



Commissioner's Column

Budget Update

by Douglas P. Gillespie

I am writing this just after the Massachusetts Legislature has wrapped up formal sessions with a flurry of activity. Most important to the DFA was the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2003 State Budget. While DFA line items were reduced throughout the process, I believe that we will have adequate funding to maintain core statutory programs, and avoid further employee layoffs. This is good news for the DFA staff as a whole who had been riding a roller coaster in recent months, with much uncertainty about their future. We have an excellent team at DFA, and any further reduction in the workforce would have been devastating. Everyone has been able to pull together to make sure the DFA mission is fulfilled.

There will be cutbacks that everyone will see. Last year the DFA received substantial one-year Specialty Crops funds from the federal government, and passed most of these dollars on to commodity groups and buy local campaigns. It appears that these funds were a "one shot" deal, and will not be repeated. Further, our core operating budget does not provide funds for buy local campaigns, fair prizes or commodity marketing grants. I hope that as the economy rebounds, each of these valuable programs will once again be funded, however, it just does not make sense to layoff additional staff in order to fund these initiatives.

The legislature also passed a \$703 million environmental bond bill that provides three years of funding for DFA's Agricultural Preservation Restriction program, Farm Viability Enhancement Program, Agro-Environmental Technology grants, Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program, and the Aquaculture Development Program. Each of these programs will now continue over the next three years at least at current levels, and in some cases additional funds are available.

DFA programs were successfully funded in both the budget and the bond bill because many of our stakeholders got involved, and lobbied in support of our agency. Please accept my personal thanks on behalf of the entire staff, because your involvement did make a difference! It is heartwarming to know that farmers, pesticide applicators, pet shop operators, school and day care administrators, land advocacy organizations, cities and towns, and many other constituents all appreciate the important role of DFA.

The next few months will bring another change at DFA. Our Lancaster field office will be moving, relocating early this fall to the Barre Falls Dam in Hubbardston. This move became necessary because

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M DFA Inspector Finds Giant Hogweed Invasive Weed Can Cause Burns, Blindness

The giant hogweed, an invasive plant on the federal noxious weed list and native to the Caucasus region of central Asia, has been found in several Massachusetts communities. State agriculture inspector Alfred Carl first found the weed on a routine inspection on a farm in Granville. It has since been found in Westfield, Blandford, Williamsburg, Andover, Groton, and Boston.

The giant hogweed can grow to 15 feet tall and the sap can cause severe skin irritation, blisters and swelling and contact with the eyes can cause temporary or permanent blindness.

News stories about the giant hogweed have generated close to 300 calls about possible hogweed sightings. DFA inspectors are following up on the most credible reports.

Photos and more information on the giant hogweed are available on the MDFA web site at www.mass.gov/dfa/pestalert. Anyone who believes they have found a giant hogweed plant can report the plant on the Department's web site or by calling the hogweed hotline at 617-626-1779.

"This plant is bad news," says Dr. Craig Hollingsworth of UMass Extension. Hollingsworth coordinates the state's Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey. "We have been on the lookout for giant hogweed for a couple of years. It has big seeds and is spread by birds, but the main culprits are gardeners."

The giant hogweed can have up to four-inch stems that have purple splotches and leaves five feet across at its base. It has large umbrella-shaped flowers. A similar related species, cow parsnip, is often mistaken for giant hogweed. Cow parsnip differs in that it reaches a maximum height of six feet and has no purple on its stems.

Brad Mitchell, Director of Regulatory Services for MDFA, is concerned about the potential consequences if this plant becomes as common as other introduced weed pests such as Japanese bamboo or purple loosestrife.

Once established, giant hogweed is difficult to control without chemicals, according to Mitchell.

Anyone who decides to cut down the plant should be very careful not to come into contact with the plant fluids. Gloves, long sleeves and pants, and eye protection should be worn.

The giant hogweed was introduced into the United States as an ornamental plant and has become established in New York, Pennsylvania, Oregon and Washington State. Infestations have also been reported in Maine, Michigan and Washington DC, according to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. ♦

State Animal Health Chief Authors New Text

By the time last year's foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in the United Kingdom made headlines around the world, Dr. David Sherman's manuscript for a veterinary textbook addressing the globalization of animal health issues was nearly complete. Now published, *Tending Animals in the Global Village: A Guide to International Veterinary Medicine* (Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore) is teaching veterinarians how to deal such universal issues.

