

Massachusetts Department of  
Agricultural Resources

*Farm & Market Report*

Vol. 81, No. 6, December 2004

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**In this issue:**

LOCAL NEWS

- [Commissioners Column](#)
- [2005 Agriculture Calendar Published](#)
- [2004 Winners of the Governor's Smart Growth Leadership Awards](#)
- ["Does Your Town Need an Agricultural Commission?"](#)
- [Agricultural Commissions On The Web](#)
- [Tons of Trash Recycled at Marshfield Fair](#)
- [Farmers' Markets looking for Growers](#)
- [Water Quality Improvement Funding - AEEP](#)
- [New MDAR Business Planning Sessions](#)
- [Winter Flower Growers' Meeting](#)
- [International buyers to meet with suppliers in Boston](#)
- [Pemberton Farms Offers "A Taste of Massachusetts" Gift Baskets](#)
- [Farm direct marketers will "Start a Revolution" in Boston in 2005](#)
- [Russell Davenport honored by the International Maple Syrup Institute](#)

NEWS FROM USDA

- [New England Small Farm Institute, Belchertown, awarded \\$110,000 USDA grant](#)
- [Veneman Awards \\$4.6 million in Grants for Community Food Projects - Two to Massachusetts](#)
- [Wildlife Services Program](#)

IN EVERY ISSUE

- [CLASSIFIED](#)
- [CALENDAR](#)
- [About the Farm & Market Report](#)

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**COMMISSIONER'S COLUMN**

By Douglas P. Gillespie

It's beginning to feel like Winter, and the upcoming season generally gives farmers the opportunity to consider what challenges lie ahead, and how best to address them. At the Department of Agricultural Resources, we are always looking to provide tools to assist in facing these challenges, and this year is no exception.

We have increased funding for the Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP) from \$175,000 to \$250,000 in order to address more on-farm environmental issues. In the past, qualifying projects were exclusively water quality or water conservation related, but this round the scope has been expanded. While the early deadline has recently passed, some funding is still available. I encourage you to check out AEEP on our website: [www.Mass.Gov/Agr](http://www.Mass.Gov/Agr) for further details.

The Department will also be expanding farm marketing opportunities in several ways during the year ahead. We have contracted with Kelly Erwin to facilitate the "Farm to School" initiative, whereby local farms can sell direct to the school cafeteria. Kelly can be contacted at [kelerwin@localnet.com](mailto:kelerwin@localnet.com), and I urge you to consider this potential market. There are obvious obstacles, such as delivery logistics, to be considered. But the advantage of creating a seasonal market base with a local face on it could really pay long term dividends! We have school systems in many areas of the state expressing interest in working with local farmers, so please consider this opportunity.

We will also devote staff time and resources toward expanding farmer participation in Massachusetts' Farmers Markets. We have nearly 100 such markets across the state, and a dozen or so communities looking to start new markets. Frankly, we need more farmers marketing through this venue to keep it growing. Likewise, DAR participates as a member of "FoodExportUSA-Northeast", thereby creating export opportunities for farm businesses and food companies. We hope to expand the number of Massachusetts firms availing themselves of this program in the year ahead.

Agri-tourism is another real marketing opportunity! Our staff is ready to assist in expanding on-farm opportunities in this area, and our Agri-Tourism map project completed through a USDA Rural Development grant will be distributed to maximize public awareness for the 2005 tourism season.

Smart Growth is a key priority for state government, and our challenge is to showcase agriculture as a vital tool in local land-use policy to succeed in smart growth. Our effort to spearhead creating of municipal Agricultural Commissions and Right To Farm bylaws is a big component of our efforts. In the past year several towns have created commissions, and we now have 13 statewide. Our hope is to double that number this Spring. Four towns have adopted Right To Farm bylaws.

For livestock, poultry and horse farms, the coming year will bring the initial phases of the National Animal ID System. DAR will be the lead agency in assigning every animal premise a distinct "Premise ID Number" to begin this effort. This means that we will

need to identify every premise in Massachusetts where a single horse, cow or rooster passes through. That will not be an easy fete, but every state is undertaking the same effort. Eventually the premise ID will become part of the individual animal ID and tracking of all animals.

2005 will also bring with it early discussions about the next federal Farm Bill. This agency will attempt to carry an aggressive agenda on behalf of Massachusetts farmers through our participation in the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture. If you have specific suggestions or concerns about federal farm programs, I invite you to email me directly at [Doug.Gillespie@state.ma.us](mailto:Doug.Gillespie@state.ma.us).

