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## USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Training Program

Sponsored by UMass Extension, MDAR, USDA Agricultural Marketing Services, Bay State Organic Certifiers

**Friday May 20th, 8:30-5:00pm** - University of Massachusetts Collaborative Services Facility, Berkshire Room, 333 South Street, Shrewsbury, MA 01545-4169

This day long program will focus on developing a farm food safety plan, a review of risk assessment, and incorporating the USDA GAP & GHP (Good Handling Practices) audit into the farm food safety plan. Worker training, water, manure, compost management, packinghouse sanitation, pest control and traceability will also be discussed. The key presenters for the training are Dr. Richard Bonanno, Ph.D. UMass Extension Educator and Ken Petersen, USDA Agricultural Marketing Services, Fresh Products Branch.

Preregistration required. Space is limited. The cost is \$50.00 for the first registration. Cost for additional employees is \$10.00 each which includes the presentation, pesticide credit, refreshments, but not the GAP manual. Send the check payable to "UMass" to Doreen York, Agriculture & Landscape Program, 210 Bowditch Hall, 201 Natural Resources Rd., University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003. If you have questions, please contact Doreen at 413-545-2254 or email at [dyork@umext.umass.edu](mailto:dyork@umext.umass.edu). Note that we cannot accept cash payments. No walk-in registrations will be accepted.

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## New Partnership Brings Local Food Distribution to Southeastern Massachusetts

[SEMAP logo](#)



Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP) and FoodEx, a food exchange operated by Organic Renaissance, have come together to make local food distribution a reality and strengthen the regional food system in southeastern Massachusetts. FoodEx will operate a food hub in New Bedford's South End providing local pickups, deliveries, and warehousing while opening direct access to Boston and other regional markets. The New Bedford facility is scheduled to open in June 2011. SEMAP will facilitate introductions to the service and provide technical assistance to farmers transitioning to wholesale through its Farms Forever program.

To help launch the service, SEMAP will host a three-stop tour for growers, producers and buyers to view a demonstration of the FoodEx platform. FoodEx president, Jonathan D. Kemp, will provide a detailed description of how FoodEx works to transport local foods from the farm or New Bedford facility directly to chefs, retailers, institutions, and other buyers throughout New England.

The launch tour will kick off at FoodEx's distribution hub at The Mill at 21Cove Street, New Bedford on Monday, May 9th, starting at 5:30 PM, where attendees will also be given a tour of the loading dock and storage space. The second stop on the launch tour is co-hosted by Buy Fresh Buy Local™ Cape Cod ([buyfreshbuylocalcapecod.org](http://buyfreshbuylocalcapecod.org)), taking place in Barnstable at the Sturgis Library, located at 3090 Main Street, on Tuesday, May 10th at 5:30 PM. Attendees will also have the option to stay for a workshop on institutional sales presented by Emily French of the Massachusetts Farm to School Project. The third stop is co-hosted by Whole Foods Bellingham, with the meeting being held at the Bellingham Public Library, located at 100 Blackstone Street, on Thursday, May 12th at 5:30 PM. Whole Foods Bellingham will provide food and beverage, including their Tasty Tots & Mediterranean Quinoa Salad. Both recipes are finalists in the USDA's Recipe for Healthy Kids contest (they need your votes). Growers, producers and buyers can sign up for one of the launch meetings at [www.semaponline.org](http://www.semaponline.org).

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## Join Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture(CISA) for Two Spring Workshops

### CISA and MA Farm Energy invite you to explore: Energy Efficiency for Maple Sugaring



Are you looking to save money, fuel, and back-breaking labor during the sugaring season? Come learn about equipment and techniques to reduce energy use for maple syrup production. We'll take a look at upgrades J.P. Welch has put in place as an example, and ask participants for their experiences with other systems. Jess Cook (MFEP) will review the services provided by the MA Farm Energy Program and possible funding support for farm energy projects related to sugaring operations. Snacks will be served. Suggested donation \$5.

Tuesday, May 17th, 6:00-8:00PM.

Justamere Tree Farm, 248 Patterson Road, Worthington. Please RSVP by Thursday, May 12th to Devon at 413-665-7100 or [devon@buylocalfood.org](mailto:devon@buylocalfood.org).

### Farmstand Savy Workshop: Building Your Image and Growing your Business

Join us for an interactive workshop on visual merchandising. Bruce Baker, who has worked for small business development centers across the country, will teach you how to create a farm stand/farmers' market display that attracts attention to your products and draws in customers. Learn effective and creative uses of space and how to create a mood with your booth that customers can relate to and sets you apart. Learn valuable strategies and increase your sales! Farmers' market managers interested in assisting their vendors are welcome to attend. Cost for Local Hero members and market managers is \$10, all others \$20. Dinner is included.

Monday, May 23rd, 5:30-9:00PM.

Mill 1 at Open Square, 4 Open Square Way, Holyoke. Please RSVP by Friday, May 20th to Devon at 413-665-7100 or [devon@buylocalfood.org](mailto:devon@buylocalfood.org).

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## Division of Agricultural Conservation and Technical Assistance Releases Two More Grant Programs – Deadlines June 30th (check times!)

