for Creating a Culture of Inclusion at MA Farmers Markets Workshop

[The MA Food System Collaborative](#) is hosting 'Creating a Culture of Inclusion at MA Farmers Markets: An interactive workshop for farmers market managers and vendors with Greg Watson, former MA Commissioner of Agriculture.' Market managers and vendors will learn more about how their farmers market can continue to bring their community together. Vendors and managers at different markets will share their experiences associated with changing community demographics and explore strategies for addressing the cultural challenges and opportunities that have arisen.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop will be on: Thursday, April 25 from 10am to 3:30pm, John W. Olver Transit Center, Allen Conference room (first floor), 12 Olive St., Greenfield.

The workshop is free to attend and lunch will be provided. Space is limited so reserve your spot early! To RSVP for the workshop in [Greenfield on April 25, register here](#). To be added to the waitlist for the workshop in Wellesley [on March 14, add your name here](#). For more information contact Brittany Peats at [brittany@mafoodsystem.org](mailto:brittany@mafoodsystem.org).

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## What do Entry-level Beef Cattle Farmers Need to Know to be Successful in New England?

To answer this question, the University of Massachusetts-Amherst needs the input of current beef farmers in a roughly 20-minute New England Beef Farmer Skills Survey [by March 3, 2019](#). Participation is voluntary, and personally identifiable information is not collected with responses.

We expect survey findings to benefit our region's beef cattle industry by helping regional universities and technical schools to create a greater pool of well-prepared new farmers: (1) to serve as apprentices or employees, (2) to expand the infrastructure of the beef industry in New England, and (3) to purchase land, animals and equipment from farmers considering retirement without family successors.

To participate in this survey, please go to [www.vasci.umass.edu](http://www.vasci.umass.edu) and click on the link for the New England Beef Farmer Skills Survey. If you would prefer a paper survey, please contact Dr. Katie Beltaire, DVM, DACT in the

Department of Veterinary and Animal Sciences at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst at (413) 545-2428 or [kbeltaire@umass.edu](mailto:kbeltaire@umass.edu).

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## QuickBooks for Farmers

Get your farm or farm-related business's books in order with this five-session class in Ware.

Classes will be held March 5, 7, 12, 14 and 19 from 9:30 am to 11:30 am.

Topics include inventory, sales tax, invoicing, adjustments and year-end procedures. A sliding-scale fee for the course includes the textbook and supplemental materials. For more information about this course, or to register, please contact Melissa at the [Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation](http://Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation) at 413-967-3001 or [melissa@qvcdc.org](mailto:melissa@qvcdc.org).

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## Federal State Marketing Improvement Program

The [Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program \(FSMIP\)](#) is a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant program that funds projects that improve the efficiency and success of the U.S. agriculture marketing system. The maximum project award is \$250,000.00.

Eligible projects range from:

- Determining best methods for processing, distributing, or marketing agricultural products.
- Eliminating barriers to movement of agricultural products in various channels.
- Exploring new uses or markets for certain commodities.

The deadline to submit a proposal to MDAR is Friday, March 29, 2019. [Click here](#) to access the RFR and for more information on FSMIP. [A webinar is scheduled on Tuesday March 5<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am - 11:00 am.](#) To sign up, or for more information about this opportunity, please contact Rebecca Davidson, FSMIP Coordinator, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, 617-626- 1744, [Rebecca.Davidson@State.ma.us](mailto:Rebecca.Davidson@State.ma.us).

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## MassHort Seeks Vendors for Gardeners' Fair

Save the date! The 2019 Gardeners' Fair at Elm Bank is scheduled for **May 11<sup>th</sup>** at the [Massachusetts Horticultural Society](#), 900 Washington Street, Wellesley, MA.

Each year the sale of annual and perennial plants and shrubs is enhanced by vegetables and herbs, not to mention the vendors with garden-related items. The Gardeners' Fair at The Gardens at Elm Bank is an event focused on the gardening enthusiast, the home gardener, and people who love plants and gardens. Mass Hort is inviting vendors to sell plants (perennials, trees, shrubs, fruits, vegetables, and flowers), garden hardscape, pots, containers, garden sculpture and furniture, tools, clothing, and other plant and garden-related goods.

[Exhibitor opportunities here.](#) Event link [here.](#)

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## Massachusetts Food Businesses Spotlighted at the 2019 Good Food Awards

Massachusetts food businesses were in the spotlight during the 2019 Good Food Awards! With over 2,000 entries from all 50 states, the [Good Food Awards](#) offer recognition for top tasting artisan food and beverage products based on craftsmanship, social and environmental attributes.

