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## June / July Farm & Market Report

6/15/17

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### COMMISSIONER'S COLUMN

#### FOREFRONT

- [Energy News](#)
- [APR Annual Application Period Open Until June 30, 2017 for Fiscal Year 2018 Projects](#)
- [Seeking Applicants for Massachusetts Day, Harvest New England Day, Military Appreciation Day at the Massachusetts State Exposition Building \(The Big E\)](#)
- [Animal Health Rules for Fairs and Shows Updated This Year](#)
- [Organic Cost Share Program](#)
- [The Market Corner](#)
- [Apiary Updates](#)
- [Record-breaking Production for Massachusetts Maple Sugarmakers](#)

### UPCOMING EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

### USDA NEWS

### CLASSIFIED

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### COMMISSIONER'S COLUMN



Greetings Mass. Agriculture and all its friends,

I write you from the Northeast State Departments of Agriculture (NEASDA) Annual Meeting in lovely Cooperstown, NY. NEASDA is one of four regional subgroups of our national organization, NASDA. It's composed of the Commissioners, Secretaries, Directors and Chiefs of the six New England States, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware and their staffs. We gather to discuss our shared interests and concerns, which sometimes are very different than those of the Midwest, Southern, and Western groups, all of which have some major commodity producing states. Though even among the NEASDA states there are varied levels of ag production, we have much more shared interests and scale than the very large commodity producing states.

It's a great learning experience interacting with my peers, hearing about their issues, and how they are dealing with them.

So, Mother Nature once again has zigged when we thought she would zag. All winter long, we heard reports that winter precipitation was not sufficient to break the drought, and that it was unlikely there would be sufficient spring rain to accomplish what winter storms had not.

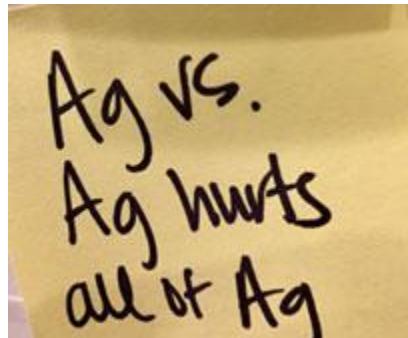
Well, as we all know, Mother Nature doesn't like doing what is expected of her, and the spring rains came. And came. And came, and as of this moment last year's drought is over. Nobody wants to complain after what happened last year, but it's been a tough year for many activities; the garden centers and greenhouses had a particularly rough May with several bad weekends during May, their busiest month of the year.

Many are starting to wonder if the wide range of extreme weather we have experienced in the recent past represents what to expect in the future. At MDAR we are continuing our work to develop best programming to respond to future drought conditions. This work keys into Governor Baker's and Lt. Governor Polito's Executive Order on Climate Change, and Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matt Beaton's charge to all the departments under the EEA umbrella.

We've formed a Climate Change Working Group within MDAR to study how we can improve existing programs and create new ones to help Mass. Ag become more climate change resilient. I anticipate reporting to you on our efforts from time to time in future columns.

Earlier this year I was in Washington DC to meet with several other state agriculture commissioners and secretaries for a strategic planning session concerning our national organization. We employed the time honored technique of writing thoughts on sticky notes and placing them on the wall.

One of them particularly resonated with me and I thought I'd share it with all of you.



Do we really have any of this "Ag vs. Ag" mentality? You bet we do! It's at a global international trade level. Nationally we have regions and sectors too frequently taking contrary positions.

And Massachusetts is no different. I have heard from time to time in private conversation somewhat resentful (and frequently misinformed) words to the effect of "The money they (insert some type of farming) received from the State is money that formerly went to us and really still should go to us," or something like "That isn't real farming," or an expressed concern that MDAR

is paying too much or too little attention to a certain Ag sector.

