

MA Farmland Action Plan – Drop-In Session for Interested Individuals

Notes from online discussion on 6/9/2025

Context

On Monday, June 9, 2025 at 4pm Katharine Otto hosted a drop-in session for interested individuals (people who may have useful information to share and/or are interested in the outcomes, but likely will not be helping with implementation directly). The meeting had no presentation – instead the content was guided by questions and comments from attendees. It was organized as an easy way to connect in, anticipating that recent discussions and new resources may have sparked additional thoughts. The primary audience was potential partners.

Facilitator – Katharine Otto, Farmland Action Plan Coordinator, MDAR. Katharine.s.otto@mass.gov

The following is a brief summary of the conversation that occurred during the drop-in session.

Some notes regarding the comments and questions:

- Some have been edited or combined.
- Comments have been collated by topics, in no particular order
- These comments are from voluntary participants in open discussion. These comments may or may not align with positions of MDAR or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Discussion notes

The following is a brief summary of some of the conversation that occurred in the chat box during the meeting as well as some of the oral comments. It includes links and resources shared with participants.

Messaging about the benefits of farmland

- Carbon off-sets/ carbon credits
- Unintended consequences cost – local versus other
- Connecticut municipal examples that compare costs and benefits of farmland versus other land uses – Page 9 in <https://farmlandinfo.org/publications/connecticut-planning-for-agriculture-2020/>

Other

- How can Ag Comms and local people connect into plan implementation?
- Farmers need viability and succession planning
- Need for private landowners to be encouraged to lease out their land for farming
- How are the federal funding uncertainties affecting MDAR work?