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Agricultural Food Safety Program (AFSIP) Deadline Extended

AFSIP Grant deadline has been extended to August 12, 2016

MDAR will be accepting applications from agricultural operations who wish to participate in the Department's Agricultural Food Safety Improvement Program (AFSIP). Interested operations are encouraged to review the application on the website. If interested in applying, applications must be submitted with any additional documentation by the new deadline of Friday, August 12th, 2016.

The purpose of AFSIP grant is to support produce and aquaculture operations in implementing enhanced food safety measures that help reduce food safety risks and help to minimize microbial contamination and food-borne illnesses. In addition, by implementing eligible upgrades that help reduce a food safety risk, the program helps operations maintain or increase their market access.

AFSIP is a competitive, re-imbusement grant program that funds projects up to \$20,000 or 75% of total project costs. This round of funding has an application deadline of August 12th, 2016 and projects must be completed by June 30, 2017.

NOTE: For those applicants who have already submitted their applications you may:

1.) Leave your application with us as is or 2.) Re-submit a new application, to modify what you already submitted or to include any new or additional information you may want to provide.

AFSIP grant applications are available at

www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/about/divisions/afsip.html.

Dairy Producers Can Enroll Today to Protect Milk Production Margins

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that dairy producers can enroll for 2017 coverage in the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy) starting July 1. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy producers

when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the producer.

Enrollment begins July 1 and ends on Sept. 30, 2016, for coverage in calendar year 2017. USDA has a web tool to help producers determine the level of coverage under the Margin Protection Program that will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The online resource, available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool> allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. For more information, visit FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy or stop by a local FSA office to learn more about the Margin Protection Program. To find a local FSA office in your area, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Also beginning July 1, 2016, FSA will begin accepting applications for intergenerational transfers, allowing program participants who added an adult child, grandchild or spouse to the operation during calendar year 2014 or 2015, or between Jan. 1 and June 30, 2016, to increase production history by the new cows bought into the operation by the new family members.

MDAR'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](#) – MDAR 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 MDAR's website at mass.gov/agr, and follow at twitter.com/MDARCommish.