



In Common



UMassAmherst Outreach **UMass
Extension**

ANNUAL REPORT ISSUE

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It is fitting that the theme of the Annual Report issue of *In Common* should be *Natural Resource Based Economic Development*. Of the six critical issues that anchor Extension research and programming – each of which we will spotlight in an issue of this newsletter – economic development is most critical at this difficult time in our history. Focusing on development sustains our natural resources and returns us to our roots.

In this issue, we explore tapping the wealth residing in our forests in ways that preserve and protect them. Next, we look at how Hartney Greymont, a landscape service firm founded during another period of great financial hardship, shows us that what is good for the environment and for employees is also good for business. That's a lesson shared and passed down through the generations at Clarkdale Fruit Farms, where a visit reveals innovation and heritage as timeless companions. Then we join some young folks who buck conventional wisdom in learning the ropes of Massachusetts dairy farming.

These stories show how long-term success arises from a careful reading of the past, coupled with a commitment to planning, research and innovation, and to the health and sustainability of natural resources upon which we ultimately depend.

-- Nancy Garrabrants, Director

Adding value: Jay Healy's Hall Tavern Farm in Charlemont.

Valuing the Forest for the Trees

Want to enjoy a simple, quiet walk in the woods?

Finding the woods shouldn't be difficult, in that 62 percent of Massachusetts is forested. And quiet? That depends. If we each stake out an individual share of the state's forest tranquility tomorrow afternoon, we will each have less than half an acre to explore. Massachusetts, it seems, is both the eighth most densely forested and the third most densely populated state in the nation.

And simple? The impact of the Massachusetts forest land on the state's economy, environmental integrity, biodiversity, public health and overall quality-of-life is much more complex than may seem apparent during that stroll through the woods – especially if you consider that:

- Over 220,000 individual private owners own 3.2 million acres of forest land in Massachusetts;

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5





Green Where it Counts

Join Ted Wales on a quick stroll across the yard at the Hartney Greymont Tree and Lawn Specialist facility in Needham, and you quickly get a sense of the elements key to the firm's 70-year record of success.

There is waste from last season's projects being composted for use next spring; there are pumps to dispense bio-diesel for the company's fleet of trucks and tractors; and there are the employees who walk around like they own the place.

In fact, they do own the place . . . and they have been committed to the most innovative principles of sustainable and environmentally sound landscaping and lawn care since long before "green" hit the scene.

Turf specialist Ted Wales, a 25-year Hartney veteran who manages the lawn care department, says Hartney Greymont began shifting toward ecologically friendly lawn and tree care strategies 25 years ago.

"We have always looked for the least toxic approach to managing any problem," said Wales, adding that "putting the right plant in the right place" is a major component of good plant health care.

Hartney Greymont has its roots in an earlier era of financial challenge and uncertainty. Started by Mike Hartney in

1938, the firm merged with Greymont Tree Specialists in 1976. Ownership passed to its employees under an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) in 1988, not long after it began focusing on environmental sustainability.

In 2008 Hartney Greymont received the Boston Chamber of Commerce's Small Business of the Year award, in part for ongoing efforts to create environmentally sound plant health care strategies. The company distributes its staff of 80 between tree care, landscape installation, and commercial and residential lawn care while also managing high-profile public spaces like Boston's Post Office Square Park.

Wales was appointed to the UMass Extension Board of Public Overseers two years ago by former governor Mitt Romney and he expects the group to go on the offensive in 2009. He says UMass Extension is critical to the "greening" of his industry, something that current governor Deval Patrick has called for. Extension is also critical, he added, to the enduring success of agriculture in Massachusetts.

"We want UMass Amherst, the governor, and the legislators to know how important Extension is to our industry," Wales said.

"Agriculture in Massachusetts is a \$2.2 billion industry and it's high-tech and high-end," he continued. "We depend on the science and research at UMass and Extension is our connection to that resource."

As an example, Wales points to the increasing demand for organic plant care but the shortage of useful science in that area.

"We're dying for that information and documentation," Wales said. "We want to adopt those practices but we need more than anecdotal evidence that they work."

Wales' childhood memories of wandering the forests around Westwood, Mass. eventually brought him back to New England after college in the Midwest, and propelled him to join the Hartney Greymont staff in his late twenties. A few years later he attended his first Winter School for Turf Managers at UMass Amherst, which he says, "completely opened my eyes to the possibilities in this field."

