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**GOVERNOR PATRICK CELEBRATES SMALL BUSINESSES AND  
TOURISM INDUSTRY AT MASSACHUSETTS WINE AND CHEESE TRAIL  
EXPANSION**

HARDWICK – Thursday, August 16, 2012 – Governor Deval Patrick today joined officials from Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) and Office of Travel and Tourism (MOTT) at Hardwick Winery to celebrate the expansion of the Massachusetts Wine and Cheese Trail, bringing the number of stops on the statewide trail to 29 wineries and 18 cheese businesses.

"Massachusetts boasts a growing number of wineries and cheese makers, giving residents and visitors alike many opportunities to enjoy our state's locally made products while, at the same time, creating jobs and maintaining open space," said Governor Patrick.

Massachusetts wineries accounted for more than \$9.3 million in sales in 2010 – a \$1.5 million increase over 2007. Two-thirds of sales were made directly to consumers at wineries like those included on the trail.

"The Commonwealth is a natural showcase for handcrafted wines and artisan cheeses and the expansion of this trail represents a thriving industry," said Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rick Sullivan, whose office includes DAR.

Maps of the trail can be found at wine and cheese businesses and MOTT's Regional Tourism Councils across the state.

The expanded trail is a creative collaboration funded by MOTT and their 16 Regional Tourism Councils, the Massachusetts Farm Wineries and Growers Association and the Massachusetts Dairy Promotion Board. The trail was designed, coordinated and distributed by DAR's Division of Agricultural Markets.

"Local wine and cheese businesses represent product diversification models that have had significant positive impact on agricultural and business viability in the Commonwealth," said DAR Commissioner Greg Watson.

"The Wine and Cheese Trail offers visitors the opportunity to experience Massachusetts' rich culinary offerings," said Betsy Wall, executive director of MOTT. "The growers and vintners provide an invaluable tourism asset to the Commonwealth."

Currently, Massachusetts is home to 25 cheese businesses – compared to 18 in 2007. In 2011, production totaled 650,160 pounds – an 11 percent increase from 2007, when the production was 586,475 pounds. About half of the cheese makers use cow's milk, and the other half goat's milk.

An economic study by state agricultural officials show sales totaled \$5.55 million in 2011, up from \$5.12 million in 2007 – an increase of 10.5 percent. The industry employed 80 workers in 2011, more than double the 38 employees in 2007. Commonwealth cheese businesses maintain some 2,014 acres of land, with 721 acres exclusively for grazing. Farmstead cheese is an important value added product for the state's dairy farmers.

Massachusetts wine and cheese businesses can also be found by going to DAR's [MassGrown](#) & Fresher website. Specific wine events can be found on DAR's ["Savor Massachusetts" Culinary and Agricultural Tourism calendar](#) and the [Massachusetts Farm Winery and Growers Association website](#).

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