Back to the sticky note-do these mindsets "hurt all of Ag"? Of course they do. We have about 28,000 people employed in agriculture in a state with a population of over 6 million people. That's only about .4% of the total population. There are so many different constituencies lobbying for attention and resources, many of whom have much larger population bases than Ag.

That's not to say that Ag doesn't have a strong voice, it does, and in my opinion its voice is stronger than one might expect from a group with a total constituency of 28,000 workers and their families. There are many strong commodity associations and other non-profits speaking out for agriculture, not to mention there is a government agency dedicated to it. (Think about how many bigger industries there are that don't have their own dedicated agency.)

Still, the "Ag vs. Ag" mentality just isn't helpful. Now I'm a pretty realistic guy, I think. I'm not suggesting we gather round the campfire, hold hands, sing Kumbaya, and pledge total devotion and support to each other.

We all have our own interests, but we also have many shared interests. There is nothing wrong with enlightened self-interest-we all have to look out for ourselves, but we also need to understand that what helps one element of Ag today may help your sector and you tomorrow. Something good that happens in another part of the state or in an urban, suburban or rural area may allow some legislators to gain new understanding of Ag's overall importance to the Commonwealth.

There is nothing wrong with enlightened self-interest, particularly if you also believe that "A rising tide lifts all ships."

So I'll get off my soapbox now. That sticky note is stuck in my brain.

What else? In April, MDAR released its [Pollinator Protection Plan](#). MDAR's team headed by Crop and Pest Division Director Taryn LaScola and Chief Apiary Inspector Dr. Kim Skyrn did a masterful job integrating many of the comments and themes received when the original draft was released. Please take a moment to follow the link and review the document.

The "Bee Team's" work continues when on June 21, EEA Secretary Matt Beaton and Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner Leo Roy join MDAR as we open the second State Apiary on the grounds of Essex Technical High School in Hathorne, a part of Danvers. The first location at UMass Amherst has developed into a fantastic educational, training and demonstration tool, and we are glad to locate another in the eastern part of the state. EEA and MDAR, along with sister agencies DCR and the Department of Fish and Game are planning some future partnerships to help pollinators and the beekeeping community. Stay tuned.

I already hit my first fair. The Comm-Mrs. and I visited the Sheep and Woolcraft Fair at the Cummington Fairgrounds on a beautiful day. It was a very valuable learning experience for me, to explore an element of Ag about which I knew very little. Now I know a little more; still lots to learn, and a lot of fairs on this year's calendar. I can't wait.

So as seems to becoming a custom, I'm past Rick's deadline, so I should close here so he can get this Report out. I remind you to follow MassDeptAgr on [Twitter](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#) for information between Reports.

I know a lot of you are behind because of all the rain, but we are also very happy to have it. I still haven't planted my garden-it's the latest ever for me. That's my plan for this weekend. I hope I can defeat the woodchucks this year, but that's for a future report to you.

I hope this season turns warm and sunny, with an inch of rain each week (preferably at night), and leads to successful harvests. You deserve it after last year.

Best regards,



John Lebeaux

# FOREFRONT

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## Energy News

Energy Audits – The Massachusetts Farm Energy Program has funds to help farms cover audits, energy efficient projects, and select renewable energy projects. Contact for more information 413-727-3090, [info@massfarmenergy.com](mailto:info@massfarmenergy.com) or visit [www.massfarmenergy.com](http://www.massfarmenergy.com), submit a “Request Form”, and you will be contacted.

### UPDATE on SMART - DOER Files SMART Regulations

SMART Regulations Filed - On Monday, June 5, 2017, DOER filed 225 CMR 20.00, the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program, with the Secretary of the Commonwealth as an emergency regulation. DOER will separately announce the timing of public hearings and the written public comment deadline in the coming weeks. In the meantime, the following copies of the regulation and accompanying guidelines are available for stakeholder review:

#### [225 CMR 20.00 – SMART Program Emergency Regulation](#)

The SMART program is the continuation of environmental solar PV incentives initiated originally as Solar Recs (SRECs). For the first time, these incentives will include Agricultural Canopies, namely an Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Unit, essentially field mounted solar PV systems designed for double use of land, optimizing crop production and energy generation.