Hartney Greymont has positioned itself as a progressive employer as well as a plant care company, and Wales is just one example of long-time staff members who have risen through the company's ranks.

Hartney Greymont recruits heavily from UMass Amherst. Company CEO Mark Tobin, a graduate of the Stockbridge School's arboriculture program, was instrumental as a former president of the Massachusetts Arborists Association in endowing a professorship in the field in 2004. One of Hartney's newest hires, Marcie Gladdys, who recently graduated from the Stockbridge School program, finished seventh in last year's international tree climbing competition.

Wales says the 70-year-old company's formula for success has been to change, not with the times, but ahead of them. "Green," he adds, is simply "something we need to do now because it will be the only way to do things in the future." ■



Clarkdale Fruit Farms is the place to be on a fall afternoon . . . especially for Tom and Ben Clark.

Places

Seeds from the Past, Success for the Future

At their fourth-generation orchard in Deerfield, Tom, Becky and Ben Clark are helping to preserve far more than apples.

Clarkdale Fruit Farms hasn't changed much in 94 years. That's the way Tom Clark likes it. His customers, who travel miles for heirloom fruit and small-batch ciders, like it too.

"Some of our apple varieties have been here since my grandfather planted them," says Tom, pulling the best specimens from a crate for a customer. "Folks come with their children and buy the same types of apples they got here when they were kids themselves."

Just before Christmas, those customers came in a steady stream to the Deerfield farm's retail stand, a rambling weathered shed attached to the original 150-year-old barn. Tom and his son Ben know them all. "Don't we owe you a jug of cider?" Tom calls to

one. "You've been so good we'll give you half a gallon of each. That's your Christmas present."

Tom's grandfather, a country general practitioner named Webster Kimball Clark, was taken by the property while treating a patient in the old farmhouse. He ended up purchasing ten acres from the man.

Today, the Clark family's rolling fields are home to nearly 60 types of apple and pear trees, over 50 varieties of peach trees planted on a sunny hilltop, and a smattering of grape vines and cherry, nectarine, and plum trees. But while the acreage has grown and the fruit selection diversified, the Clarks have been careful to keep the farm's soil and spirit intact, a decision that preserves Clarkdale's character and makes good business sense.

"Staying small has helped us survive," says Tom. "We don't have fancy overhead, we didn't build a new barn on the highway, and we have no full-time employees other than ourselves." Even

the wooden apple crates, some made years ago by Tom himself, are reused season after season, and regular cider-making ensures that any fruit too imperfect to sell won't go to waste.

That renowned cider ties Clarkdale to the past as well, through special vintages like Tom's single-growth Roxbury Russet, pressed from the first "named" apple in the U.S., originally grown in Roxbury, Massachusetts. As Tom says, "People have been making cider in New England for 300 years. It works."

Ultimately, of course, the family's commitment to preservation begins and ends with protecting the land itself. That has meant a long association with UMass Amherst and UMass Extension. Tom's father, Fred, graduated from "Mass Aggie" in 1934 with a degree in pomology. Tom has taken an active role in providing data for UMass Extension Integrated Pest Management initiatives. He has worked with Extension's Sonia Schloemann in testing hardy new varieties of table grapes, as well as with

Jon Clements in high density planting of apple trees (See *In Common*, Winter 2007-2008, and Spring 2008.).

“I have always been a solid supporter of Extension,” he notes.

Hands-on caretaking has been critical. “At a big commercial operation, a guy’s going to fill up the sprayer and go at it until he quits,” he explains. “But if you’re smaller, you only do what you really need to do.” That intimacy with the land is hard to come by if you don’t live and breathe where you work, as generations of Clarks have done.

“They say you should be able to walk from your house to everywhere on your farm in half an hour,” says Tom. “To really know your land, you need to watch it at all times, day and night, all year.” In season, that means he’s on the job more often than not. It’s not an easy life, but the rewards are rich enough to have enticed Ben, a recent Wesleyan grad with a degree in theater, to return to the farm and, as Tom puts it, “learn about the other side of 5:00 a.m.”

