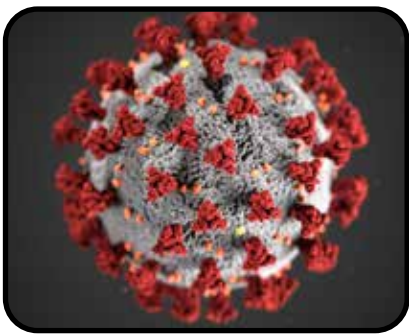


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GUIDANCE ON
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REDUCED LEAVE
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MASSACHUSETTS FARM BUREAU FEDERATION'S

Vol. 29, No. 1

NEWS & VIEWS

DECEMBER 2020/January 2021

www.MFBBF.net

New Laws Taking Effect In Massachusetts In 2021: Minimum Wage Hike, Paid Leave

New year, new laws. What happens on Beacon Hill may seem a million miles away, but it can affect your everyday life.

New Year's Day brings some added protections for Massachusetts workers -- with more on the way later in the year -- and people making minimum wage will find they're getting a pay bump.

Minimum Wage Increase
In 2021, Massachusetts' minimum wage will rise from \$12.75 per hour to \$13.50 per hour and tipped workers' minimum wage increases from \$4.95 to \$5.55 an hour.

Meanwhile, the higher rate of premium pay that retail establishments must offer for working on Sundays and some holidays will

drop from 1.3 times standard pay to 1.2 times.

Those changes are all part of a multi-year phased transition to a \$15 minimum wage and elimination of premium pay that Beacon Hill leaders approved in 2018 as part of the so-called "grand bargain" with business and labor groups.

Paid Family Medical Leave
On Jan. 1, workers will be able to access most paid family and medical leave benefits that were also approved in that "grand bargain."

Those benefits offer paid leave to workers taking time off to bond with

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Please Stay Safe & Healthy This Winter!



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What’s In The New COVID-19 Relief Package For Ag?

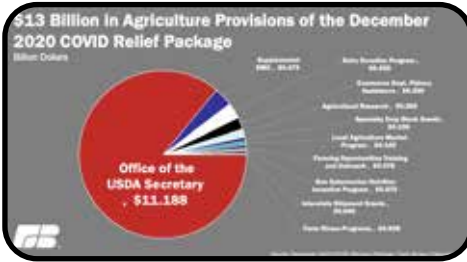
After months of negotiations, Congress passed a \$900 billion COVID-19 stimulus package with much-needed financial relief for agricultural producers, funding for food assistance programs, enhancements to the Paycheck Protection Program and funding for enhanced broadband access, as well as additional financial resources for agricultural research and farmer stress assistance programs, among others.

The package provides an estimated \$13 billion directly to agricultural programs, with \$300 million allocated to the Commerce Department for assistance to fisheries.

Agricultural Provisions

Of the \$900 billion in the recently passed COVID relief package, \$13 billion was allocated to agricultural programs, representing approximately 1.4 percent of total spending in the bill. Of the \$13 billion, \$11.2 billion is allocated to the Office of the Agriculture Secretary, approximately \$870 million is allocated for a supplemental Dairy Margin Coverage program as well as a dairy donation program, \$300 million is provided to the Commerce Department to assist fisheries, and \$20 million per year, or \$200 million over 10 years, is to be used to address gaps in nutrition research. Specialty crop block grant programs and Local Agriculture Market programs are allocated \$100 million each, farming opportunities

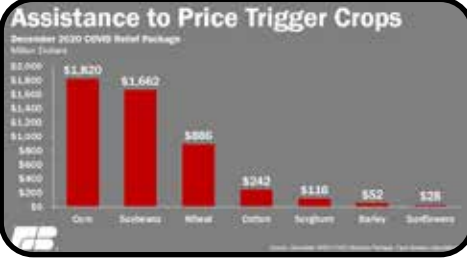
training and outreach and the Gus Schumacher nutrition program receive \$75 million each. Interstate shipment grants were allotted \$60 million and \$28 million was allocated for farm stress programs.



Assistance for Non-Specialty and Specialty Crops

Price Trigger and Flat Rate Crops
The bill provides approximately \$11.2 billion of direct financial assistance to commodity producers. Producers of 2020 price trigger crops and flat-rate crops are eligible to receive a payment of \$20 per eligible acre of the crop. Price trigger commodities, as defined in the second Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, are major commodities that meet a minimum 5 percent price decline over a specified period. These crops include barley, corn, sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers, upland cotton and all classes of wheat. For example, with 91 million acres of corn planted in 2020, and based on a \$20 per acre payment, corn producers would be expected to receive \$1.8 billion in financial support. Across these seven crops alone, 240 million acres were planted, representing \$4.8 billion in COVID-19 stimulus. Additionally, the bill allows

the Agriculture Secretary to extend the term of marketing loans by three months, providing producers additional time to repay.