Please note the performance standards specifically for the Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Units, originally considered to be guidelines, are now stated as part of and in the regulations under, Section 20.06. 1(d) Special Provisions for Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Units.

In regard to SREC-II being extended to March 31, 2018, from the DOER webpage: “In recognition of the time necessary to fully implement the new Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) program and its obligation to have an orderly transition between the SREC II and SMART programs, DOER will grant good cause extension requests for projects that seek one.” Please note SREC factors will be applied. For more information please see the DOER webpage:

[www.mass.gov/eea/energy UTILITIES-clean-tech/renewable-energy/solar/rps-solar-carve-out-2/current-status-solar-carve-out-ii.html](http://www.mass.gov/eea/energy UTILITIES-clean-tech/renewable-energy/solar/rps-solar-carve-out-2/current-status-solar-carve-out-ii.html)

You can find out more about this effort at [www.mass.gov/eea/energy UTILITIES-clean-tech/renewable-energy/rps-aps/development-of-the-next-solar-incentive.html](http://www.mass.gov/eea/energy UTILITIES-clean-tech/renewable-energy/rps-aps/development-of-the-next-solar-incentive.html) or contact Gerry Palano, [Gerald.Palano@state.ma.us](mailto:Gerald.Palano@state.ma.us).

### MDAR’s Annual AgEnergy Grant Programs – Submission Deadline Reached for FY2018 Applications

The June 7, 2018 postmarked deadline for MDAR’s FY2018 AgEnergy Grant Program was reached with over 35 applications received and still counting at the time of publication of this Farm & Market Report. Similar to FY2017, the FY2018 AgEnergy Grant consists of two grant programs – our “Traditional” agricultural energy grant program, now in its tenth year, which requests applications for a wide variety of energy efficiency and

renewable energy projects; and a “Special Projects” grant, now for the second time, for very specific categories of clean energy technology applications.

MDAR is thankful and grateful to the MA Department of Energy Resources (DOER) for once again contributing significant funding toward both these grant programs in a partnership arrangement. This is all in an effort toward the goal of assisting our MA Agricultural sector in becoming more energy sustainable through energy efficiency and clean energy project implementation, while simultaneously achieving the MA goals of GHG reduction as well as those established our 2015 MA Food System Plan, the first since 1974.

## **Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Dockets**

DPU has two open dockets for public comment relative to net metering:

**D.P.U. 17-10 Rulemaking on Net Metering:** pertains to a proposed new Net Metering Facility type, Small Hydroelectric Facilities, as a result of An Act to Promote Energy Diversity. Also relevant to whether net metering should be based on technology or facility type. Please visit DPU’s website for more information - <http://web1.env.state.ma.us/DPU/FileRoom/dockets/bynumber> (insert 17-10). To provide opportunity for public comment, and pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, §§ 2 and 4, and 220 C.M.R. § 2.05, the Department will hold a public hearing on Thursday, June 29, 2017, at 2:00 p.m., at the Department’s offices, One South Station, Fifth Floor, Boston, Massachusetts. Any person interested in commenting on this matter may appear at the public hearing or submit initial written comments to the Department not later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on Friday, June 30, 2017, and reply written comments not later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on Friday, July 14, 2017. The Department welcomes specific recommended language changes to the Proposed Net Metering Regulations.

**D.P.U. 17-22 Inquiry into Application of the Net Metering Regulations and the “Single Parcel” and “Subdivision Rules”:** pertains to granting blanket net metering exemptions to the single parcel/single net metering facility net metering rule, includes the DPU’s staff’s straw proposals, a request for further written comments, and next steps associated with the Department’s investigation in this docket. DPU seeks written comments no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 25, 2017. Please visit DPU’s website for more information - <http://web1.env.state.ma.us/DPU/FileRoom/dockets/bynumber> (insert 17-22).

