

Patrick-Murray Administration Awards \$475,000 in Environmental Enhancement Grants to 35 Massachusetts Farms

BOSTON – December 19, 2011 – Officials from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) today awarded 35 farm projects across the Commonwealth with grants for projects designed to increase compatibility between agricultural practices and protection of the state's natural resources.

Awarded through DAR's Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP), grants totaling \$475,000 were given to farms in Carver, Cheshire, Cummington, Dracut, East Bridgewater, Granville, Hadley, Hanson, Haverhill, Lakeville, Mattapoisett, Middleboro, North Harwich, Paxton, Plymouth, Plympton, Rehoboth, Shelburne, South Hadley, Sudbury, Sunderland, Taunton, West Brookfield, Ware, Westport and Williamstown.

"These grants will help protect the state's natural resources and improve conditions for our farming families," said Governor Deval Patrick. "We are committed to helping our local farmers create jobs to support agricultural economies across Massachusetts."

The funding will support projects such as automated irrigation systems for cranberry operations, manure storage areas, compost pads, fencing, milkhouse wastewater treatment areas, and zone tillage equipment for a vegetable operation.

"I want to applaud the efforts of this year's recipients and all those who have participated in the program since its inception," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "Through this program, our Administration continues to work with local farmers to not only provide industry resources, but also additional aid to protect the Commonwealth's land, air and water for years to come."

"This grant program helps farmers protect the state's environment and encourages sustainable agricultural practices," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Richard K. Sullivan Jr., whose office includes DAR. "These investments reflect the commitment of the Patrick-Murray administration and our state's farmers to reducing impacts on our natural resources."

AEEP fund practices that improve water quality, promote water conservation and improve air quality. Farmers selected to participate are reimbursed for the approved costs of materials up to \$30,000. Since 1999, AEEP has funded 387 projects statewide, providing growers and producers approximately \$4.5 million to address environmental concerns on their farms. This program also helps advance several of the strategies outlined in the recent Climate Change Adaptation report.

"AEEP has been a proven tool in helping us safeguard the environment, while ensuring that our local food supply remains viable," said DAR Commissioner Scott J. Soares. "We are delighted to support our local farmers in their efforts to ensure a sustainable future for their farms and I congratulate all of this year's award recipients."

The program is one of several within DAR's Division of Agricultural Conservation and Technical Assistance, whose mission is to enhance the viability of agricultural enterprises and safeguard natural resources through preservation, environmental stewardship, technology, technical assistance and education.

"I am encouraged that so many of the state's farmers are working toward implementing best practices that will enhance environmental practices," said Sen. Marc R. Pacheco, Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture. "I am pleased to see the Patrick Administration allocating these resources to ensure farmers have incentives to make these projects environmentally and economically viable."

“Our farmers strive to prevent any negative environmental impact their operations may have,” said Rep. Anne Gobi, House Chair of the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture. “This partnership with DAR to make grants available for mitigation keeps our farms viable and our air and water clean.”

The 35 awards announced today are:

Municipality	Farm Name	Project Type	Award
Carver	Pratt's Bogs	Irrigation Pump	\$5,000
Carver	Walker Cranberries, LLC	Irrigation System	\$11,800
Cheshire	Mizpah Farm	Vegetable Treatment Strip	\$15,000
Cummington	Maple East Farm	Soil Stabilization; Manure Storage	\$17,240
Dracut	Farmer Dave's	Trickle Irrigation	\$25,000
East Bridgewater	CJW Realty Trust, Inc.	Automated Irrigation	\$8,000
Taunton	Holloway Street Bog	Automated Irrigation	\$8,000
Granville	Evans Farm	Fencing; Manure Pad; Gutters; Water Lines	\$20,000
Hadley	Czajkowski Farm	Zone Tillage	\$16,750
Hanson	Indian Head Cranberries, Inc.	Automated Irrigation	\$6,400
Haverhill	Willow Spring Vineyards	Wastewater Connection	\$18,938
Lakeville	Sherry's Berries	Flumes	\$11,584
Mattapoisett	Hubacheck Cranberry	Irrigation Pump	\$5,000
Middleboro	Polilio Beach Street Trust	Automated Irrigation	\$8,000
Harwich	Hall's Cape Cod	Flumes	\$8,257

	Cranberries		
Paxton	R.H. Robinson, Co.	Irrigation; Fuel Storage	\$20,000
Plymouth	Holmes Farm	Bog Renovation	\$15,100
Plympton	Fresh Meadow Realty Trust	Automated Irrigation; Irrigation Pump	\$13,000
Plympton	Grandpa Tom's Vegetable Farm	Trickle Irrigation	\$13,000
Plympton	J.D. Mathias Cranberry	Automated Irrigation	\$6,000
Plympton	JMK Realty Trust	Automated Irrigation; Irrigation Pump	\$13,000
Rehoboth	Bettencourt Dairy Farm	Milkhouse Waste Management System	\$4,897
Rehoboth	Lawton Farm	Manure Storage; Watering System	\$6,000
Shelburne	Biscuit Hill Farm	Manure Storage	\$10,000
Carver	GSW Cranberries, Inc.	Automated Irrigation	\$8,000
Carver	Lim-Kran, Inc.	Automated Irrigation	\$5,860
Carver	Salmi Bogs	Irrigation System; Fuel Storage	\$13,024
South Hadley	McCray's Farm	Manure Storage	\$25,000
Sudbury	Blue Meadow Farm, Inc.	Compost Pad; Fencing	\$25,000
Sunderland	Patterson Farm, LLC	Pesticide Storage	\$20,000
Ware	F+L Farms	Soil Stabilization	\$23,750
Brookfield	Ragged Hill Orchard	Double Wall Fuel Tank	\$8,400
Westport	Santos Brothers Farm	Manure Storage	\$15,000
Williamstown	Ridgeview Farm	Soil Stabilization Wastewater Treatment Strip	\$25,000

Williamstown	Sweet Brook Farm, LLC	Fencing; Watering	\$20,000
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DAR'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 – DAR 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 DAR's website at www.mass.gov/agr, and/or follow at twitter.com/MDARCommish