Flat-rate crops, as described in CFAP 2, either do not meet the 5 percent price decline trigger or do not have data available to calculate a price change. Flat-rate crops include alfalfa, amaranth grain, buckwheat, canola, extra long staple (ELS) cotton, crambe (colewort), einkorn, emmer, flax, guar, hemp, indigo, industrial rice, kenaf, khorasan, millet, mustard, oats, peanuts, quinoa, rapeseed, rice, sweet rice, wild rice, rye, safflower, sesame, speltz, sugar beets, sugarcane, teff, and triticale. These commodities will also receive a payment of \$20 per acre.

The bill includes a provision allowing for the adjustment of direct support payments to account for price differentiation among commodities. This may include specialized varieties, local markets and farm practices such as certified organic.

For specialty crop producers, the bill modified the sales-based rules from CFAP 2 to allow specialty crop producers to include crop insurance

indemnities and disaster payments in their 2019 sales, which was the basis for determining the amount of support under CFAP 2, or by substituting 2018 sales. Additionally, the bill makes available an additional \$100 million in Specialty Crop Block Grants that are administered through each state's Department of Agriculture and an additional \$100 million available for the Local Agriculture Market Program.

Assistance for Processors

The bill requires that a portion of the appropriated money to be used to make payments to domestic users of upland cotton and extra long staple cotton between March 1, 2020, and Dec. 31, 2020. The payment rate is calculated by multiplying 6 cents per pound by the average monthly consumption of the domestic user from Jan. 1, 2017, through Dec. 31, 2019, then multiplying it by 10.

Moreover, one of the consequences of COVID-19 precautions and stay-at-home orders was a significant decrease in fuel consumption, and along with it was a slash to biofuel demand. Since the beginning of the year, and through mid-December, the cumulative decline in ethanol production is nearly 2 billion gallons. The bill allows for payments to producers of advanced biofuel, biomass-based diesel, cellulosic biofuel, conventional biofuel, or

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Annual Report To MFBF Delegates From MFBF Executive Director Doug Gillespie

Good morning! My annual report is an opportunity to review the past year, and then look ahead to some of the challenges facing our members and the organization in the coming years. It should come as no surprise that 2020 has been dominated by COVID-19, challenges, restrictions, policies and even opportunities!

The shutdowns this past spring brought out the unknown, and I'm proud how Farm Bureau stepped up to provide some certainty as our members adapted their operations to meet the new realities. Staff spent a lot of time on Zoom and conference calls, working with government officials to keep our essential businesses open and able to operate. Then providing those new guidelines to our members was equally important. Whether it was farmer's markets, agri-tourism, agri-entertainment or riding lessons, Farm Bureau provided critical input into the guidance issued by the state.

There have still been many challenges and as we move forward, we need to expand marketing opportunities to industries such as oysters, which found itself totally reliant upon restaurants which were severely curtailed by the pandemic.

With each challenge came opportunities. Many farms expanded into home delivery and have thrived

in that market. Many took advantage of state's \$36 million Food Security Infrastructure Grant to improve their systems and prepare for future opportunities. Customers bonded with local farm businesses; they were home more, buying local. They were traveling less and visiting farms for something to do close to home. These are the positives that we must continue to find ways to integrate into today's farm businesses.

Labor issues will continue to be at the forefront in 2021 and beyond. The guidance developed by the Massachusetts Division of Labor Standards for on-farm overtime requirements was a temporary blessing that buys us some time for a more permanent solution. We are paddling upstream on this issue, and the current is against us. When our policymakers talk of "a living wage" we are included in that, and it is likely that overtime exemptions in general will become a thing of the past, and we need to find new ways to buffer farm operations from the change. However, the fact that this guidance was issued demonstrates the success from the bonds Massachusetts Farm Bureau tries to build with every administration.

As we move to the future, MFBF must continue to grow, and that means membership growth. We must find new methods to recruit and retain

members. Farmers no longer have the time or interest in recruiting, and we can't rely upon insurance agents to bring in the members as that industry has become so competitive. The strategic plan approved at last year's delegate session recognized that need, and today you'll be asked to take the next step and agree to a minimal due increase and a shift in resources to allow development of a membership plan. I hope that you'll approve both, unless you have an alternative to keep moving your Farm Bureau forward.