So it will be a busy Winter! These are just a few examples of the initiatives our department faces in the coming months. Happy Holidays to all. Doug

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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## **Massachusetts Agriculture Photo Contest Winners Announced and the 2005 Agriculture Calendar Published**

The winning photos from this year's Massachusetts Agriculture Calendar Photo Contest have been selected and published in the [2005 Massachusetts Agriculture Calendar](#). The calendar, published by [Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom, Inc](#), in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) features a winning photograph each month, plus several honorable mention winners in selected locations throughout the calendar. The winning photos portray local farms and products throughout the seasons.

The winners received their winners certificates in a ceremony on Thursday, September 23 - Massachusetts Day - at The Big E, West Springfield. Commissioner of Agricultural Resources Douglas P. Gillespie presented the awards on the front lawn of the Massachusetts Building on the fairgrounds.

The Photo Contest winners are:

- [January 2005](#) - Nancy King, Northfield
- [February 2005](#) - Elaine Wickstrom, Berlin
- [March 2005](#) - Janice Wentworth, N. Brookfield
- [April 2005](#) - Aleda Freeman, Malden
- [May 2005](#) - Rick Connole, East Falmouth
- [June 2005](#) - Donna Lengieza, Chicopee
- [July 2005](#) - Julianne Snow Gauron, Lincoln
- [August 2005](#) - Jack Grundstrom, Rowley
- [September 2005](#) - Emily Turteltaub, Ipswich
- [October 2005](#) - Steve Vicario, Oakham

- [November 2005](#) - Lynn Hartman, Barre
- [December 2005](#) - Teresa Volante, Needham

[\(Click here for picture of the calendar cover, and a photo of some of the winners at the Eastern States Exposition\)](#)

The 2005 Ag calendar also includes Massachusetts agriculture facts, conservation facts, agriculture and horticulture related events and websites, and a chart showing when local crops are in season.

"This calendar will educate consumers about the rich diversity of agriculture in the Bay State," said Commissioner Gillespie, noting that the calendar also features facts about Massachusetts agriculture, agricultural events, and websites offering more information. "I'm sure folks will enjoy viewing these attractive pictures throughout the year while learning about farming in Commonwealth."

"The Massachusetts Agriculture calendar also offers people an opportunity to learn about conserving natural resources on a farm and in their own backyard," said Cecil B. Currin, Massachusetts State Conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. "I'm happy that NRCS was able to partner with the state ag department and Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom on this educational project."

Each winner received a winners certificate, tickets to the Eastern States Exposition (The Big E), and two complimentary calendars.

Calendars may be purchased for \$10 each; the wholesale cost is \$5 each for orders over five copies. Proceeds will benefit Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom, a non-profit organization that works with teachers throughout the state in developing classroom materials. Send a check payable to [Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom](#) with your name and address to: Calendar, Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom, c/o Debi Hogan, PO Box 345, Seekonk, MA 02771.

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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## **2004 Winners of the Governor's Smart Growth Leadership Awards**

### Town of Abington

“Abington Transit Oriented Development and  
Central Business District”

The Town of Abington created a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zoning district encompassing 30 acres around the commuter rail station to encourage development that takes advantage of the rail line and complements surrounding residential areas by, for

example, providing for the relatively modest levels of on-site parking appropriate to transit- and pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods.

Town of Amesbury  
Office of Community and Economic Development  
“Downtown Amesbury – A Showcase of Smart Growth”

The Town of Amesbury's Office of Community and Economic Development has demonstrated commitment to the principles of sustainable development through the transformation of historic, underutilized buildings into a vibrant mixed-use district through the creation of new housing, the cleanup of brownfields, and the preservation of open space.

Town of Amherst  
Conservation Department  
“Farmland Protection and Agricultural Viability”

The Town of Amherst has used zoning and other tools in a comprehensive strategy to protect its agricultural landscape and support local farms.

City of Brockton  
Brockton Area Transit Authority  
“The Intermodal Transportation Center: A Hub for Downtown Revitalization”

The Brockton Area Transit Authority’s new Intermodal Transportation Center is the centerpiece of the City’s efforts to revitalize its downtown using Transit Oriented Development and Smart Growth strategies

City of Cambridge  
Community Development Department  
“Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Program”

The City of Cambridge has invested in a “best in class” bicycle and pedestrian program that embraces the vision of a sustainable city where walking, biking, and public transit are the primary means of getting around.