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## **APR Annual Application Period Open Until June 30, 2017 for Fiscal Year 2018 Projects**

MDAR is now accepting applications to the Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program for projects that will be funded in partnership with the USDA-NRCS Agricultural Lands Easement (ALE) Program. APR applications must be received at the Department’s Boston office by 5:00 pm on June 30, 2017 for review in Fiscal Year 2018. Applications that have already been received by the Department throughout this past year will be processed for Fiscal Year 2018. Applications received after June 30, 2017 will be kept on file for review in Fiscal Year 2019. However, the application process and timeline are subject to revision due to changes in funding levels and sources.

For more information on the APR Program or the 2018 APR ALE Application process, please click here: [www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/land-use/apr-application-gateway.html](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/land-use/apr-application-gateway.html)

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## **Seeking Applicants for Massachusetts Day, Harvest New England Day, Military Appreciation Day at the Massachusetts State Exposition Building (The Big E)**

MDAR invites Massachusetts organizations and businesses to apply for the opportunity to exhibit on [Massachusetts Day](#), [Harvest New England Day](#), and [Military Appreciation Day](#) at the Massachusetts State Exposition Building at the [Big E Fair](#). The mission of the Massachusetts Building is to showcase agriculture, commerce, culture, and tourism through informational, educational, promotional and retail exhibits. The Massachusetts Building is located at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield, Massachusetts.

The 2017 Big E Fair runs from September 15, 2017 through October 1, 2017. More information and all three applications are available on the [MDAR website](#).

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## **Animal Health Rules for Fairs and Shows Updated This Year**

The 2017 Animal Health Rules for Fairs and Shows have been published. There are changes from recent years: One properly completed health certificate may be used for the entire MA fair season when accompanied by a list of all of the New England shows at which the animal is expected to be exhibited. Please see the full rules document here at [www.mass.gov/eea/docs/agr/animal-health/docs/fair-reg-2017.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/agr/animal-health/docs/fair-reg-2017.pdf)

Updates have also been made to the Fair and Exhibition rules for other New England states. A joint statement by the six NE state veterinarians can be found here: [www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/animal-health/animal-imports-livestock-markets/](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/animal-health/animal-imports-livestock-markets/).

[Top](#)

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## **Organic Cost Share Program**

2017 Organic Cost Share Program - Reminder – Applications are due October 15, 2017



The MDAR works with the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service to reimburse certified organic farmers and food processors up to 75% (\$750 dollars maximum) of the total certification cost. Funds are available to farms and food companies that are inspected and certified and/or inspected and receiving renewal of certification.

[Criteria and application here.](#)

If you are certified organic, open to the public, and would like to be mapped on the Massgrow [map](#), please fill out the [Massachusetts Farm Marketing Survey](#)

[Top](#)

## The Market Corner

Announcements & Information from MDAR's Division of Agricultural Markets

New posters have arrived! As part of a recent "Massachusetts grown...and fresher" Specialty Crop Block



Grant, four new posters have been created - Honey, Blueberries, Bedding Plants, and Maple. If interested in posters for your farms, favorite teacher, or anyone else, [click here for order form](#). We still have our traditional posters ("Top 10", apple, pumpkin, strawberries, and vegetables), as well as stickers, and price cards. It's always good to remind the public the value of all we grow and produce in Massachusetts!

Host special events? It is important to keep sending us your top farm events or ag-tivities to add to the [Massgrown Culinary and Agricultural Events Calendar](#). Next to the "Massgrown" [map](#), it is one of the most viewed "Massgrown" webpages.