And what if Ben hadn’t chosen to become the fourth generation of Clarks to enter the world of pomology? “I don’t know what I would have done,” admits Tom. “You wonder, how many years am I going to be here; is it worth planting? You know, the average age of farmers in the U.S. now is nearly 60.”

The local food movement is good news to operations like Clarkdale. “People really want to keep the quality and flavor of a small farm,” reflects Tom. “A place where you can come in and sample three different types of cider, try out a Jonagold, or learn which apple’s best for baking. More and more, people tell us, ‘Thanks for being here.’”

“Preservation and local food are important,” he adds, “but to tell the truth, I never stopped to think about why I do this. It’s just a way of life, and it so happens it’s the one I grew up with.” ■



Learning the ropes at cow camp.

Learning to Show Cows that Wow

If you insist on predicting the demise of Massachusetts dairies, you might not want to mention it at the UMass Amherst 4-H Dairy Cattle Camp at Northampton’s Three County Fair Ground.

As the next generation prepares for the county fair dairy shows – or, for the best, the Big E, the Eastern States Exposition – you can’t help but share in an unassailable enthusiasm for cows, cow care, and all things bovine.

This year, 87 young folks got a head start on the road to the Big E by attending the camp, which targets the next generation of dairy competitors (and their parents) with tips on judging pedigree, sire selection, showmanship, and even dressing for success in the ring.

UMass Extension’s Carrie Chickering-Sears, who grew up showing dairy cattle and now judges at regional and national competitions, is director of the camp that she started five years ago to help 4-H members learn responsibility and effective animal care. Chickering-Sears, who heads the 4-H Animal and Veterinary Science program for UMass Extension, says those skills are more important today than ever.

“It’s expensive to have animals today,” she says. “Corn prices have tripled in the

past year so you really need to know how to care for those animals and protect that investment.”

The popularity of the camp over the years prompted Chickering-Sears to create a novice day camp this year for youngsters just getting started in dairy cattle showing. She says the influx of young talent into the program is a positive sign for the region’s shrinking dairy business.

Ross Hubacz of West Brookfield was one of the first dairy campers five years ago and has been showing animals in 4-H since he was ten. He’ll be a college freshman next fall and he returned to the camp this year as a volunteer instructor to work with younger kids, as did Rachel Pomeroy of Westfield, an animal science major at UMass Amherst and a veteran showing her families Holstein and Brown Swiss cows.

Pomeroy said dairy showing has always been part of the farm life. “You either love it or hate it,” she said.

Carrie Chickering-Sears says that experience in the show ring has long-term advantages for the kids.

“As 4-Hers, they learn lots of life skills like leadership, responsibility, and community, and when they get to college they’ve already built a strong résumé,” she said. ■

Cover Story CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

- There are over 47,000 parcels of forested land over 10 acres in size;
- Forestry ranks seventh in economic impact, with forest-based employment of over 24,000;
- Massachusetts forests generate \$232 to \$338 million in wood product revenues, or an estimated total \$580 to \$845 million if you count the value added to many of those products before sale;
- The value of climate regulation, freshwater supply, storm water mitigation, nutrient regulation, biodiversity, soil retention and aesthetics attributed to the state's forest land is estimated at \$2.9 billion.
- Over 40 acres of land, much of it forested, is developed each day.

Economically, then, it's easy to miss the value, and the impact, of the forest for the trees – an impact that, given current trends in land conservation rates, we may be losing.

According to UMass Extension Forest Specialist Paul Catanzaro, however, economics is not what motivates a vast majority of those forestland owners. Instead, they tend to value forestland for the same reasons that all of us do – reasons that aren't easy to quantify. For many, a relationship with a forest parcel is intensely personal and spans generations.

“Woodland owners are different from traditional farmers,” said Catanzaro. “It is typically not a business investment. They own it for the privacy, the solitude, and the beauty. It is a place to share with family and a place that can be left to children.”

Despite the commitment of owners, however, it can be difficult to maintain the integrity of those parcels as the



Woodland Co-op: David Lashway's Highland Community Lumber in Williamsburg

decades roll by, as development pressure builds, land values rise, and as the land is broken into parts and passes to multiple heirs. While profit may not be the primary motivator for landowners, tapping the economic value of the forest or recognizing the tremendous value that their forests offer through tax incentives is essential if the forestland and all the many benefits they provide are to be ensured into the future.