Town of Dennis  
Planning and Appeals Office  
“Reviving Main Street: Dennisport Village Center”

The Town of Dennis used historic postcards and other images to win support for Village Center Zoning as a way to revitalize downtown Dennisport, allowing increased densities, a mix of retail, commercial, professional and upper-floor residential uses on a single property, and affordable and handicapped accessible housing units.

East Boston  
“Maverick Gardens Phase II Hope VI Housing Initiative”

With its proximity to downtown, access to rapid transit, historic waterfront and spectacular views of Boston, Maverick Gardens in East Boston is the residential cornerstone of a neighborhood revitalization effort, featuring 396 units of diverse mixed-use housing.

The City of Gardner  
Department of Community Development and Planning  
“The Levi Haywood Memorial Library”

The City of Gardner’s Dept. of Community Development and Planning took a 1.8 acre brownfield site in the downtown, rezoned it, cleaned it up, and transformed it into a library and park.

City of Lawrence  
Lawrence CommunityWorks  
“Reviviendo Gateway Initiative”

The Reviviendo Gateway Initiative in Lawrence is a coalition of local residents, mill owners, business people, artists, non-profit organizations, civic leaders and elected officials working together to create a vibrant urban village with mixed-use infill development and historic rehabilitation in the central business district, the historic mill district, and the adjacent North Common neighborhood in Lawrence.

Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea  
“10 and 12 Summer Street”

Under the leadership of the local housing authority, an old rundown building - across the street from the commuter rail station and within walking distance to stores, restaurants, parks and community services - was rehabilitated into an attractive mix of affordable and market rate housing with both rental and homeownership units.

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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**“Does Your Town Need an  
Agricultural Commission?”**

That will be the topic of three informational meetings in :

- December 8, 2004, Marion Social Club, Marion 5:30PM to 7:30PM. Co-Sponsored by the Westport, Dartmouth and Middleboro Agricultural Commissions, Pilgrim Resource Conservation & Development and a grant from

the Coastal Zone Management Agency. For more info. contact Barbara Link 508-336-3823 or by email [barbaralink@earthlink.net](mailto:barbaralink@earthlink.net).

- January 10th (snow date, the 18th) at the Brookfield Town Hall, 6:30-8:30pm
- January 26th (snow date, January 31st) at the Holden Town Hall.

Meetings will introduce farmers, local officials and interested parties to the benefits and process of establishing local Agricultural Commissions. These meetings are being sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources.

“Worcester County ranks first in total value of agricultural products sold in Massachusetts, with a proud history behind it. But like everywhere in this state, development pressures are crowding farms and making them less and less viable. A local Agricultural Commission can give farmers a voice in town government, can educate the residents on the value of working farms, and can promote the products and services offered by agriculture,” according to Doug Gillespie, Commissioner of the Department.

Commission members and local officials from communities with Ag Commissions will talk about their experiences in passing a local by-law at Town Meeting and in getting themselves up and running. The Department is encouraging communities to consider putting an article on their Town Meeting warrants this spring.

For information about these meetings, contact Mary Greendale at 508-429-2813.

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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## **Agricultural Commissions On The Web**

At present, there are 13 agricultural commissions in Massachusetts! To assist others who are interested in learning about and forming agricultural commission, DAR has developed a new web page devoted to this topic on DAR’s website. The address is [www.mass.gov/agr/agcom](http://www.mass.gov/agr/agcom).

The site incorporates some material from an excellent CD produced by and available from Pilgrim RD&C, which provides recommendations for how to organize an agricultural commission in your town. A list of the current agricultural commissions, including contacts for people who are already involved in agricultural commissions, can be found on the site. There is an additional listing of organizations throughout the state that can help answer questions about agricultural commissions. DAR intends to keep this site updated so please let us know what other information would be helpful to support agricultural commissions.

Please contact Susan Phinney at 617-626-1772 or email her at [susan.phinney@state.ma.us](mailto:susan.phinney@state.ma.us).

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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## **Tons of Trash Recycled at Marshfield Fair**

Fairgoers, vendors, and volunteer “recycling ambassadors” collectively recycled more than 12 tons of what would have been trash at this year’s Marshfield Fair. Due to separate but related initiatives by the South Shore Recycling Cooperative and the Massachusetts Lottery Commission, and with the support of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Marshfield Fair directors and grounds crew, and the Marshfield Public Works Department, five tons of cardboard, bottles and cans from the Fair were recycled, and seven tons of old lottery tickets were brought in by fairgoers and recycled.