Dr. Sherman was appointed as the department's Chief of Animal Health last year and is now dealing with matters concerning tending animals in the Bay State.

Tending Animals in the Global Village addresses such topics as international trade, food safety and animal disease control, as well as cultural attitudes concerning the use of animals, food security, and preserving biodiversity.

"The goal of the text is to provide a framework for understanding veterinary medicine in a global context," says Dr. Sherman. "It offers an overview of the social, economic and environmental forces that influence the relationship of animals and society and which thereby create new challenges and opportunities for veterinary medicine in an increasingly interconnected world."

"Dramatic events in 2001 have made it indisputably clear that veterinarians live and work in a global

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1st Annual "Tour des Farms" Cycling and Harvest Tasting Tour

The First Annual "Tour des Farms," cycling and farm harvest tasting tour will be held Sunday September 22. This unique cycling and tasting tour, which will start and end at Westport Rivers Vineyard and Winery in Westport, Mass., will take riders through scenic Dartmouth, Westport and eastern Rhode Island. Along the route, riders will be able to stop in at participating farms and taste the locally grown bounty of the Southcoast.

Varying ride lengths and tour routes of 12, 18 and 21 miles, are offered so there will be enjoyable opportunities for families as well as more experienced cyclists.

Registration fees and sponsorship minimums for the Tour de Farms are as follows:

- ◆ **Individual** : \$10 registration/\$100 sponsorship min. per cyclist
- ◆ **Families** : \$10 registration/\$200 sponsorship min. per family
- ◆ **Adult Teams** : \$10 per cyclist registration/\$100 sponsorship min. per cyclist
- ◆ **Youth Teams** : \$10 per cyclist registration/\$400 min. sponsorship per team
- ◆ **Walkers** : \$10 registration/\$100 sponsorship per walker

The "Tour des Farms" is a fundraising event for the Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP), a coalition of farmers, consumers, and industry representatives who are working together to raise consumer awareness of the value of local farms in order to protect working farmland and open space.

For more information, call 508-999-8895 or visit www.umassd.edu/semaph. The registration deadline is September 12. ◆

SAVE THE DATE! Farmers' Market Nutrition Conference

The 10th Annual Conference of the National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs (NAFMNP) will be held October 16-19, 2002 at the Washington Plaza Hotel, 10 Thomas Circle, N.W., in Washington, D.C.

The theme of the conference is "Partnering for Our Future." Collaborations with health, farm, sustainable agriculture, aging, and food security organizations will be highlighted. The event is sponsored by the NAFMNP in conjunction with the District of Columbia Department of Health and the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

For more information, contact NAFMNP at 202-331-7950 or bv@nafmnp.org; hotel information may be found at www.washingtonplazahotel.com.

USDA Dairy Program Signup Begins

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman has announced that signup for the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program has begun. This program, authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill, financially compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices fall below a specified level.

Eligible dairy producers are those who produced milk in any state and marketed the milk commercially beginning December 2001. To be approved for the program, producers must be in compliance with highly erodible and wetland conservation provisions and must enter into a contract with USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation to provide monthly marketing data.

MILC payments will occur in months when the price of Class I milk in Boston under the Northeast Milk Marketing Order falls below \$16.94 per cwt. Payment rates will be 45 percent of the difference between \$16.94 and the Boston Class I price for that month. Dairy operations will not receive a payment for months during which the Class I price in Boston is \$16.94 or higher. A similar payment calculation will be applied from Dec. 1, 2001, through the month preceding the month the producer enters into a contract with CCC.

Program payments, scheduled to begin in October 2002, will be retroactive from Dec. 1, 2001 for eligible production. Payments will be made on an operation-by-operation basis, up to a maximum of 2.4 million pounds of milk produced and marketed by the dairy operation per fiscal year. Producers can select the month they want to start receiving payments for eligible production.

For more information, or to sign up for the program, dairy producers should visit their local USDA Farm Service Agency offices. ◆

Project to Assist Berkshire Farms with Energy Efficiency

The Center for Ecological Technology (CET), a non-profit energy and resource conservation organization, has received a two-year grant to work with dairy farms and orchards in Berkshire County to increase energy efficiency and explore the potential for implementing renewable energy technologies. Funding for this \$80,000 project comes from USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE).