Structurally, Massachusetts Farm Bureau needs to rebuild our committee structure to expand our effectiveness. It's sad to admit that right now, the Promotion & Education committee is our only really active broad-based committee. So if you have interest in equine, livestock, apiary, APR (agricultural preservation restriction), cannabis, fruit and vegetable, membership and young farmers and ranchers and are willing to devote time an energy in an effort to build a stronger Farm



Doug Gillespie is the executive director of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation.

Bureau, please reach out to your County president to volunteer your service. This is how Farm Bureau maintains its grassroots foundation, and how it works the best.

The value of membership continues to be proven again and again with the policy successes mentioned

earlier, our member services, and the evolving use of technology to provide members with the information they need in a timely manner. The weekly e-newsletter that you receive in your inbox every Wednesday, the webinars and virtual committee activities are all examples of how we can update you frequently so you can make decisions for your own operation, and consider yourself the first to know. Soon we will add a digital resource library available behind a firewall on the MFBF website so our members can access more forms, court cases and other resources 24/7 for use in decision-making.

Massachusetts Farm Bureau proudly welcomed Martha's Vineyard Farm

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Annual Report To MFBF Delegates From MFBF President Mark Amato

Good Morning, delegates. First off, I hope you and your extended families are healthy and I want you to know that I am praying for those of you who are suffering both physically and financially.

2020 has been an extraordinary year. We began the year expressing concerns about how trade policy impacted our dairy farmers, cranberry farmers and forest products producers. We took legislative policy initiatives concerning neonicotinoid insecticides, agricultural overtime requirements, solar energy production among other things that the delegate body approved, to Beacon Hill. We felt these issues had a good chance of being adopted or otherwise worked into legislation. Just about the time the farming community was about to make it's big push at our annual Agricultural Day at the State House in March, the world as we know it ground to an economic halt.

The uncertainty that ensued made it incredibly difficult to plan our normal seasonal schedule. We were fortunate that the Trump administration took the advice of the USDA and organizations like American Farm Bureau to declare agriculture an essential industry. This declaration provided the guidance the state's needed to pave the way for food production to continue to operate here in Massachusetts. MDAR in cooperation with Farm Bureau was able to convince the Governor's advisors that agriculture and food production must continue here in the Commonwealth and that it could be done in a manner consistent with public health guidelines.

After numerous Zoom meetings with

the department, guidelines for retail farm markets and farmers markets were adopted. Equine and pick your own guidelines soon followed. The PYO guidelines included some aspects of agtourism with additional agtourism activities added as the summer progressed. Unfortunately not all activities that we would ordinarily expect to be included in the agtourism space were allowed. We continue to work on ways to include all of agriculture.

Needless to say, our legislative agenda has been sidelined to a great degree. The primary focus of the legislature has centered on the state budget. The Commonwealth is currently operating on interim and temporary stopgap budgets with no allowances for discretionary spending.

Commissions and taskforces have been created or are contemplated in various non-budgetary legislation to look at subjects such as Agriculture in the 21st Century, Agritourism, and Mosquito Control strategies. We have a seat at the table with these groups and will be advocating for your interests.

We did suffer a setback in the new solar Massachusetts renewable target regulations that significantly limits our participation the state's carbon reduction strategy. The dual use provisions that were included in the regulation have proven to be unworkable. Discussions with legislators are ongoing about how we can be more fully included.

Legislation concerning agriculture overtime solutions and changes in the zoning enabling legislation have been sidelined temporarily and are unlikely to be addressed until after the new

year begins. We have very serious concerns regarding both of these legislative proposals and we will be watching them very closely.

Something very unusual happened this fall. A new county Farm Bureau was established and I would like to officially recognize and welcome Martha's Vineyard County Farm Bureau to our state organization. While there are instances of new county Farm Bureaus being created around the country, it is a very rare occurrence and I am truly gratified that the folks on the island chosen to take the opportunity to be the captain of their own ship and are taking advantage of our resources to better their farms and aquiculture operations. Welcome aboard.

After the board of directors came together to developed a strategic plan in 2019, this delegate body voted their approval and support. One of the key provisions of the plan was that we balance our budget. Farm Bureau has been around for a long time and we all have our expectations as to what we think FB should do and be. As a result any kind of change will be hard to accept. The board is strongly committed to maintaining the level of service that we currently provide to our members. Being able to do that while trying to balance the budget however requires us to both increase revenues and reduce expenses.



I have brought the executive committee and the budget committee together to look at how we might realign the staff structure as we explore ways to further reduce expenses. At some point in the not too distant future the executive director may decide to retire and we need to be prepared for that eventuality. This group has been meeting to develop a strategy that will be presented to the board for their consideration.