A grant from the DEP to the South Shore Recycling Cooperative provided technical assistance by DEP staffer Ann McGovern and 150 recycling carts and bins, which were placed next to trash receptacles for bottles, cans, newspaper and cardboard during the Fair.

Most vendors and exhibitors complied with the request to separate their cardboard and flatten it for efficient collection. Thirty vendors were awarded “Super Recycler” ribbons for superior participation. Four of these received “Recycling Champions” awards for outstanding recycling throughout the Fair. “Recycling Champions” were Buchino’s Foot Longs sausage stand for “Best Leadership,” Fiesta Shows Cook House for “Most Improved,” Marshfield Fair Horticulture Department for “Most Enthusiastic,” and Marshfield Fair Grounds Crew for “Hardest Working.”

Keeping five tons of recyclables out of the trash saved the Fair about \$460 in disposal fees at the Marshfield Transfer Station, where the rest of the 45 tons of trash was disposed at a rate of \$92 per ton.

“We are very pleased with our first recycling effort at the Fair,” said Carleton Chandler, the Marshfield Agricultural and Horticultural Society’s secretary-treasurer. “We conserved natural resources, provided a great opportunity for public education about recycling, and led by example. We anticipate recycling these materials again at next year’s Fair and hope for even greater participation.”

Claire Sullivan, executive director of the South Shore Recycling Cooperative, reported that “recycling all those materials not only saved nearly 200 trees and tons of minerals, but also thousands of gallons of fuel that’s needed to make paper, cardboard, plastic and aluminum from scratch, and the associated air and water pollution.”

Ann McGovern, Consumer Waste Reduction coordinator for DEP, was thrilled that the recycling pilot was so well received, and plans to volunteer to organize the recycling effort at Marshfield Fair next year. "It was amazing to see how much was recycled and it was very rewarding to be part of such a cooperative effort," she said. "Everyone's efforts truly made a difference for the environment. I hope we can build on this year's success to recycle even more at next year's Fair, and that fairgoers will recycle more at home because of their experience at Marshfield Fair."

In an effort to reduce litter, the Mass. Lottery Commission offered "Instant Replay," a recycling program for lottery tickets. A free \$1 ticket was given for every 20 used scratch tickets brought to the Fair. Fairgoers turned in old tickets by the boxful, which added up to 7.2 tons that were recycled by EOMS of Brockton.

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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### **Farmers' Markets looking for Growers**

Several new farmers' markets are being proposed for the 2005 season. If you are interested, please get in touch with the contact listed.

- Brighton, Dennis Minihane, 617-254-1130
- Brookfield, Sarah Heller, 508-867-8494 or [gohls@mac.com](mailto:gohls@mac.com)
- East Boston, Jackie Rosatto, 617-833-3304 or [Jackie\\_rosatto@hotmail.com](mailto:Jackie_rosatto@hotmail.com)
- Lexington, Sonia Demarta, 781-860-0729, or [maranatha@rcn.org](mailto:maranatha@rcn.org)
- South Hadley, Linda Kurowski, 413-538-5042, or [lkurowski@hotmail.com](mailto:lkurowski@hotmail.com)
- Wareham, Susan Lauerman, 508-291-4316 or [slauerman@admakepeace.com](mailto:slauerman@admakepeace.com)

For more information on selling at farmers' markets contact David Webber at 617-626-1754 or [david.webber@state.ma.us](mailto:david.webber@state.ma.us).

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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### **Water Quality Improvement Funding - AEEP**

The first round of funding for the Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP) closed November 26, 2004. Forty eligible applications are being review for the \$200,00 worth of available funding. Decisions should be announced before January.

New applications for round 2 are being accepted until April 1. Applicants who are not funded in round 1 will be automatically considered in round 2. Fifty thousand dollars will be awarded in round 2.

For more information or to obtain an application go the DAR's website at [www.mass.gov/agr](http://www.mass.gov/agr) or contact the Coordinator, Susan Phinney at 617-626-1772 or email her at [susan.phinney@state.ma.us](mailto:susan.phinney@state.ma.us).

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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## **New MDAR Business Planning Sessions**

The cold months and tax time bring farmers' labors in from the field and onto the desk. Need help sorting those piles into meaningful information and making informed plans for the future? Ready to face a smaller pile next year? Sign up for a chance to gather with your peers for a few evenings in a friendly setting with professional guidance and develop some measurable plans for your farm enterprise!

MDAR can offer four learning formats in 2005.