Western Mass. farms, by virtue of their large open fields and sometimes rolling hills, may have the potential to generate non-polluting electricity while continuing to harvest food and maintain the scenic and environmental values of the landscape. Renewable electricity production could prove to be a way for some farmers to harvest a new "crop" and become more financially viable.

In response to inquiries from several local farmers, CET and UMass Extension assembled an advisory committee to apply for funding to research the viability of the technologies locally. The project will focus initially on those farms that have large electric loads, such as dairies and orchards that depend on refrigeration.

After assessing energy efficiency improvements, farmers will work with CET to determine whether they have resources, such as large south-facing barn roofs, open fields and hills, that could be potential sites for generating clean, renewable energy. Farmers will receive assistance in researching financing opportunities. Information will be shared with the ag community through site-visits and workshops.

For more information, contact Nancy Nylén or Ruth Dinerman at CET 1-800-238-1221 or Cathy Roth at UMass Extension Agroecology Program 413-623-6053. ◆

USDA Awards Grants for Marketing Projects

Massachusetts is among 21 states awarded matching grants by USDA to support agricultural market research and demonstration projects. The grants, totaling \$1,347,000 nationwide, are provided under the Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program and will be used to improve marketing systems for food and agricultural products or to identify new market opportunities for farm products.

USDA has awarded Massachusetts \$62,700 to the Department of Food and Agriculture, in cooperation with the Wampanoag Aquinnah Shellfish Hatchery, to develop, test and compare two packaging systems for live bay scallops, and to introduce live product to area restaurants; and, in cooperation with the Pioneer Valley Growers Association, to assess the opportunities and challenges of increasing use of locally grown food in private schools in Massachusetts, establish a pilot program with three private schools, and develop a guide for private school food buyers.

Web Opportunities for Specialty Foods

A New Sales Channel For Quality Massachusetts Products

A new web store will soon be launched to sell products associated with Massachusetts and to promote the rich heritage of the state. Massachusetts Bay Trading Company (MBTC) is targeting a dedicated following of residents, visitors, newcomers, and tourists as well as anyone looking for the best of Massachusetts-based products.

MBTC offers an incremental sales channel for vendors of quality Massachusetts goods. The company is signing up in-state vendors whose products fall in several categories including local specialty food products. The MBTC site will be aggressively marketed through both traditional and electronic, Internet-based media.

MBTC will generate the product demand through marketing and public relations programs. MBTC will handle all order taking, credit card processing, shipping acknowledgement and collection of applicable sales taxes. MBTC will pay for all shipping, but the vendor will actually ship the product to the end customer. MBTC will pay the vendor a mutually agreed upon wholesale price for each item sold through the web store.

To contact MBTC, e-mail info@massbaytrading.com or call 781-899-4725.

Special Offer for Mass. Specialty Food Assoc. Members

Web Wise World Inc., the company that designed, created and hosts the Massachusetts Specialty Foods Association (MSFA) website, is offering a special opportunity to MSFA members.

Web Wise World Inc, in partnership with the MSFA, will create and host a webpage for your business that will have it's own listing on the MSFA.net website (www.MSFA.net/yourcompany) as well as being linked with the MSFA membership directory.

The cost for this opportunity will be only \$100 for members of which \$25 will go back to the MSFA.

For more information, contact Terry Schneider, President, Web Wise World Inc., 74 Broadway, Norwood MA 02062, 781-551-9253 Fax: 781-344-1747, toll free: 877-WEBWISE, sales@webwiseworld.net, www.webwiseworld.net. ♦

New Farm Registration Plates to be issued in September

The Section 5 Division of the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles will be issuing new Farm plates to current holders of these plates. The renewal cards were mailed in late July. The cards should be returned to the Registry along with a check or money order for the appropriate fees no later than September 9. Complete renewal instructions are included with the renewal cards.

The new plates will be mailed starting September 16. and will have the following features:

- ◆The plate numbers will be in blue lettering.
- ◆The expiration month (SEP) is printed in the upper right hand corner in blue lettering.
- ◆The word "FARM" will be in blue lettering across the bottom of the plate and in the upper left side of the plate, just above the location of the decal.
- ◆The Section 5 plate decal (F03) will be red.
- ◆The word "Massachusetts" will be in red, centered across the top of the plate

These new Farm plates will be effective on Tuesday, October 1, 2002. They should not be attached before this date. The old plates should be discarded. For more information call the RMV Section 5 Division at 617-351-9272. ♦

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village," explains Dr. Sherman. The spread of mad cow disease throughout Europe and into Japan, the devastating outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the United Kingdom and the specter of that same disease entering the United States, the rapid spread of West Nile virus, the horrific terrorist attacks of September 11 and the subsequent fear of bioterrorism, all underscore the global dimension of contemporary veterinary medicine."