**Retail Farms:** Reminder to check your farm information on the "Massgrown" map. If any edits needed, send to [Richard.LeBlanc@state.ma.us](mailto:Richard.LeBlanc@state.ma.us). New and beginning farmers, please fill out the [Massachusetts Farm Marketing Survey](#)



**Calendar Contest Extended to July 1** – Each year [Mass. Ag in the Classroom](#) and MDAR collaborate in creating a great visual calendar that spotlights the diversity of agriculture we offer in the Commonwealth. We encourage growers and the public to send in up to five pictures. You can mail them in, or even easier, download them to the link provided in the [entry form](#). We especially like photographs of maple, cranberries, flowers and plants, farmers' markets, animals, fruits, turkeys, and Christmas trees. (Farmers – send out contest details thru your email lists for an opportunity for your customers to spotlight your farm!)

### Save the Date for the Annual Tomato Contest

Save the Date for the 33rd annual Massachusetts Tomato Contest on **Tuesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>** in the KITCHEN at the Boston Public Market, 100 Hanover Street, Boston. Tomatoes will be judged by a panel of experts on flavor, firmness/slicing quality, exterior color and shape. The contest is sponsored by the New England Vegetable and Berry Growers Association in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources and Mass Farmers' Markets and hosted by the Boston Public Market Association and Trustees of Reservations. This friendly contest is open to commercial tomato growers and is designed to increase consumer's awareness of local agriculture.



## Apiary Updates

### Remember June 19-25<sup>th</sup> is National Pollinator Week

Visit the [Pollinator Partnership Pollinator Week](#) webpage to learn more about events happening all over the country. Locally, consider attending the grand opening of the new State Apiary at the Essex Technical High School located at 565 Maples St, Danvers on Wednesday, 6/21 from 10-11:00 am.

### Want a Health Inspection of Your Honey Bee Colony(ies)?

Visit the [MDAR Apiary Program Inspection Request Form](#) to sign up for your annual health inspection. After submission, an inspector will contact you to schedule an inspection during the month(s) you select. Please note that inspections are not performed during inclement weather (i.e. rain/hail, high winds, and temperatures below 60F).

### Want to Register Your Apiary and Honey Bee Colonies?

Visit the [MDAR Apiary Program Registration Form](#) to register your apiary and honey bee colonies.

### Interested In Learning More About Honey Bees, Their Health and Colony Management Techniques?

Join State Apiary Inspectors at the State Apiary location on the UMass Agricultural Learning Center Farm (911 North Pleasant St, Amherst, MA 01002) on Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup> (collaborative education with MA Beekeepers Association annual Field Day Event) and July 15<sup>th</sup> to get a tour of live working honey bee hives and an educational demonstration. These events are open to the public, but will focus on topics of interest to beekeepers. Participants must bring protective clothing (i.e. bee suit and/or bee veil with long pants and closed toed shoes) as it will not be provided and is required to enter the apiary.

### Want To Learn About Managing Varroa Mites in Your Colonies?

Review the newly created [MDAR Varroa Mite Brochure](#) for biology, survey techniques and treatment options. Attendees at the MA Beekeepers Association Field Day event on Sat, 6/17 can pick up a free Varroa mite alcohol wash jar kit for determining mite levels in their own apiary – see the MDAR Apiary Program table for more information and to pick up your kit.

### Worried About Bears This Bee Season?

Review the newly created [MassWildlife brochure](#) on how to manage your apiary to prevent bear issues.

### Want to Opt Out of a Wide Area Application of Mosquito Pesticides?

Visit the [MDAR State Reclamation and Mosquito Control \(SRB\)](#) webpage to submit your information using either the online or print form.

### Pollinate New England

[New England Wild Flower Society](#) is now developing “Pollinate New England,” a multifaceted educational outreach program that includes building a network of model pollinator gardens throughout New England filled with diverse, systemic pesticide-free native plants. The program, supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, aims to remedy the drastic, dangerous drop in pollinator populations and help gardeners fight through a storm of misinformation and false advertising to select native plant species that genuinely benefit pollinators. Over the next two years, the Society will design and deliver a suite of free

educational programs, including an online course, twelve pollinator garden workshops and installations across New England, and much more. Fill out the [questionnaire](#) to get involved.