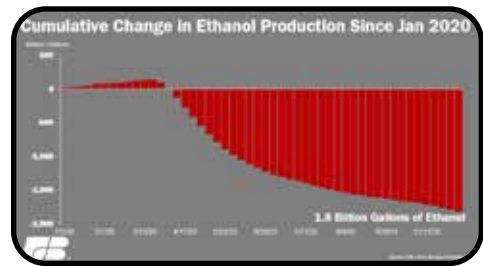
In closing I want to say, thank you to all the staff here at Farm Bureau as well as the board. It has been a stressful and difficult year and they all have performed admirably. Also, I want to thank all of you for taking the time to participate today in this very important process. Hopefully as we move into the New Year we can start to have some in person meetings which in my mind are a lot more productive. The connections and friendships that we build over the years at these meetings truly can last a lifetime.

Mark Amato
MFBF President
mark@mfbf.net

COVID-19 Relief Package

Continued From Page 2

renewable fuel due to unexpected market losses as a result of COVID-19.



Fisheries Disaster Assistance
For offshore aquaculture producers, there is an additional \$300 million in Fisheries Disaster Assistance available until Sept. 30, 2021, for the Sec. 12005 CARES Act assistance program. In the CARES Act, an initial \$300 million in direct assistance was provided to fisheries that were negatively impacted by COVID-19, including commercial fishing businesses, charter/for-hire fishing businesses, qualified aquaculture operations, processors and other fishery-related businesses, e.g., The Ins and Outs of Direct Assistance for Fisheries. The provisions for distributing the money among eligible states are specifically outlined in Sec. 12005 of the CARES

Act and are updated by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This additional money will be appropriated to eligible states, tribes or territories and limits the amount each government entity can receive based on the total annual average revenue generated to the state from commercial fishing operations, aquaculture firms, the seafood supply chain and charter fishing businesses.

Timber Harvesting and Hauling
For timber harvesting and timber hauling businesses, \$200 million is allocated for relief to those that experienced a loss of at least 10 percent of gross revenue between Jan. 1, 2020, through Dec. 1, 2020, compared to the gross revenue earned in the same period in 2019.

Livestock and Dairy Provisions
Support to Contract Growers of Livestock and Poultry
Poultry, in particular, was left out of the CARES Act, largely due to the structure of the industry and how the

relationship between the farmer and integrator historically has operated. Under the CARES Act, to be eligible for assistance, the farmer had to directly own the commodity. This worked well for MOST cattle and hog producers, but not for broiler farmers. Typically, a broiler farmer raises and cares for the birds, but does not directly own the birds; the integrator maintains ownership of the animals. However, these producers saw their income significantly reduced as many of their barns (which they financed the construction of and still were required to service the debt) remained empty due to supply chain disruptions earlier in the pandemic. The new bill addresses losses faced by many in the poultry industry (and other livestock sectors as well) by providing \$1 billion for contract growers of livestock and poultry to cover up to 80 percent of losses.

Support for Losses Due to Depopulation of Animals
The livestock supply chain was significantly disrupted, especially

at processing facilities, where labor shortages and worker protection measures slowed throughput and even caused some facilities to shut down. As a result, some producers were forced into the heart-wrenching position of having to euthanize their animals. This is the last resort, as farmers do everything they can to avoid this outcome, but in such a tightly coupled delivery system they were threatened with going out of business having raised animals they could no longer sell. This bill directs the Agriculture Secretary to make payments to producers for losses incurred due to the depopulation of livestock and poultry due to insufficient processing access. These payments will be up to 80% of the fair market value of the depopulated animals, and for the costs of depopulation.

Livestock Dealer Statutory Trust
The bill ensures that livestock producers are paid for their animals by requiring dealer trusts. In the current

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News and Views is published six times a year, by Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation. Subscription comes with membership. It is received in the homes of almost 6,000 MFBF members.

MFBF’s mission is to strengthen a diverse agricultural community by supporting and advocating for Massachusetts farm families

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COVID-19 Vaccines and Ag Workers

By: Brad Mitchell, MFBF Deputy Executive Director

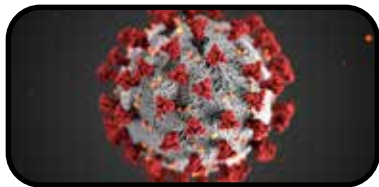
When COVID-19 hit Massachusetts, farmers and farm workers were designated as essential workers. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) and several legislators, they did not receive the same kind of support that other essential workers received – most notably access to free testing. Where grocery baggers had the opportunity to be tested at state facilities free of charge, this was not widely offered to farmers or farm workers. Testing has since become widely available, but early in the pandemic, access to testing for farmworkers was a major concern in the agricultural community.