1) For Experienced Farmers - The now-familiar and acclaimed 11 session (one per week) NxLevel course "Tilling the Soil of Opportunity" – successfully completed by over 230 MA ag businesses in the last six years – will return with our experienced Instructor and team of topic experts. Limited to twelve already-working farms, this course runs January-early April. A likely site this year is in the Quaboag Valley CDC service area – somewhere near Palmer. This allows for easy site access from the Pike and points north and south. Fee is \$300 per business. Signup is in December, with the course slated to begin in mid January.

2) For New Farmers - New - MDAR will partner with the New England Small Institute to offer their popular 4 session (one per week) "Explorer" course for those contemplating or just beginning a new farm enterprise. Also limited to 12 new/entry farmers, NESFI teaches this course in Belchertown at their home location. MDAR is making it available in other locations around the state where there is interest. We expect to offer a session this year in late winter in northern Berkshire County, in collaboration with Berkshire Grown. Fee is \$150 per business. Signup is ongoing – this course can be held in any month when there is need.

3) For Ag Businesses seeking a boost - New – MDAR is preparing to pilot a new year-long "Cluster" approach to farm business development. Limited to 10 well-developed existing ag businesses, this format starts with a facilitated monthly group meeting, interspersed with separate bi-monthly meetings of each participating business's "advisory board". This board, which will be formed as part of the cluster program if you don't currently have one, includes all key decision makers in each farm business – and is also facilitated by the Cluster Coordinator. The group meetings will serve as an invaluable peer resource to focusing and solving common issues, and the individual meetings of the farm boards will deal with private implementation of plans and problem solving. The Coordinator for this effort has extensive experience using this model with small

businesses in RI and MA, and is also our respected NxLevel Instructor for ag businesses from format # 1 above. We hope to pick a location based on interest and begin in March or April. Fee is \$500 per business.

4) For Farmers needing more from their Schedule F - New – For three years now, MDAR has been developing a financial and business planning tool known as “The Financial Bridge”. It starts from your existing IRS Schedule F (the farm tax form) and works backwards and forwards to develop meaningful financial statements and analysis tools for your ag enterprise. You will attend 2-3 training sessions in the use of the tool, and will receive a workbook and software disk to make the forms interactive based on simple Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. The sheets work with each other automatically – a change on one line in one form makes the appropriate changes to all the other forms without separate entries. Although we will use a computer lab for the trainings, you must have access to a computer at home with a version of Excel installed no older than “2000” to use this tool. This is a much simpler and more intuitive tool than learning a full accounting program, and we give you the software (assuming you already have Excel). You will take home a tool you can easily continue to use, and which will always work with your schedule F each year. Visits to your accountant and tax preparer will be shorter, more useful and cheaper! The pilot class is limited to 10. We have already tested it successfully with three individual farms who said we had a good thing and should get on with it. The fee for the pilot is \$75, and the first course will be held at UMass Dartmouth, probably in February.

The fee for each of these formats is already significantly subsidized by MDAR and its regional partners. Most of what you will pay will go for materials and the extra time our Instructors and Coordinators put in to each enterprise. We have found that farm businesses prepared to make at least this small investment in planning and analysis have shown the commitment to get the most out of the time involved. We can discuss some accommodation if the cost is a serious barrier.

December and early January is when we must decide whether to hold these courses – and where. Please call or email us to make your interest known and to get questions answered. We will send you an application and additional information.

Contact: Rick Chandler, MDAR, 25 West Experiment Station, UMass, Amherst, MA 01003. (413) 577-0459, [rchandler@umext.umass.edu](mailto:rchandler@umext.umass.edu)

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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## **Winter Flower Growers' Meeting**

Sponsored by University of Massachusetts Extension and the Massachusetts Flower Growers' Association.

Date: Tuesday, January 18, 2004

Time: 9:00 AM - 3:15 PM

Place: D&D Farm and Greenhouses, 32 Hudson Rd., Stow, MA

Join us for a full-day educational program for greenhouse and flower growers and tour of D&D greenhouses. Topics will include "Creative Containers and Mixed Baskets", "Water Quality Issues for MA Growers", "Managing Your Advertising Dollars", "Sanitizing Greenhouses with Chlorine Dioxide" and "New Fungicides". The cost to register is \$15 and lunch is available for \$15.

D & D Farm and Greenhouses - What started as a way to make a few extra bucks for one man and his family, has grown into a three generation, family owned and operated wholesale flower business.