**Currently Open :** Two grant programs which improve agricultural stewardship of natural resources and promote energy efficiency and use of renewable energy are being announced in addition to the three viability grant programs which were released last month by the Division of Agricultural Conservation and Technical Assistance (DACTA). Applicants are encouraged to pay close attention to the destinations and deadlines for the five programs as they occur at different times over the last two weeks of June. The two newly announced grant programs are:

**Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP)**, DEADLINE: June 30, 2011, 4PM, Boston Office. Contact Laura Maul at 617-626-1739 or [Laura.Maul@state.ma.us](mailto:Laura.Maul@state.ma.us)

AEEP is a competitive, re-imbusement grant program that **funds the acquisition of materials only** for conservation practices that mitigate or prevent negative impacts to the state's natural resources from agricultural practices. Practices funded include those that prevent direct impacts on water quality, ensure efficient use of water, and address agricultural impacts on air quality. Reimbursement grants up to \$30,000 will be awarded on a competitive basis depending on need. Links for AEEP grant applications are available on [MDAR's website](#).

**Ag-Energy Grant**, DEADLINE: June 30, 2011, 5PM, Boston Office. Contact Gerry Palano at 617-626-1706 or [Gerald.Palano@state.ma.us](mailto:Gerald.Palano@state.ma.us)

MDAR's Ag-Energy Grant provides funding to help agricultural operations improve energy efficiency and adopt alternative clean energy technologies. Reimbursement grants up to \$30,000 will be awarded on a competitive basis. Among the energy efficiency practices that are eligible are the following:

Dairy - Plate/Coolers, Heat Recovery and VSD Vacuum Pumps

Greenhouse/Nurseries - Thermal blankets, roof venting modifications to eliminate mechanical ventilation needs, efficient heating distribution modifications – e.g. bench/soil in combination with staged control, electronic controls

Higher Efficiency Advanced Low Emissions Indoor Furnaces or Boilers - Condensing type, central or unit heater utilizing conventional fuels, maple sap evaporator wood furnaces

Other Technologies - High efficiency refrigeration, optimally with heat recovery, Reverse Osmosis equipment for maple sugaring operations, process heat recovery, energy efficient Technologies advancing urban food gardens

Eligible renewable energy practices include:

- Photovoltaics
- Wind
- Solar Thermal
- Geothermal
- Bio-fuel crops for those shown to be grown on marginal soils or used in crop rotation
- Bio-fuel Production provided demonstration of all federal, state and local process permits and approvals are identified and will be provided as part of the project installation, including but not limited to product pre- and post- storage, hazardous materials, and process effluents
- High Efficiency Advanced Gasification Biomass thermal boilers or furnaces intended for indoor use only, utilizing wood pellets, wood chips or kernel corn, meeting all current federal, state and/or local construction, emission and efficiency standards, and regulations and certified for MA installation
- Advanced biomass (gasification) Outdoor Wood Boilers (OWB), meeting all current federal, state and/or local construction, emission and efficiency standards, and regulations Requirements that must be met include a demonstration that the OWB system shall:
  1. meet all local Board of Health requirements
  2. be installed and certified under Mass Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) regulations 310 CMR

7.26 (50) through (54) found at [www.mass.gov/dep/air/laws/regulati.htm#owb](http://www.mass.gov/dep/air/laws/regulati.htm#owb)

3. comply with all certified equipment requirements; MassDEP certified OWB equipment is listed at: [www.mass.gov/dep/air/community/certohh.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dep/air/community/certohh.htm)

- Renewable Technologies advancing urban food gardens

**Links to the AgEnergy Grant are available now on MDAR's [website](#). In addition, the Department has previously announced the following grants:**

- [Farm Viability Enhancement Program](#) - DEADLINE: June 23, 2011, 3PM, MDAR Boston Office. Contact Craig Richov at 617-626-1725 or [Craig.Richov@state.ma.us](mailto:Craig.Richov@state.ma.us)
- [APR Improvement Program](#) - DEADLINE: June 23, 2011, 4PM, MDAR Amherst Office. Contact Melissa Adams at 413-268-8269 or [Melisa.AdamsAIP@gmail.com](mailto:Melisa.AdamsAIP@gmail.com)
- [MEGA - Grant Program For Beginning Farmers in MA](#) - Deadline June 23, 2011, 3PM, MDAR Amherst Office. Contact Kate Hayes at 413-559-0949 or [megacoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:megacoordinator@gmail.com)

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MDAR's mission is to ensure the long-term viability of local agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – [Agricultural Development](#), [Animal Health](#), [Crop and Pest Services](#), and [Technical Assistance](#) – MDAR strives to support, regulate, and enhance the Commonwealth's agricultural community, working 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, go to [www.mass.gov/agr](http://www.mass.gov/agr) or follow us at [www.twitter.com/agcommishsoares](http://www.twitter.com/agcommishsoares) for the latest agricultural trends and updates. To keep up to date on workshops and events, visit [www.mass.gov/agr/events/coming\\_up.htm](http://www.mass.gov/agr/events/coming_up.htm).