Thankfully, the Commonwealth appears to have recognized the need to keep farmers and farm workers healthy. In December 2020, Governor Baker’s administration rolled out their preliminary timeline for administering vaccines. Agriculture is

listed in Phase 2 of the vaccine plan along with other essential workers. Phase 1 is limited to first responders and those at highest risk. At this time, Massachusetts expects to begin administering vaccine to those in Phase 2 between mid-February and mid-April.

The timing is still preliminary as there are yet many unknowns concerning vaccine supply, who will be able to administer it, etc. MFBF is in touch with state officials and will let you know more information is made available. Please watch the newsletter and Weekly Update emails for more information.

Brad Mitchell
MFBF Deputy Executive Director
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Guidance On Intermittent Leave, Reduced Leave Schedule

The Massachusetts Department of Family and Medical Leave (DFML) has recently issued the following guidance on Intermittent Leave and Reduced Leave Schedule.

Intermittent Leave, as defined in 458 CMR 2.02, is:

Leave taken in separate periods of time due to a single qualifying reason, rather than for one continuous period of time. Examples of intermittent leave include leave taken on an occasional basis for medical appointments or leave taken several days at a time spread over a period of months. Intermittent leave shall be taken in increments consistent with the established policy of the employer or covered business entity uses to account for use of other forms of leave; provided, however, that the Department will not pay in increments of less than 15 minutes. A covered individual shall not be permitted to apply for payment for benefits associated with intermittent leave until they have eight hours of accumulated leave time, unless more than 30 calendar days has lapsed since the initial taking of such leave.

Reduced Leave Schedule, as defined in 458 CMR 2.02, is:

A leave schedule that reduces the usual number of hours per workweek, or hours per workday, of a covered individual.

Medical Leave or Qualifying Exigency Leave:

For intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule taken because of one’s own serious health condition, to care for a family member with a serious health condition, to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness,

or leave for a qualifying exigency, the minimum increment may not exceed one hour. For claims administered by the Department, increments must be measured in 15-minute multiples as smaller minimum increments cannot be administered. As of Jan. 1, 2021, the Department will default to 15-minute minimum increments for all employers.

Bonding Leave:

For family leave to bond with a child during the first 12 months after the child’s birth, adoption, or foster care placement, family leave may be taken on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule only if the employer and covered individual mutually agree. This guidance shall not impact an employer’s ability to approve a mutually agreed upon intermittent or reduced family leave schedule for purposes of bonding.

A covered individual must submit a request for intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule within the applicable minimum increment, otherwise the request will be rounded down to the applicable minimum increment or, if the minimum increment is not satisfied, no benefits will be paid.

In all circumstances, intermittent leave and leave on a reduced leave schedule shall be paid by the Department in increments of at least 15 minutes and only when an employee has accumulated eight hours of leave time or more than 30 calendar days has lapsed since the initial taking of such leave.

Please refer to the department’s website for more information.



New Massachusetts Laws In 2021

Continued From Page 1

a new child, take care of a sick or injured service member or to tend to a serious personal health condition. Paid leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition will become available on July 1.

Without action from the Legislature, employers will also face a massive increase in unemployment insurance trust fund contributions starting next year, stemming largely from the unprecedented surge in demand for joblessness benefits.

The fund that pays out unemployment aid -- funded almost entirely by employers -- projects to end the year nearly \$2.4 billion in the red, which would trigger a nearly 60 percent increase in the unemployment taxes that businesses pay. Gov. Baker filed a bill that would limit those hikes to about 17% and lawmakers took testimony on it on Monday. The increases take effect starting in 2021, but the bills for the first quarter will not be due until the spring.

Winter Update

By: Mark Amato, MFBF President

2021, with any luck it will be a less stressful year than 2020. The holidays, as subdued as they were, and the election have come and gone so now we need to get down to the business of running our farms given the restrictions and confinements that the government has imposed on our marketplace. We are all struggling to figure out how to exist in the present and plan for the future. Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) has similar concerns in that we cannot follow our normal calendar of events. We did establish policy at the annual meeting on Dec. 4.

The challenge is to connect with the legislature, in order to influence the legislative and regulatory environment in which we operate, in ways we are not familiar with and in ways that are not as certain to have an impact. Legislative breakfasts, as we have known them, cannot occur



Mark Amato, who works as a farm manager for Verrill Farm in Concord, is the president of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation.

given the restrictions. In past years, we have depended on these gatherings to discuss our strategy and to begin discussions with local legislators, however, we will need to re-envision and re-configure these essential meetings. The breakfasts have been the precursor to what has been our big event at the state house to engage legislator on a wider scale. Ag Day is

not likely to happen again this year. As of today, the Statehouse is not open to the public and they are not scheduling any public events at this time.