New updates have been made at the [MDAR Apiary Program](#) website, as well as dates for 2017 Honey Bee Education Days at State Apiary. Massachusetts honey producers wishing to be mapped on "Massgrown and fresher" [map](#), click here for [Survey](#). 

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## Record-breaking Production for Massachusetts Maple Sugarmakers



### Legislation introduced to commemorate maple syrup in MA

For the third year in a row Massachusetts maple syrup producers made a record amount of maple syrup, according to data released by the National Agricultural Statistics Survey (NASS) on June 9. The 84,000 gallons of maple syrup exceeded by 7,000 gallons the amount produced in 2016, which itself had been a record.

Unpredictable weather kept sugarmakers on their toes this year, with surprise warm-ups in January and February that had many making syrup much earlier than usual, a cold March when barely any sap ran, and then some perfect weather in April to end on a high note. Massachusetts sugarmakers set 320,000 taps around the state, and produced slightly more than a quart of syrup per tap.

[Complete release here.](#)

[Top](#)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

**June 15 - Growing Cut Flowers: Seed to Vase** - SEMAP Event – 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm – Weatherlow Florals, 845 Sodom Rd., Westport. Managing Production of Specialty Cut Flowers for Floral Design. Tour the flower fields and hoop houses at Weatherlow Farms and learn about the ins and outs of growing specialty cut flowers for use in floral design. We'll discuss sourcing seeds and plugs, trialing new varieties, harvest and post-harvest tricks for extending vase life, and what fun flowers and foliages you might want to add to your cutting garden.  
[Register here.](#)

**June 15 - UMass Fruit Program Summer Berry Twilight Meeting** - 5:00 pm - Nourse Farms, 41 River Rd., Whately. Topics: Strawberry & Raspberry Variety Showcase - Blackberry Swing Arm Trellis Demo - High Tunnel Berry Production Update - Spotted Wing Drosophila Management Research and Management Update. 1 Pesticide Credit requested. Pre-registration is encouraged by emailing [umassfruit@umass.edu](mailto:umassfruit@umass.edu) in order to provide enough seating and food. [Details and registration here.](#)

**June 17 - Weed Management and Weed Control in Blueberry Plantings** - 11:30 am - Vandervalk Farm & Winery, Mendon. The MA Cultivated Blueberry Grower's Association (MCBGA) holding its annual spring seminar. Hilary Sandler, UMass Ext. Assistant Professor; State IPM Coordinator will give a talk "Weed Management and Weed Control in Blueberry Plantings." Cost is free for [MCBGA](#) members, non-members \$15. Please register for this seminar by emailing Elisabeth Patt at [eap1226@verizon.net](mailto:eap1226@verizon.net).

**June 19 - Agricultural Lands Preservation Committee Meeting – Open Meeting Notice** - 10:30 am, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Field Headquarters. 1 Rabbit Hill Road (off North Drive), Westborough, MA 01581 - For more information, please call 617-626-1704.

**June 22 - Topics in Landscape IPM** - 8:30 am to 12:30 pm, Doubletree Hotel, Milford, MA. Learn about timely topics in pest management for turf and landscapes, featuring soil health/plant health connections and characteristics of herbicides. Fundamental to the integrated management of turf pests is the careful selection and establishment of the right turfgrasses for the site and intended use. We'll look at how to find, select and use turfgrass species and cultivars that exhibit particular insect and disease tolerances, resistance to weed encroachment, and tolerance to environmental and use stresses. Details at [ag.umass.edu/events/topics-in-landscape-ipm](http://ag.umass.edu/events/topics-in-landscape-ipm).