D & D Farms has over 140,000 sq. ft. of greenhouse growing area for pansies, perennials, annuals, mixed and flowering hanging baskets, 4" and 6" crops and flowering mums and asters. They just built a new Westbrook Skyline II gutter-connected, glass open roof designed greenhouse and plug operation/production facility. D&D sow all their own seedlings, from pansies to perennials to the ever-growing selection of flowering annuals. Their vegetative material and mums come from cuttings they root themselves.

To register for this meeting and information on other upcoming events, visit [www.umass.edu/umext/floriculture/upcoming\\_events.html](http://www.umass.edu/umext/floriculture/upcoming_events.html)

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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## **International buyers to meet with suppliers in Boston**

Here is a low-cost, low-risk opportunity to get product feedback from international buyers and develop business relations and sales. There will be some 20 international buyers in Boston on Thursday, January 13, 2005. There will be 30-minute meetings to meet with each buyer that you have pre-selected prior to the mission. You may use the meetings to cultivate new export sales, solidify relationships with current buyers, or gain primary feedback about your products in specific international markets. The cost is \$125.

Buyers will be looking for a vast range of products from a variety of market segments including retail, foodservice, ethnic and healthy/organic. The list of buyers is being finalized. You may obtain FREE pre-meeting assistance including information to develop export pricing and quotations. To review details about the event including buyer profiles and/or sign up for assistance, please contact [bonita.ohlke@state.ma.us](mailto:bonita.ohlke@state.ma.us).

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources is working closely with Food Export USA Northeast to coordinate this event. [www.foodexportusa.org](http://www.foodexportusa.org).

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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### **Pemberton Farms Offers “A Taste of Massachusetts” Gift Baskets Just in Time for Holiday Gifts**

Massachusetts Specialty Foods are featured exclusively in the 4 new “A Taste of Massachusetts” gift baskets offered by Pemberton Farms. The baskets are showcased on the Pemberton Farms website and are available just in time for holiday ordering.

These beautiful “A Taste of Massachusetts” Baskets offer a wonderful solution for holiday and gift giving. Spread the word and forward this information to your family and friends! Pemberton Farms is making a generous donation to the Massachusetts Specialty Foods Association on each basket sold. To view the individual baskets and for ordering information, [click here](#).

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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### **Farm direct marketers will "Start a Revolution" in Boston in 2005**

In February 2005, more than a thousand farm direct marketers will gather for the annual conference of the North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA). The last time this many farmers gathered in Boston, they started a revolution!

The conference will be held on Feb. 11-12, 2005, at the Park Plaza Hotel, which is just a few blocks from the start of the Freedom Trail. It's being held in conjunction with the New England Farmers' Direct Marketing Conference. A trade show with more than 80 vendors will be held in conjunction with the conference; it will be held across the street at the historic Castle at Park Plaza.

In addition to the conference, the convention will feature pre- and post-conference bus tours and a full-day workshop. The entire event runs from Feb. 7-14, 2005.

The conference will feature nine different tracks; topics include agritourism, business management, retail markets, farmers' markets, local food initiatives and livestock. Another track will take attendees Beyond Fruits & Vegetables, and another will take a close look at Featured Farms.

The conference will feature several well-known speakers, including: Bruce Baker, jewelry craftsman and salesmanship expert, Craftsbury, Vt.; Chris Fesko, dairy farmer and award-winning videographer, Skaneateles, N.Y.; Marty Jacknis, business management expert and vice president of Calico Cottage Inc., Amityville, N.Y.; John R.

Mullin, certified land use planner and director of the Center for Economic Development at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst ; and Susan Wagner, editor of Country Business, St. Charles, Ill.

The pre-conference bus tour will be held Feb. 7-9, 2004. For the first time ever, NAFDMA is offering four different pre-conference bus tour options: Agritourism, On-Farm Retail, Farm Direct Marketing and Farmers' Markets.

A day of workshops will be held Feb. 10. Workshop topics include: Salesmanship with Bruce Baker; Business Transfers with Attorney Michelle Carron; Business Management Strategies with Marty Jacknis; and School Tours with Chris Fesko and a team from the famed Shelburne Farms in Vermont.

The post-conference bus tour will be held on Feb. 13-14. The tour will go to New York City for sightseeing and will include a ticket to see The Lion King on Broadway. Stops along the way will be Bishop's Orchards in Guilford, Conn., and Stew Leonard's in Norwalk, Conn.

For convention information, visit [www.nafdma.com](http://www.nafdma.com), e-mail [info@nafdma.com](mailto:info@nafdma.com), or call (413) 529-0386. Pre-registration deadline is Jan. 6.