Catanzaro, working with Department of Natural Resources Conservation faculty members Dave Damery and Dave Kittredge, as well as post-doc Anthony D'Amato, just completed a financial analysis of land ownership in the Deerfield Watershed of Massachusetts. The findings suggest that making money from forest management is not keeping pace with the land's tax burden and rising real estate values.

“Good forestry is no longer enough and no one pays them to be custodians of the land which benefits us all, sequestering carbon, protecting watersheds and nurturing biodiversity,” said Catanzaro.

Not yet, anyway. That's where the Massachusetts Woodlands Cooperative comes in. The landowner-led cooperative was launched in 1999 with the assistance of Catanzaro, who was then a state forester, along with professors Dave Damery

and Paul Barten. The co-op gives its nearly 60 members access to information, land management resources – including services and equipment – and marketing resources.

The cooperative has succeeded in achieving “green certification” through a group certification from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) by meeting stringent requirements for sustainable forestry. “It is a strong marketing opportunity,” noted Catanzaro. “People seem to want to buy more locally grown, environmentally friendly products which can expand markets.”

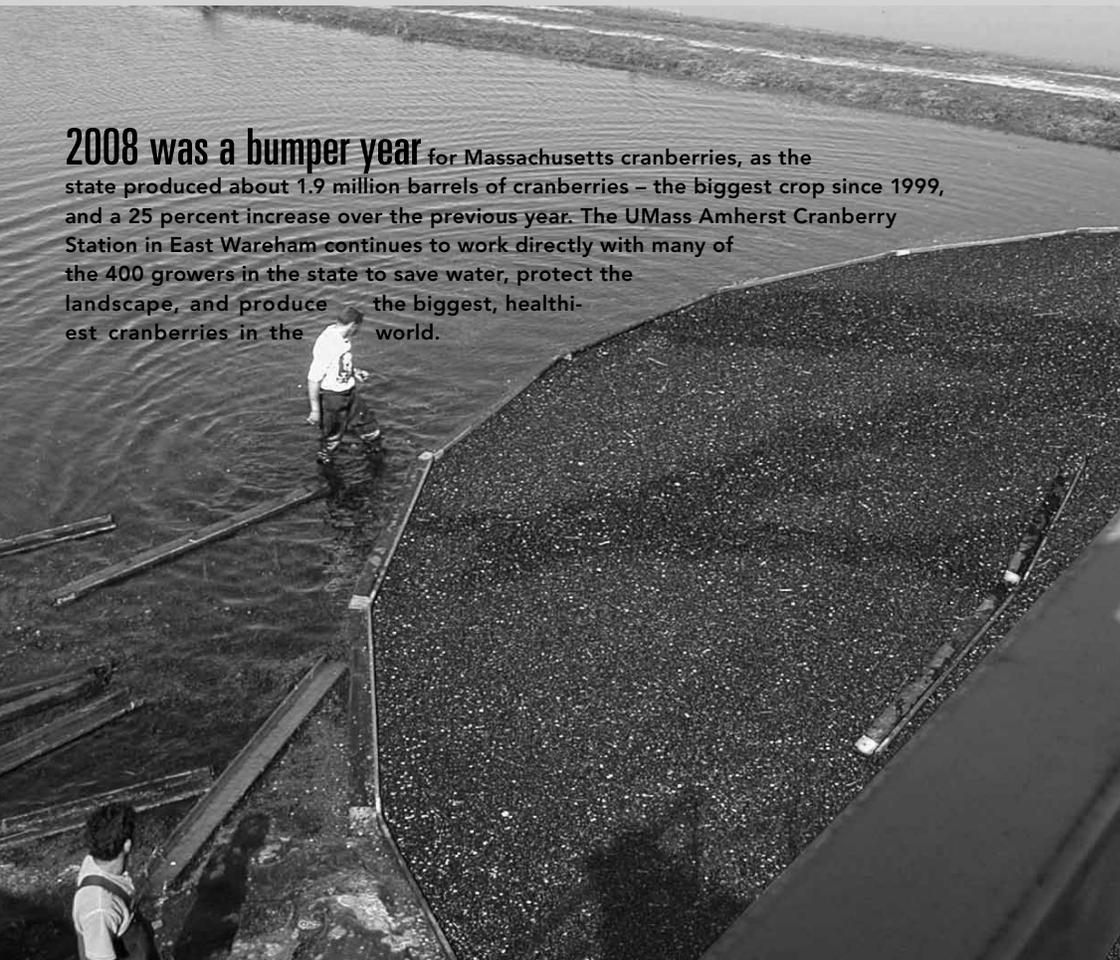
However, the real value of our forests, may lie in our desire for economic *and* environmental sustainability, clean drinking water, and in the critical need to control carbon emissions into the atmosphere.