The good news is that MFBF is actively engaging in discussions with key and influential legislative friends. Issues concerning solar energy, Chapter 61A, animal slaughter, and farm vehicle registration are being addressed and strategies being developed to resolve them. However, having you the individual members communicating with your legislators is key to having success with our legislative agenda. MFBF is very effective at bringing a legislator up to speed regarding the details of a particular bill or issue but your personal connection to your legislator is what frequently makes the difference in moving our position across the goal line.

Our challenge is to find new ways to facilitate those connections for you.

I have been discussing ideas with staff as to how we might be able to make that happen and it will be a topic of discussion at the January board of directors meeting. With input from county presidents I am sure we will develop an alternative to the traditional legislative breakfast that will help make those all-important connections. Please keep an eye out for communications regarding these spring time events. MFBF staff and our legislators truly value your questions and commentaries as votes on legislation come before their respective bodies.

In the meantime, I hope you all can get recharged during the winter months and that we can hit the ground running when spring arrives. Be well.

Mark Amato
MFBF President
mark@mfbf.net

Top Five Resolutions From MFBF’s 2020 Delegate Session

By: Brad Mitchell, MFBF Deputy Executive Director

At each year’s delegate session, Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) delegates discuss and vote on resolution. Resolutions are policy statements that are first voted upon at a county Farm Bureau annual meeting, then voted upon at MFBF’s delegate session. At the end of this session, delegates prioritize those resolutions which passed. Below is a list of the top five from this year’s delegates session as ranked by MFBF delegates:

- #5 Samples on Farm Tours** – Due to complex licensing laws, shellfish farms which offer tours are not allowed to provide samples to customers. As you might imagine, this is a drawback for any farm tour. This regulatory prohibition is likely related to the ability to trace back any illness to a particular location. We are hopeful we can work something out with the Departments of Public Health and Marine Fisheries.
- #4 Ag Products for School Lunches** – this resolution calls on MFBF to promote and support the purchasing and use of local ag products in school lunches. MFBF has long done so, but it is helpful to

- have the resolution.
- #3 Extend Excursion Fairs to All Ag Producers** – Those of us on the mainland do not give it much thought, but it can be difficult to get produce and livestock to and from the islands, especially during summer months where ferries are often booked months in advance. While some sectors of the agricultural industry get preferential treatment by the steamship authority, others do not. This can mean waiting in line in hot weather to see if you can get onto the ferry. This resolution asks MFBF to seek preferential treatment for famers carrying perishable product or livestock on the ferries.
- #2 Excluding Shellfish Aquaculture from Workman’s Compensation Requirements of the Jones Act** – Have you ever wondered what laws govern workers on ships at sea? This is the Jones Act, a federal law which among other things requires that seaman be covered by a special type of workman’s compensation insurance. While this makes sense for seamen far out to see and outside state jurisdiction, it does not



- make sense for shellfish aquaculture workers who seldom are out of sight of shore. Yet, they are required to carry both state and Jones Act workman’s compensation insurance. This cost aquaculture employers about \$1,500 per employee each year.
- The resolution would change the Jones Act to exempt shellfish aquaculture growers from workman’s compensation provided they are covered by state workmen’s comp. As this is a federal law, the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) delegates will consider in mid-January whether to adopt this into AFBF policy.
- #1 Overweight Permits** - Overweight permits are required of vehicles and loads over a certain weight when traveling on state

roads. They are not inexpensive. Some farmers who run multiple vehicles have had to purchase several permits, despite operating under farm plates. This resolution would allow for waived or reduced fees for overweight permits on vehicles with farm plates after the initial permit is purchased. Senator Anne Gobi has already agreed to file legislation on this.

Remember, the resolution process is just the beginning. Changing laws and regulations requires your voice. Speak to your legislators about these policy changes and keep an eye for email alerts from MFBF on how you can weigh in and help make these changes.

Brad Mitchell
MFBF Deputy Executive Director
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Annual Report To MFBF Delegates From MFBF Executive Director Doug Gillespie

Continued From Page 2

Bureau as our twelfth county affiliate in 2020. We are excited to see the enthusiasm and new ideas from our members on the island.

We also partnered with the Massachusetts State Grange to produce the Century Farms recognition that we have assumed responsibility for one each decade. Thanks to Liz Smith who

led this project.

Overall, Massachusetts maintains one of the most robust menu of Farm Bureau programs and services, as evidenced by our 10 AFBF Pinnacle Awards in my 12 years as executive director. We all take pride in that accomplishment.