**June 26 - Setting the Stage for a Successful Season with Full Spectrum Fertility** - Twilight Mtg - SEMAP Event – 6:00 - 8:00 pm - Brix Bounty Farm, Dartmouth. Take a fieldwalk through the Brix Bounty vegetable fields surveying early season crop growth and focus our discussion on fertility steps we take at Brix Bounty to ensure crops are able to maximize growth during the longest days of the year. From boron to zinc we'll cover the mineral foundations we invest in each season to promote healthy, vigorous crop growth. Included in the tour will be a deep dive into onion production, including: variety selection, enterprise analysis, cultivation strategies, fertility programs, and pest and disease management. [Register here](#).

**June 28 - Water Management Twilight Meeting** - 4-6:00 pm - Tangerini's Spring Street Farm, 139 Spring St, Millis. FSMA and drought got you down? Tour the newly installed irrigation system for orchard and vegetable crops built with funding support from NRCS with the designer, Trevor Hardy of Brookdale Farm, Irrigation and Row Crop Supply. Find out water sampling protocols and lab requirements for FSMA from the UMass Food Safety Specialist Lisa McKeag and about grant opportunities for irrigation and food safety improvements. Other industry representatives will be available for consultation and dinner will be provided following the tour. [More here](#).

**July 9 - No-Till Market Gardening Intensive: Tools and Techniques For Vital Crops and Healthier Soil**, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Woven Roots Farm, Tyringham. Learn techniques for intensively growing vegetables using no-till practices on a commercial scale from long-time farmers Jen and Pete Salinetti of Woven Roots Farm. Jen and Pete have managed their diversified vegetable farm for over 15 years using inexpensive, low-tech tools. Their system has built a soil with incredible structure, water-holding capacity, and the soil life needed to grow nutrient-dense crops. They've been able to do so all while reducing the use of fossil fuels and compaction associated with tractor equipment. [Details and registration here](#).

**July 11 - Massachusetts Fruit Growers' Association Summer Meeting**, Cider Hill Farm, Amesbury, MA - <http://ag.umass.edu/fruit/upcoming-events>

**July 19 - Down to Earth: MNLA Annual Summer Conference & Trade Show** - Wachusett Mountain, Princeton. If you are in the green industry, you won't want to miss this great opportunity for education, re-certification and networking! Take advantage of Solution Central with our exhibitors for new ideas and cutting edge information that will put you steps ahead of your competitors. For green industry professionals it's a great time to take stock and learn about new products, trends and business solutions. [Details here](#).

**July 22 - Christmas Tree "Growers' Gathering"** - 9:00 am - noon - Davagian Tree Farm, Sutton. Hosted by Greg and Jan Davagian. A meeting where growers can informally gather and share their accumulated knowledge about growing Christmas trees. This first "Growers' Gathering" will not be a formal program, it's a chance for

everyone to give and receive information, and to share and discuss ideas and methods. Bring your questions, thoughts, problems, and solutions that have worked for you. Open to all, [details here](#).

**August 11 – 13 - Northeast Organic Farming Association Summer Conference** - Hampshire College, Amherst. Workshops \* Exhibitors \* Children's Conference \* Music \* Dance \* Country Fair - Three-day, solutions-oriented celebration of the grassroots organic movement. Gardeners, farmers, growers and food-lovers from across the Northeast will again share their inspiration and ideas for organic food, farming, health, activism, and beyond. 130+ workshops and sessions on everything from soil health and food preservation to mushrooms, bees and food activism. Check out the full organic spread: [www.nofasummerconference.org/2017program/](http://www.nofasummerconference.org/2017program/).

**August 26 - Massachusetts Christmas Tree Association's Annual Meeting** - 9:00am - 3:00 pm - Mistletoe Acres Tree Farm, LLC, East Bridgewater. Hosted by Matt and Megan Krugger. [Details here](#).