### Massachusetts awardees include:

- [Beverly Bees](#)- Honey - Raw MA Wildflower Honey & Comb, Beverly
- [BOHO Chocolate](#)- Chocolate - 70% Dark Cacao Nib Crunch Bar, Leverett
- [Broadsheet Coffee Roasters](#) - Coffee - Special Prep Ethiopia Natural Bombe, Bensa Sidama, Cambridge
- [C&C Orchards](#)- Honey - Wildflower Honey, Sunderland
- [Doves and Figs](#)- Preserves - Flower Power Peach Conserve, Arlington
- [Goodnow Farms Chocolate](#)- Confections - Esmeraldas with Putnam Rye Whiskey Bar, Sudbury
- [Shire City Herbals](#)- Elixir- Fire Cider, Pittsfield
- [Stoneman Brewery](#)- Beer - Tractor Ryed IPA, Colrain
- [Stormalong Cider](#)- Cider - Red Skies at Night, Sherborn
- [Real Pickles](#)- Pickles - Organic Garlic Dill Pickles & Organic Garlic Kraut, Greenfield
- [Tewksbury Honey](#)- Honey - Spring Harvest 2018, Tewksbury

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## UPCOMING EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

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**February 26 - Berkshire Grown: Bookkeeping for Farmers Part 1** - Stockbridge. [More here.](#)

**February 26 & 27 – MNLA Winter Forum & Annual Meeting** - Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center, Marlborough. [Details here.](#)

**February 27 & 28 - [Harvest New England Ag Marketing Conference and Trade Show](#)** - Sturbridge Host Hotel - New England's premier agricultural marketing conference. Sponsored by the six New England State Departments of Agriculture. With more than 800 people in attendance and a trade show of almost 100 exhibitors, this is New England's largest agricultural conference solely dedicated to agricultural marketing. [Details here.](#)

**February 27 - [CCCGA Annual Meeting](#)** - 1620 Hotel, Plymouth. [Details here.](#)

**February 28 - [Webinar: Common Nutrient Problems of Spring Greenhouse Crops](#)** – [Details here.](#)

**March 1 – [Maple Month Kickoff Event](#)**, Ferrindino Maple, Hampden, MA. [Details here.](#)

**March 1 - [Produce Safety Alliance \(PSA\) Grower Training](#)** - Beverly. [Details here.](#)

**March 4 - MDAR Hemp Program Informational Session** - Randolph. Registration link: [www.bit.ly/randolph\\_hemp](http://www.bit.ly/randolph_hemp).

**March 5 - The Local Specialty Crop and Local Food Trade Show**, Northeastern University. [Details here.](#)

**March 5 - Funding Opportunities for Your Farm** - Westborough. [Details here.](#)

**March 5 - Berkshire Grown: Planning for Profit** - Stockbridge. [More here.](#)

**March 6 - Worker Protection Standard (WPS) Train the Trainer Course** - East Wareham. [More here.](#)

**March 6 - CISA Winter Workshop: Three Pillars of Digital Marketing** - Greenfield. [More here.](#)

**March 7 - Worker Protection Standard (WPS) Train the Trainer** - Topsfield Fairgrounds. [Details here.](#)

**March 7 - Planning for the Next Successor on your Farm** – Leominster. Free - Register with Dorothy Du at [Dorothy.Du@mass.gov](mailto:Dorothy.Du@mass.gov).

**March 11 - Worker Protection Standard (WPS) Train the Trainer Course** - Springfield Technical Community College. [More here.](#)

**March 12 - Food Safety Planning Workshop** – Westboro. [Details here.](#)

**March 13 - Deer Ticks and Associated Diseases** – Webinar. [Register here.](#)

**March 14 - Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) Grower Training** - Stockbridge - [Details here.](#)

**March 16 - 18 - New England Made Giftware & Specialty Food Shows** - Portland, ME. [Details here.](#)

**March 16 - Buyers Mission to Seafood Expo North America**, Boston. Contact: [Bonita.Oehlke@state.ma.us](mailto:Bonita.Oehlke@state.ma.us).

