

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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PESTICIDE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 29, 2025

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

| | |
|--|---------|
| Commissioner Ashley Randle, MDAR (Chair) | Present |
| Meg Blanchet, DPH, Designee for Commissioner Goldstein | Present |
| Michael Moore, DPH, Food Protection Program | Absent |
| Misty Anne Marold, DFG, Designee for Commissioner O'Shea | Present |
| Kathy Romero, DEP, Designee for Commissioner Heiple | Present |
| Eric Seaborn, DCR, Designee for Commissioner Arrigo | Present |
| Richard Berman, Commercial Applicator | Present |
| Steven Ward, Farmer | Present |
| Jack Looney, Public Member | Present |
| R. Christopher Brittan, Public Member | Present |
| Rosemary Malfi, Public Member | Present |
| Nicole Bloor, Public Member | Present |
| Brita Luneburg, Public Member | Present |

The Board did meet or exceed the minimum number (7) of members present to form a quorum and conduct business.

A. REVIEW OF MINUTES FROM JULY 29, 2025:

Motion to Approve Minutes: S. Ward

Second: K. Romero

Discussion: None

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

B. CONSERVATIONIST PESTICIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL OPEN SEAT

The following four candidates were interviewed for the open seat on the Conservationist Advisory Council:

Emma Wick

She is currently a conservation planning technical specialist for NRCS. The work she does is primarily with cranberry growers in developing management plans. Prior to this position she worked as an environmental regulations program manager with Massachusetts cranberry growers, an Integrated Pest Management scout on cranberry bogs, and a research fellow with UMASS Cranberry Station. The idea of serving the "whole

system” is what interests her in applying for the seat. She believes she is well positioned to see the agricultural perspective and conservation perspective when it comes to pesticide policy.

R. Malfi asked if she worked with cranberry bog restoration. She stated she had but was more on the permitting side of things. She also asked if she had any experience in implementing pesticide mitigation measures. E. Wick stated that they would primarily rely on the cranberry chart book. She would occasionally make recommendations on things related to wellheads, but she was primarily in regulatory space and therefore directions would be coming from that space.

S. Ward asked if she could speak more about her experience in the environmental planning specialist. She stated that she was an assistant to the consultant and helped with the permitting packaging for projects. She was responsible for assessing where the project fit into the Wetland Protection Act.

N. Bloor asked her to explain her work with IPM. She stated that she helped growers collect, identify pests and recommended IPM (cultural, mechanical, etc.) strategies on how to handle the pest.

C. Brittan asked if she had done any work in other fields other than cranberry and she responded she had not.

J. Looney asked if she saw a relationship between biotic and abiotic factors impacting conservation. She stated that she does.

M. Marold asked how she balances needs of maintaining the needs of agriculture and the needs of maintaining conservation land. She stated that she studied sustainability and philosophy, so she tries to have a broad perspective of the area prior to going out to the site. She tries to have a holistic approach in her conservation plans.

Carrie Stamos

Conservation was a key part of her life when growing up on a farm. While her employment background has not been in conservation, her property abuts wetland areas and had to work with the conservation commission in town. It is here where she learned a lot about conservation. Her general philosophy is that humans and the environment have to work together and after retirement she began working with Mass Audubon. She also works with Rescue Raptor campaign and Save Lincoln Wildlife. She stated that Lincoln is working on a home petition rule to ban pesticides in the town. She is interested in finding ways that she can be helpful to support the environment and communities.

S. Ward asked her about the home petition rule. She explained that she understands pests can be an issue, but she believes the use of pesticides should be limited and that there are other options. She does not have an agenda to ban anything but rather to educate and have a balanced approach.

M. Marold asked her to expand on her connection with Mass Audubon and the work with the rodenticides. She replied that she has learned about IPM through the work with rodenticides. She reiterated that she does believe they can be used in a responsible and safe manner but there are other actions that can be taken as well.

R. Malfi asked if she had done any pesticide or mitigation work on her property. She stated that she is not allowed to do any pesticide applications. She treats a section of her property as a wetland to enlarge the buffer area.

J. Looney asked if she would ever consider mRNA when it comes to pest control. She stated that she thinks that those are interesting solutions and she supports them.

Michael McManus

He is trained as a scientist. He has a PhD in synthetic organic chemistry. While at MIT he was involved in a project to find an alternative to Glyphosate. Throughout his life, most of his conservation efforts have been at home. He currently sits on the Wellsley Board of Public Works where pesticides are not allowed on town land.

S. Ward asked him to speak about any experience that he has had with farming. He stated that he doesn't have experience in farming and only buys organic.

M. Marold asked how he would approach the idea of banning pesticides on land in a large city. He stated that Wellesley is small so he would assume that there would need to be more thought taken when looking at a larger city because of the difference between small and large cities.