An expert in foreign animal diseases, Dr. Sherman has taught large animal clinical medicine at the University of Minnesota and Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, and in numerous countries. He is coauthor of another veterinary textbook "Goat Medicine," published in 1994.

For more information, visit www.lww.com ♦

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our lease in Lancaster could not be renewed, and appropriate space was not available within our budget constraints. The new site is a picturesque location, with space for staff, files, meeting and conference uses, and further expansion. More details will be forthcoming on this move.

While state resources for agriculture may be limited in the short term, the new federal farm bill provides many tools for farmers to access. I encourage everyone to contact the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and USDA Rural Development Agency offices for details. ♦

CLASSIFIED

Sheep for sale: 1 two-year-old proven registered Romney ram (Foxy 368) and 2- three year old Navajo-Churro wethers from organically managed spinners flock. Excellent health and dispositions. Woolly Mammoth Farm - 413-323-6922.

Need some advice? On The Farm, "Problem-Solving for the Small Farm", is a consulting company, which can provide advice on the care, feeding, and management of livestock raised in a rural or suburban setting, for fun or profit. We will visit your site and help you devise an animal-management plan, which is tailored to your setting and your goals. For a free brochure, contact Bill Graves at 413-369-4679 or Bob DUBY at 413-548-9404, or e-mail us at offarm@hotmail.com.

Corriedale natural brown breeder ewe and ram lambs for sale. Call Abbey Farm 508-528-1282.

Milk or processor tank wanted: 500-2000 gallons. 508-428-8442.

Two Patz silo unloaders, 18 and 24 foot, reasonable. 2 Harder silos. Wagner Farms, 413-253-5194.

Irrigated sweet corn, SE varieties. \$12/bu. Picked up at farm. Call Jim at Sunshine Farm, 508-655-5022.

For sale: 80 gal galvanized storage tank, \$75 or B/O. Brand new electric water tank, \$100. Lime spreader, M/A/O. Cement mixer, \$100. Wood & aluminum door & window, M/A/O. Oil furnace for barn, B/O. Cann milk compressor, B/O. All kinds of farm & whatever, M/A/O. Leo Bedard, 181 Newmarket Rd., Durham, NH.

P.B. registered Icelandic lambs for sale: 2 ewes lambs: one horned brown (twin) \$550; one horned white (twin) \$475; 2 ram lambs: 1 horned white (single) \$500, 1 horned white (twin) \$400. Pembroke, MA 781-826-3581, westelmfarm@aol.com, www.westelmfarm.com.

For sale: used books and pamphlets on gardening, farming, beekeeping and other agricultural subjects. Nancy L. Dole Books & Ephemera, ndole@crocker.com, 413-625-2210, 32 Bridge St., Shelburne Falls, MA 01370.

We will help Massachusetts farmers with a free help-wanted ad in The Caretaker Gazette. We have Massachusetts subscribers who want to work on your farm. Contact: THE Caretaker Gazette, PO Box 540, River Falls, WI 54022 (715) 426-5500, www.caretaker.org.

Subscribe to the New England Farm Bulletin. \$17/year includes 2 free farm classifieds or \$17 in free information booklets, monthly publication, annual almanac, New England fairs and farmers' market directory, monthly farm classifieds and features, access to rare farm topics and more! NEFB, Dept. MA, PO Box 67, Taunton, MA 02780.

How to Place a Classified Ad

Classified ads are accepted free-of charge on a first-come basis. Limit: 25 words. Be sure to include a phone number. No display ads will be accepted. Only one ad per business/individual per issue, unless space permits. Ads may run in consecutive issues, space permitting.

Ads must be of interest to Massachusetts farmers. The Mass. Dept. of Food and Agriculture reserves the right to refuse any listing it deems inappropriate for publication.

Send typewritten or neatly printed copy to: Farm & Market Report, Mass. Dept. of Food and Agriculture, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 500, Boston, MA 02114, 617-626-1752 fax: 617-626-1850, e-mail: Diane.Baedeker@state.ma.us

Receive the Farm & Market Report by E-mail!