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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### **Russell Davenport honored by the International Maple Syrup Institute**

Russell Davenport of Shelburne Falls was honored by the International Maple Syrup Institute at their annual meeting and banquet in Lake George, NY in October. Davenport, was honored for outstanding service to the international maple industry.

He was cited for his leadership in the American Maple Museum's Hall of Fame, and his leadership in developing the first edition of the Maple Syrup Producers Manual. Davenport has a long history of work with the industry in Massachusetts and he was honored with a life time membership for his efforts, several years ago. A life long sugarmaker, he has been a leader in technology implementation, marketing efforts and much more. For many years he and his wife operated the sugarhouse in the Massachusetts building at Eastern States Exposition and he serves on the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture Advisory Committee. He has been active on many international maple committees over the years, including chair of the North American Maple Syrup Council for two years.

The Davenports still sugar at their multi-generational dairy/maple farm in Shelburne Falls. Each spring they operate a maple restaurant on the farm with their family.

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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## NEWS FROM USDA

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### **New England Small Farm Institute, Belchertown, awarded \$110,000 USDA grant**

BELCHERTOWN, MA -- The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has presented the New England Small Farm Institute (NESFI) with a \$110,000 federal Conservation Partnership Initiative (CPI) Grant for a project that will improve conservation services to local farmers with grass-based livestock operations in the Chicopee River Basin.

NESFI is one of only six organizations nationwide selected to receive a CPI grant this year, and the only organization east of the Mississippi River.

NESFI will lead a partnership of nine organizations to develop a service network to assure good conservation practices on grass-based livestock farms. The project will focus on new farmers and start-up enterprises.

The grant check was presented recently by Cecil Currin, USDA-NRCS State Conservationist for Massachusetts, to NESFI director Judith Gillan at the institute's headquarters on Jackson Street in Belchertown. Douglas Gillespie, Massachusetts Commissioner of Agricultural Resources, and other federal, state and local officials and partnering agricultural and land conservation organizations attended.

CPI grants are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and are designed to foster conservation partnerships and fund projects that focus technical and financial resources on conservation priorities in watersheds of special significance and other geographic areas of environmental sensitivity. CPI is open to state and local governments, tribes and nongovernmental organizations with a history of working with agricultural producers.

Small-scale livestock enterprises are increasingly common in New England's upland watersheds. The region's soil base, hilly terrain, and rain-rich climate are particularly suited to grazing operations. Consumer demand is strong for grass-based farm products because of their social and economic acceptability, as well as their dietary value. Market proximity and well established buy-local campaigns provide regional farmers with a competitive advantage in providing "native grown."

"Grass-based farming and livestock enterprises are central to the future of agriculture in this area," Currin said. "This grant will support the development of locally-led solutions to their natural resource concerns. NESFI is well suited to helping them cooperate and share information to address their environmental challenges."

NRCS received 29 proposals involving 31 states (including five multi-state submissions). Applications were received from one local agency, four state agencies, three universities, three conservation districts, four resource conservation and development councils and 13 nongovernmental organizations (one nonprofit submitted two proposals in different states). CPI proposals were required to address one or more of the following conservation priorities: terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat, coastal resources, livestock nutrient management and minor/specialty crop pest management.

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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### **Veneman Awards \$4.6 million in Grants for Community Food Projects - Two to Massachusetts**

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced that 25 grants totaling \$4.6 million have been awarded as part of USDA's Community Food Projects (CFP) Competitive Grants Program. The program helps low-income people meet their food needs.

"This Administration is committed to helping all Americans have access to a healthy and nutritious food supply," said Veneman. "These grants invest in innovative community-based projects that will also provide access to nutritious food for those in need."

The CFP awards will aid nonprofit organizations in 17 states in carrying out a variety of projects in helping low-income communities.

The two projects awarded are:

Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture, South Deerfield, \$125,000. This project will address low-income needs by developing stronger farmers' markets through sales of locally grown produce and nutrition education classes.

The Food Project, Lincoln, \$140,000. This training and technical assistance project will significantly increase aid in youth training and development for current and potential program grantees through regional training hubs for mentoring and training for youth and adults in sustainable food activities.

For more information and a complete list of grants, [click here](#).

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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### **Wildlife Services Program**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services Program is available to assist landscapers and grounds managers with wildlife damage throughout Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Wildlife Services may provide assistance with obtaining permits and the development of a management plan specific to most grounds managers' needs.