Catanzaro is enthusiastic about the possibility of paying landowners for the often unseen and largely unrecognized ecosystem services their land provides the Commonwealth everyday, such as the emerging market in carbon credits. With a cap on total annual carbon emissions, the financial markets can assign a value to initiatives that reduce carbon in the atmosphere. That value can then be sold or traded to organizations that emit carbon.

While it is not possible for individual landowners to tap that market, a green certified co-op may well qualify for credits for the carbon-reducing impacts of growing trees.

“As our parcels get smaller, it will be increasingly important to find ways for landowners to collaborate in order to access markets for ecosystem services and maintain a viable forest industry,” he said. “That is what is so exciting about the co-op. They are breaking new ground and redefining how landowners can work together to maintain working forests into the future.” ■

2008 was a bumper year for Massachusetts cranberries, as the state produced about 1.9 million barrels of cranberries – the biggest crop since 1999, and a 25 percent increase over the previous year. The UMass Amherst Cranberry Station in East Wareham continues to work directly with many of the 400 growers in the state to save water, protect the landscape, and produce the biggest, healthiest cranberries in the world.



UMass Extension is a program of UMass Amherst Outreach, which works with the academic schools, colleges and departments of the University of Massachusetts Amherst to apply university teaching and research to benefit communities throughout the Commonwealth, the nation and the world.

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- Extension Nutrition Education
- Massachusetts 4-H Youth Development

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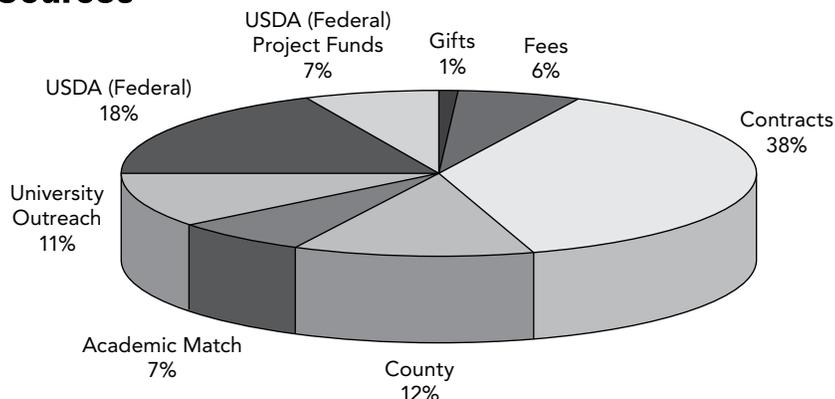
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Fiscal Year 2008 Financial Review

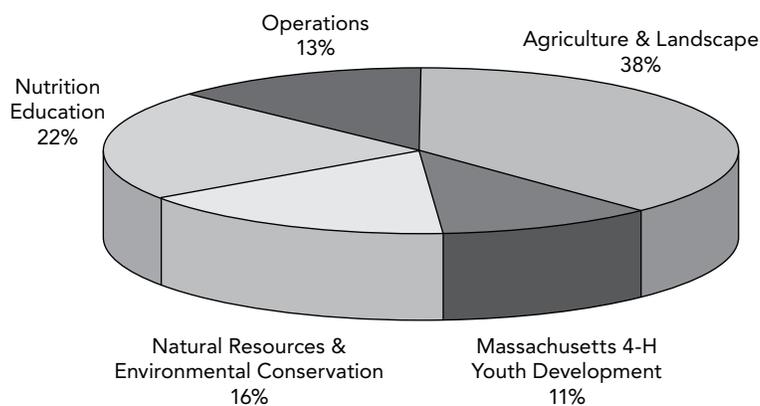
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UMass Extension will continue to rely on a combination of public and private funds, appropriately balanced and focused, to address critical issues in Massachusetts.

Programs



Notes on Fund Types

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