J. Looney asked if he sees any use in mRNA in pest control. He stated he has concern with modifying anything in nature and understands it can be used in a safe manner but worries if it is understood enough to put out into the environment.

Devon Smolak

She is interested in the seat because a lot of the topics discussed at the Council meetings affect her. She grew up next to a farm, keeps bees and used to work for a tree care company. She feels that she brings a neutral opinion on things and is fact based. She believes being afraid of pesticides is just as harmful as being careless with them and believes she can bring a good perspective on pesticide use. She currently works on a family farm and is a crop insurance agent.

S. Ward asked to explain how she balances farming with conservation. She explained that it is important to follow the regulations and have faith in them. Things like notification, PPE, buffers etc. are important.

M. Marold asked if she has experience in structural pesticide applications. She stated that she has less experience but when she worked for the tree company, she would make pesticide applications to trees in areas where buildings were located.

R. Malfi asked about what mitigation measures she uses. She stated that the farm uses IPM and practices things like proper timing of application to reduce exposure and mowing frequently to lessen the use of herbicide use. She asked Devon to define IPM. Devon responded that IPM is monitoring thresholds, using cultural practices and only using pesticides when needed. R. Malfi asked if a pesticide was applied according to labels would she consider the application "safe". D. Smolak replied that she has faith in the regulatory process and if the information on the label and science behind it is correct, she would consider it safe.

C. PESTICIDE PROGRAM UPDATES, TARYN LASCOLA

MDAR has been working on updating our exams to comply with the federal requirements that were put into place in 2017. The following exams reviewed and updated:

- Aerial, Commercial
- Aerial, Private
- Cranberry
- General Pest Control
- Greenhouse
- Nursery
- ROW

- Shade Tree
- Small Fruit
- Termite
- Tree Fruit
- Turf
- Vegetable
- Vertebrate
- Custom Ag
- Aquatic

MDAR anticipates that there will be three more exams completed by the end of the year.

Rodenticide Review

The draft Phase 2 of the review has been completed. It is posted online for the public to review and provide comments on. The comment period closed on Oct. 1st. The comments were provided to ERG where they will be summarizing the comments and making any factual updates that may need to be made because of the comments.

Biodiversity Goals Report

The Governor recently announced the Biodiversity Goals Report. In it, there were recommendations specific to pesticides. They include:

- Conduct a scientific and individual review of second-generation anti-coagulant rodenticides (SGARs),
- Ensure reporting of application to protect public health and wildlife.
- Encourage integrated pest management on state, municipal, and private property
- Educate the public impacts of pesticides on pollinators and reduce their use.
But we will evaluate things to determine if we can increase the amount of work we are doing in these spaces given limited resources.

MDAR currently conduct many of the actions that the plan is recommending:

Pesticide Licensing

The notice that it is renewal time has gone out. Emails have been sent to individuals whose certification cycle ends this year to let them know.

R. Berman asked when the Board will see the first draft of 333 CMR 10. T. LaScola stated that MDAR has completed its draft and it is now being reviewed before it is sent to the Board.

D. PESTICIDE PROGRAM OVERVIEW, TARYN LASCOLA

T. LaScola provided an overview of the pesticide program which included:

- Statutory Authority
- Pesticide Product Registration
- Pesticide Licensing and Exams
- Pesticide Program Structure and Staffing
- Pesticide Enforcement
- How Changes are Made to Regulations

R. Malfi asked how often different standards are applied to a new active ingredient. T. LaScola explained that the Pesticide Subcommittee determines:

- if something will be registered for use in the state
- whether the product will be restricted/general and;

- they can conduct an individual review. It is not very often that the Subcommittee does not register something that EPA has registered. R. Berman provided an example.

R. Berman asked how long it takes MDAR to review the applications. T. LaScola stated that the goal is to have it on the list for registration within a month or two, but sometimes it could take longer depending on workload. She also noted that if a product contains a new active ingredient, it will take longer.

D. PESTICIDE APPLICATOR PESTICIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE, BOB LEON

B. Leon summarized that the Council would like 25b application to require licensing and they would like for the waiting period in between obtaining the commercial applicators license and the certification license to be reduced. Additionally, the Council is working on drafting a response to the Conservationist Councils notification recommendations.

E. CONSERVATIONIST PESTICIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE, CLINT RICHMOND

C. Richmond stated that the following topics were discussed at the meetings between the last Board meeting and today:

- Pre-emption
- Summary about other states' annual use requirements
- Biodiversity goals

F. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business

H. ADJOURN

Motion to Adjourn: J. Looney

Second: S. Ward

Discussion: None

In Favor: All

Opposed: None

Any documents referenced in these minutes may be obtained through a Public Records Request. To make a request, please go to [AGR Public Records Requests | Mass.gov](#).