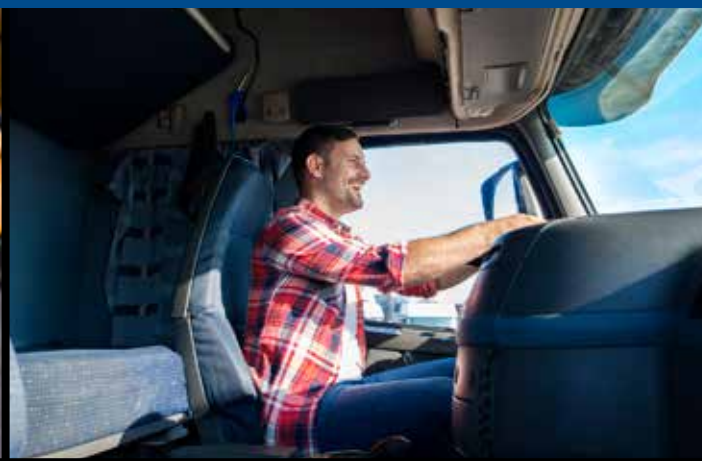
As most of you know, I suffered a mild stroke in March, and was hospitalized for three weeks right at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic. That was scary in itself, but I’m proud to say that seemingly endless physical therapy and support from family, friends (including Farm Bureau) and a great medical team resulted in my full recovery. I thank you all for your well

wishes and prayers along the way. I’m proud that we never missed a step. We have the very best staff team serving you every day, and I thank them for all they do. Let’s get on with a successful year ahead.

Doug Gillespie
MFBF Executive Director
doug@mfbf.net



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Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee Happenings



Learn more about YF&R at www.MFBF.net!
Or follow us on social media - Facebook: @MAFarmBureauYFR &
Instagram: @MAFBYoungFarmers.

A Message From MFBF's YF&R Chair Heather Bonanno-Baker

Thank you so much for allowing me to be your Young Farmers and Ranchers (YF&R) state chair. Last year I was elected your YF&R state vice chair. Unfortunately, the world shut down before we could do anything major. I plan to use my time as chair to try to expand our group. I know there are plenty of young farmers in the state from all backgrounds who could use some

guidance or support along their agriculture journey. I know when my father left the farm, I looked to my fellow farmers for help with A LOT of situations. I want to make sure other young farmers have that available to them as well. There have already been talks of reaching out to other Ag groups in the state and working closely with them to try and gain new relationships. Through interacting with these

groups, I hope to have a stronger presence at national conferences. We also plan on stepping up our social media presence to let more in our community know about us and what we do. As well as YF&R chair, I am also Essex County Farm Bureau president, and run my family's produce and flower farm. I look forward to serving as your state chair!



A Message From MFBF's YF&R Vice Chair Christina Saccone



Hi! My name is Christina Saccone, thank you so much for the opportunity to contribute to Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) committee as the vice chair for the coming year! I am so excited to get started! I have run Dargoonian Farm, a small flower and vegetable farm, for the past three years. The connections I have made through my involvement with YF&R have proven invaluable. I believe that we, as farmers and ranchers, represent the biggest

resource that exists in our industry. With that in mind I want to focus on creating a community that fosters communication and friendship in a way that will benefit not just our group but also future farming generations in Massachusetts. We hope to bring in more members and with them new ideas and perspectives. Together we can help each other succeed and preserve the legacy of neighborliness among farmers.

If anyone is interested in hosting a virtual tour of their farm or joining the YF&R committee, please email Heather at heatherbonanno@gmail.com.

Photo Update From 2019 John& Liolia Schipper Grant Recipients



Congratulations To Jeanette Rotondo For Recieving The 2020 John Ogonowski Award and Dominic Sinpoli For Recieving 2020 American National Agent Of The Year!



There’s A Million Reaons To Join Massac

Below Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) outlines the benefits of being a Farm Bureau organization has helped them and their farms. Please take this insert and ask your local farmer friend

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Works On Your Behalf

2020 brought a difficult time filled with a lot of fear and uncertainty to the Massachusetts agricultural community with the spread of COVID-19. MFBF heard from its farmer members, on how this pandemic has been impacting their businesses, including interrupting sales and disrupting the workforce.

Based on this input and feedback, MFBF staff and leadership worked to identify ways to support farms and farmers.

Examples of this work, includes:

- **Co-Hosting weekly calls for farmers.** Every Monday, MFBF was co-hosting with MDAR calls with farmer members, during which farmer members expressed concerns

about the COVID-19 pandemic and how it was impacting business.

