

## Annual Timeline

Open Application Period  
(April – June)

Application Review and Selection  
(July – September)

Applicants Notified;  
TA Team is Organized  
(October, November)

Team Assesses Farm Operation;  
Makes Recommendations  
(November – March)

Business Planning Completed  
(March – April)

Farmer May Request Funding  
Agricultural Covenant is Signed  
(April – May)

Farmer Receives Grant Payment  
(April – June)

## For More Information

### Contact:

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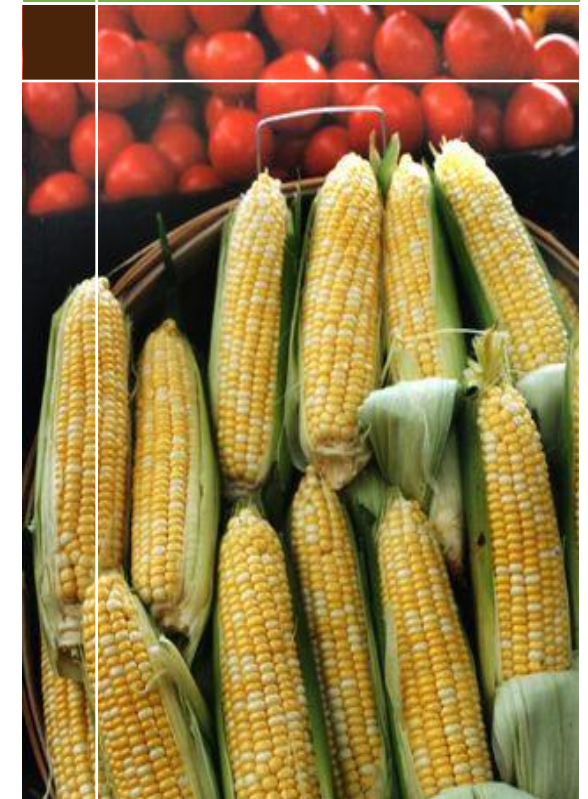


### Funding Subject to Availability

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500  
Boston, MA 02114  
[www.mass.gov/agr/programs/farmviability](http://www.mass.gov/agr/programs/farmviability)

# Farm Viability Enhancement Program

Integrating Technical Assistance,  
Business Planning, Grants, and  
Farmland Protection



**MDAR**  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

# Purpose

The Massachusetts Farm Viability Enhancement Program (FVEP) is designed to improve the economic bottom line and environmental integrity of participating farms through the development and implementation of farm viability plans developed by teams of agricultural, economic, and environmental consultants.

The team will assess the current farm operation and suggest ways to increase farm income through:

- ❑ Production Efficiencies
- ❑ Diversification
- ❑ Direct Marketing
- ❑ Value-Added Opportunities
- ❑ Agri-Tourism

In addition, recommendations concerning pollution prevention and resource conservation will be made.

Funding for implementation of the recommendations may be available in exchange for an agricultural covenant on the property. The covenant would require that the property be used for farming only for prescribed number of years, usually five or ten.



## Eligibility

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources is seeking farmers who intend to have their land in continued agricultural use and who wish to enhance the economic viability of their farm.

Any Massachusetts farmer who owns at least five (5) acres of land in agricultural use that has been managed for the three or more previous years is eligible to apply. Applications will be evaluated upon the following criteria:

- ❑ Number of acres to be placed in the program and the intensity of use
- ❑ Degree of threat to the continuation of the agricultural operation
- ❑ Number of years and type of agricultural experience of applicant
- ❑ Degree to which the project would accomplish environmental objectives
- ❑ Opportunities for retail or value added activities
- ❑ Suitability and productivity of the farm land

## Process

First, the applicant submits a completed application form and any required documentation. The Department reviews submitted applications and selects farms based upon criteria.

A team comprised of professionals from various disciplines, including agriculture, marketing, finance, management, and environmental sciences is organized for each farm. The farm's financial records, management practices, equipment, buildings, and natural resources are assessed.

Based upon the farm assessment, the team will make recommendations for improving the financial and environmental viability of the farm.

Working with the farmer these recommendations will be prioritized and placed on a timeline for implementation. Funds are typically used to construct farm buildings and to purchase equipment.

Any farmer who completes a plan may request funding for its implementation in exchange for an agricultural covenant on the property.