For more information, contact Don Wilda at (413) 253-2403, or email at [Donald.J.Wilda@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Donald.J.Wilda@aphis.usda.gov).

[\[back to table of contents\]](#)

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## IN EVERY ISSUE

### CLASSIFIED ADS

- Hay 40 to 50 lbs 2nd cut timothy clover mix  
  
1-802-276-3773 or 1-744-930-3639, [appledumplinghangout@surfglobal.net](mailto:appledumplinghangout@surfglobal.net)
- Empire Packaging Company - A full line of wholesale and retail packaging for the farm & orchard. Serving New England since 1989.  
  
(508) 426-7813
- For Sale: CERTIFIED ORGANIC LAYING CHICKENS. 1 1/2 years old. New Hampshire Reds, Black Australorps, and Silver Laced Wyandottes. Excellent brown egg layers. Call Rita at The HERB FARMacy, Salisbury, MA 978.834.7879
- OnTheFarm consultants provide assistance in planning and problem solving to those involved in the animal industries including producers, municipalities, governmental agencies and the legal profession. Bill Graves and Bob Duby, 413-369-4679 or [onthefarm0248@msn.com](mailto:onthefarm0248@msn.com).
- Position: assistant farm manager for small organic farm at homeless shelter. 25 weeks position. \$500/week salary. Call for info 617-534-2526 x304.
- For Sale: 800 gal bulk tank, Crepaco Milkeeper rectangular, single fan cooler \$900.00 BO 413-369-8029.
- Need help on the farm? Massachusetts farmers can place a free help-wanted ad in THE CARETAKER GAZETTE. Just email [caretaker@caretaker.org](mailto:caretaker@caretaker.org) or call (830) 336-3939.
- For Sale: Selected Trees Blue, White and Norway Spruce and Frasier Firs. Most between 6 & 8 feet You dig them. \$25.00 each 508-866-2839.

### 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 Agricultural Resources reserves the right to refuse any listing it deems inappropriate for publication.

E-mail, fax or mail ads to: Farm & Market Report, Mass. Dept. of Agricultural Resources, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 500, Boston, MA 02114, fax: 617-626-1850, e-mail: [Richard.LeBlanc@state.ma.us](mailto:Richard.LeBlanc@state.ma.us)

[\[back to contents\]](#)

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## CALENDAR

### December

- **December 8**, Starting an Ag Commision, Marion Social Club, Marion 5:30PM to 7:30PM. For more info. contact Barbara Link 508-336-3823 or by email [barbaralink@earthlink.net](mailto:barbaralink@earthlink.net).
- **December 15 & 16**, NE Fruit, Vegetable and Berry Conference and Trade Show, Manchester, NH. Contact John Howell at 413-259-1203. [Click here for program information.](#)

### 2005

- **January 10th** (snow date, the 18th), Starting an Ag Commision, at the Brookfield Town Hall, 6:30-8:30pm, contact: Mary Greendale, 508-429-2813.
- **January 26th** (snow date, January 31st), Starting an Ag Commision at the Holden Town Hall, 6:30-8:30pm, contact: Mary Greendale, 508-429-2813.
- **Feb. 7-14**, North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Conference, Boston, MA. Visit [www.nafdma.com](http://www.nafdma.com).
- **March 15 - 16**, The Northeast Regional Community and Urban IPM Conference, Manchester, New Hampshire, For more information, visit the [conference web site](#) or contact [Liz Thomas](#), 315-787-2626.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

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## About the Farm & Market Report

Published monthly by:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Mitt Romney, Governor  
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Ellen Roy Herzfelder, Secretary  
Department of Agricultural Resources, Douglas P. Gillespie, Commissioner  
251 Causeway St., Suite 500, Boston, MA 02114  
617-626-1700, fax 617-626-1850  
[www.Mass.gov/agr](http://www.Mass.gov/agr)

- Kent Lage, Assistant Commissioner and Chief of Staff, [Kent.Lage@state.ma.us](mailto:Kent.Lage@state.ma.us)
- Bill McKinney, Deputy Commissioner for Budget & Finance,  
[William.McKinney@state.ma.us](mailto:William.McKinney@state.ma.us)
- Mary Jordan, Director of Agricultural Development, [Mary.Jordan@state.ma.us](mailto:Mary.Jordan@state.ma.us)
- Brad Mitchell, Director of Regulatory & Consumer Services,  
[Brad.Mitchell@state.ma.us](mailto:Brad.Mitchell@state.ma.us)