Sign up to have the Farm & Market Report delivered to your e-mail box. Get the newsletter sooner, receive special "news extras" and help us save tax dollars in the process. Send a message to Diane.Baedeker@state.ma.us with your name, address and phone number to sign up.

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Brad Mitchell, Director, Regulatory Services

Diane Baedeker Petit, Editor, Farm & Market Report

This publication is available in alternate formats upon request.

calendar 2002

September 13-29 – **Eastern States Exposition (The Big E)**, West Springfield. Avenue of States, agricultural exhibits, livestock shows, midway, entertainment, crafts, Storowton Village and much more. Call 413-737-2443 or visit www.thebige.com.

September 14 – **Fall Farm Tour & Feast**, sponsored by CISA (Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture). Visit farms in western Franklin County. Tickets \$30, fundraiser for CISA. Call 413-559-5338 or visit www.buylocalfood.com.

September 21 – **The Fourth Annual North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Festival**, "The Festival That Stinks," 10:00 am to the evening hours! At Forster Farm, 60 Chestnut Hill Rd. Orange, MA 01364 Contact: Deb Habib, 978-544-9023 or visit www.seedsofsolidarity.org.

September 22 – **1st Annual Tour des Farms Cycling and Farm Harvest Tasting Tour**, in Southeastern Mass. and eastern Rhode Island. Benefits SEMAP (Southeastern Mass. Agricultural Partnership). For more information call 508-999-8895 or visit www.umassd.edu/semap.

September 21 and 22 - **11th Annual Soule Homestead Harvest Fair** and Joe Davies Folk Festival. Saturday 10:00 am-5:00 pm and Sunday 11:00 am-5:00 pm. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors, students and members, \$1 for children ages 6 to 12, children 5 and younger free. For a complete schedule of activities, directions, or more information about the Homestead call 508-947-6744 between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Tuesday through Sunday or visit the Homestead website at www.soulehomestead.org.

September 28 - **Apple Festival at Nashoba Valley Winery**, Bolton, 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm. Enjoy the Fall season in the heart of Massachusetts' apple country. Walk through our scenic orchard and choose from over 100 varieties of apples. Enjoy hayrides and face painting for the children, as well as winery tours and tastings. Call 978-779-5521 or visit www.nashobawinery.com.

October 19 - **Fall Festival: Brews and Blues** at Nashoba Valley Winery, Bolton, 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm. The Orchard will be bursting with the colors of Fall. Enjoy this breathtaking site while celebrating our brand new event Bubbles and Blues. Sample our variety of microbrews, specialty foods prepared by our chefs at J's, a live blues band, and lots of other activities. Call 978-779-5521 or visit www.nashobawinery.com.

A Salute to New England Specialty Foods

Friday, September 27, 2002
Massachusetts Building,
The Big E (Eastern States Exposition)
West Springfield

Massachusetts food producers are invited to sample and sell on the front lawn of the Massachusetts Building as part of the Salute to New England Specialty Foods Day at the Big E. There is no cost. Participation is limited to 20 - first come - first served. If you would like information -call 617-626-1753 or email: bonita.oehlke@state.ma.us. ♦

2003 UMass Garden Calendar: "It's a Jungle Out There"

Next year's UMass Garden Calendar features many familiar landscape and garden plants and their key pest problems. As with a jungle, there are far more organisms in gardens than just plants. Some of these organisms are considered pests and include insects, diseases and weeds and they often challenge or thwart our gardening efforts.

UMass' goal is to help the gardener to be able to: demystify the garden jungle; identify and develop a better understanding of pest and garden problems; and help reduce unnecessary pesticide usage. As always, the calendar offers beautiful color photos and information on garden pests and management strategies as well as daily gardening tips such as when to plant peas, how to manage grubs, sunrise/sunset times, and phases of the moon.

To order single copies, send \$8.50/ea (payable to UMass) to the UMass Extension Bookstore, Draper Hall, 40 Campus Center Way, Amherst, MA 01003-9244. Orders will be shipped during in September. Orders of 25 or more to a single address qualify for the bulk rate of \$4.25/ea plus shipping. Use this informative calendar to educate or thank your clients! For a price quote, including shipping, call the UMass Extension Bookstore at 413-545-2717. For more information go to www.umassgardencalendar.org ♦

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