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### [\*\*Central Mass Grown Summer Workshop Series:\*\*](#)

- July 10 & 17 - QuickBooks Overview Workshops - 5:30 - 8:30 pm - Union Hall Worcester
- July 12 - Organic Certification and Pricing Workshop - 5:30 - 8:30 pm - Union Hall Worcester
- July 20 - Value Added Production and Commercial Kitchens – 6 - 8:00 pm - Union Hall Worcester
- July 26 - Website & Media Marketing – 6 – 8:00 pm - Union Hall Worcester
- August 21 - Dairy Day - Whittier Farm Tour - 90 Douglas Rd, Sutton - 3:00 - 4:30 pm
- August 21 - Forgotten Farms Screening - Elm Draught House, Millbury - 5:30 - 8:00 pm

[Details on events here.](#)

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### **Mass. Agriculture in the Classroom (MAC) Holding Two Workshops in June**

Mass. Agriculture in the Classroom is holding two June workshops for teachers as a continuing education opportunity. Each workshop is from 9:00-3:00 pm, costs \$50.00, includes lunch, and offers 10 Professional Development Points. Registration information & form can be found at [www.aginclassroom.org](http://www.aginclassroom.org).

Tuesday, June 27 - “Day of Dairy” at Cooper’s Hilltop Farm, 515 Henshaw St., Rochdale. Come enjoy a full tour of this family farm that has been processing delicious milk for generations and learn how the farm is evolving and adding new features to make your experience there even better. You will test some lessons and leave with new dairy themed classroom ideas.

Thursday, June 29 - “Gardens – for You and Others” at Finch Rd, on the grounds of the Wrentham Developmental Center in Wrentham. Learn more about soil and ways to improve it, choosing vegetable varieties for the school garden, ways to extend the growing season, and lessons to make the garden a part of the curriculum. All are welcome: teachers, college students preparing to teach, and others who are just interested in the topics. [Register today!](#)

[Top](#)

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### **USDA News**

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## Be Counted in the 2017 Census of Agriculture

Soon, America's farmers and ranchers will have the opportunity to make a positive impact on their operations and communities by taking part in the Census of Agriculture. Conducted every five years by the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the census captures a complete count of all U.S. Farms and ranches and those who operate them. You can find the results of the 2012 Census of Agriculture at [www.agcensus.usda.gov/](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/).

The Census of Agriculture provides a unique picture of U.S. agriculture since it shows the contributions of farms of all sizes at the county, State, and national level. It is also the main source for demographic data (age, sex, race/ethnicity) of U.S. farmers.

**New Farmers:** NASS is in the final stage for preparing the 2017 Census of Agriculture mailing list. If you are new to farming or didn't receive a 2012 Census of Agriculture questionnaire there is still time to be counted by signing up at [www.agcounts.usda.gov/cgi-bin/counts/](http://www.agcounts.usda.gov/cgi-bin/counts/). Simply click on the 'Make Sure You Are Counted' button below and provide the requested information.

[Top](#)

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## Classified

- [\*\*Farmers' Markets Seeking Vendors\*\*](#) (click back for updates throughout the season) – This includes new proposed markets, as well as existing ones.
- **Job Posting:** Corporate Sponsorship Director to join NOFA team (25-30 hours/week). Details at [www.nofamass.org/content/nofamass-corporate-sponsorship-director](http://www.nofamass.org/content/nofamass-corporate-sponsorship-director)
- **Agricultural Excavation – Grading Services** - provide earth moving, drainage, land/pasture reclamation, greenhouse preparation, and rock raking services. Includes but not limited to orchards/equine facilities/cranberry bogs/nurseries. Chris Merrill Excavating [merrilltrucks@comcast.net](mailto:merrilltrucks@comcast.net), 978-897-9977.

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## About the Farm & Market Report

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Next issue to be published for early August. Please send news, calendar and/or classified information by July 31 to [Richard.LeBlanc@state.ma.us](mailto:Richard.LeBlanc@state.ma.us). To unsubscribe or change your address, send an e-mail message to [Richard.LeBlanc@state.ma.us](mailto:Richard.LeBlanc@state.ma.us) or call 617-626-1759.

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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).