**March 17 – 19 - Seafood Expo North America**, Boston Convention Center. [Details here.](#)

**March 19 - Introduction Holistic Financial Planning** - Stockbridge. [More here.](#)

**March 21 - Northeast Harvest Agricultural Conference** – Topsfield Fairgrounds. [Details here.](#)

**March 26 - MA Farm Winery and Growers Association Annual Meeting** - Publick House, Sturbridge. [Details here.](#)

**March 27<sup>th</sup> - Agriculture Day at the Statehouse** – [Details here.](#)

**March 29 - Food Policy Council Meeting** - MassWildlife Field Headquarters, Westborough. [More here.](#)

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

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## USDA News



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## The Deadline for Disaster Coverage is March 15<sup>th</sup>

Massachusetts farmers are encouraged to purchase disaster protection on their 2019 crops. Farmers have a variety of risk management options to protect their investment. The options include the following:

- Whole Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP), WFRP provides growers with farm revenue protection from crop or market losses. WFRP replaced the Adjusted Gross Revenue policies that have been available in previous years. WFRP is sold by crop insurance agent. Check with your [crop insurance agent](#).
- Individual Crop policies, Growers can purchase federal crop insurance on potatoes, fresh market sweet corn, tobacco, corn (grain/silage). These policies protect growers from natural disaster losses. Check with your crop insurance agent.
- [Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance \(NAP\)](#), NAP is available on all annual crops not covered by crop insurance. The new farm bill reauthorized buy-up coverage, check with FSA on the availability for the 2019 crop year. Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is sold by the [USDA Farm Service Agency \(FSA\)](#).

Beginning, historically underserved and limited resource farmers receive special consideration which include waiver of NAP administrative fees, 50% reduction in NAP premiums and up to an additional 10% premiums subsidy and waiver of policy fees on their crop insurance policies.

Remember: It is each producer's responsibility to develop a risk management plan for their farm that will provide adequate protection if a disaster occurs...and to live with the consequences. UMass Extension works in partnership with the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) to educate Massachusetts producers about Federal Crop Insurance and Risk Management Programs. For more information, please visit [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov) or contact UMass Risk Management Specialists Paul Russell at [pmrrussell@umext.umass.edu](mailto:pmrrussell@umext.umass.edu) or Tom Smiarowski at [tsmiarowski@umext.umass.edu](mailto:tsmiarowski@umext.umass.edu).

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- [Farmers Markets Seeking Vendors](#) - Check back periodically for updates to this list. **If updates, please send to [David.Webber@state.ma.us](mailto:David.Webber@state.ma.us).**
- **Vendor Opportunity at the Ashland Farmers Market** - Now entering its 8th season, the Ashland Farmers Market is seeking one or more ready-to-eat vendors. The ideal vendor would offer both breakfast and lunch between 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM, use locally sourced products, prepare and cook fresh food on site, and participate in special events during the June to October season. Open to weekly or bi-weekly schedules. This is a rare opportunity to join an established Saturday morning summer market. Recently voted MetroWest's Best Farmers Market, AFM draws an average of 1400 customers per week and features 40 tents weekly and has been a successful incubator for new businesses. Covered picnic tables allow shoppers to meet friends, eat together and listen to music. We want them to come for breakfast and stay through 'til lunch! Interested persons should contact Rob Moolenbeek of the Food Vendor Committee at [moolenbeek@gmail.com](mailto:moolenbeek@gmail.com).
- **MDAR Job Opportunities:**
  - [Seasonal Field Technician](#), Contracted Seasonal Employee, State Reclamation Board, Yarmouthport, MA
  - [Seasonal Surveillance Technician](#), Contracted Seasonal Employee, State Reclamation Board, Walpole, MA
  - [Agriculture Land Use Outreach Contractor](#), Contractor, MDAR, Boston, MA
- **NOFA positions:**

- [Grant Writer](#)
- [Corporate Sponsor Director](#)
- [Membership and Database Coordinator](#)
- [Organic Food Guide Coordinator](#)
- [Fundraising Coordinator](#)
- **Tractor for Sale:** Ford 1720 tractor, 630 hours w/bucket and 100 gallon SS sprayer. Great condition, \$12500. Call Eric 508-362-4268, [klbeh@comcast.net](mailto:klbeh@comcast.net).

## About the *Farm & Market Report*

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Next issue to be published in February. Please send news, events, or classified information by April 5<sup>th</sup> to [Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov](mailto:Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov). To unsubscribe, or change your email address, contact [Richard.LeBlanc@mass.gov](mailto: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](http://www.mass.gov/agr).