- **Online resources.** MFBF developed an online toolkit of the guidance documents that have been released by state officials related to agriculture.
- **Provided input into guidance documents.** MFBF was in constant

communication with MDAR and other state officials to express concerns and unique situations that needed to be addressed in guidance documents from MDAR. MFBF is farmers’ voice to these officials, and MFBF works to ensure farmers’ concerns are heard, and hopefully addressed.

- **Provided links to financial**

As beginning farmers, the task of starting a farm was daunting. Dozens of questions arose around permitting, land acquisition, employees, legislation and safety standards. Every time a question arose, I contacted the Farm Bureau and they always had a helpful ear, a solution and a timely response. We are very grateful because we would not have known where to have found the answers otherwise.

Lisa Evans and Tim Smith
We Grow Microgreens, LLC



With one phone call to the Farm Bureau office, I received the information I needed to show my town that I qualify for the farming in wetlands exemption. I spoke to a real person who provided me with all there was to know. This type of service helps me run my business. It’s because services like this that I joined Farm Bureau and why I’ll stay one as long as I farm.

Joshua Noble
Burkland Farm

I was clearing some land on my farm and burning the brush. The Fire Department showed up, put it out and told me I wasn’t allowed to burn. I knew that wasn’t right. Staff at Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation spoke to me and gave me the information so I could show the Fire Chief the law and protect my rights as a farmer. During the same call to MFBF, I also was provided with information on the registration requirements for farm vehicles as well as where to get insurance that worked for my farm - and that’s not even why I called!



Jeff Brown
Lo Tide

The Farm Bureau is important to me because it provides a large, unified voice to what others would consider small, individualized problems. No one except the farmer can understand the small challenges we face in our day-to-day operations. The Farm Bureau gives me the ability to raise these issues, and then provides the resources to follow through on the solutions. This ability, for a family farm, to have a voice on the state and federal level is more important than ever.

Dan Martino
Martino’s Seafood, LLC
Cottage City Oysters / Martha’s Vineyard Seaweed



As a young man growing up on a Massachusetts Century Farm, I was exposed to Farm Bureau at a very young age. My grand Norman, got older and more involved, I saw more action at the local grassroots and how farmers had to supportthemselves beca in Farm Bureau; I participated in many of the Ag Days in the State House, as well as political fundraisers, speaking with our tep because of our loss of open spaces. In the past few years, the local movement has grown significantly and more of the populatio growing up, I also involved them in Ag Days, bringing them to the State House so as to expose them, hopefully, to Farm Burea continues to grow through my future generations as I have exposed Terri and Danielle to various agricultural work. Terri has been are also members in Worcester County and have participated in Ag Days as

Ed Lawton
Oake Knoll Farm at the Lawton Family Farm

Join Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation

With multiple levels of membership, many families and individuals q

Definitions of each membership level are available online: <http://www.farmbureau.co/become-a-member>

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation



...a member and has compiled testimonials from several current members on how the
...ls to join our organizaiton. While we work for farmers, we can't work without them!

assistance programs. As the situation with COVID-19 unfolds and continues to unfold, we have provided farmer members with links via the organization's *Weekly Update* email and on social media to financial assistance programs. While not every program is perfect for every situation, MFBF worked to identify situations that work for agriculture.

• **Acted as a 'Call Center' for agricultural questions.** As guidance documents became available and created more questions, MFBF acted as a call center and took questions from members about these documents to try to help members navigate these documents.

• **Outreach to federal and state legislators.** MFBF has contacted

legislators on several issues important to the farming community including expanding SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans to farm, expediting processing of H2A workers and more.

It is important to remember in these difficult times that we are stronger together. Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation is built on the power of

consensus and membership is its lifeblood. For less than 0.65 cents a day (\$225 per year), you can support MFBF by becoming a member.

Additionally, a membership in Farm Bureau can pay for itself with savings from the organization's discount program for members! Please consider joining MFBF today!

MFBF is the only organization that represents horsemen and horse farms with legislative problems, local problems and advancing the sport and livestock characteristics of it. For example, many years ago, MFBF pushed to include equine in the definition of agriculture. This designation allows the equine industry to partake in some of the benefits that other livestock owners and producers enjoy, such as enrolling stables and/or boarding facilities in Chapter 61a, which gives the equine industry a tax break on land. More recent examples of MFBF's work for the equine industry include support of a bill that would change the Massachusetts horse riding instructor licensing program to be more in step with surrounding states' licensing process. Currently, the Massachusetts licensing process includes a written test with questions focused on animal health, not on instructing riders. No other state has this test. The legislation that MFBF supports would require the licensing process to be removed and CORI checks being made a requirement for all riding instructors. Additionally, MFBF also worked to revise helmet laws to make them more workable for adults on private properties and for equine show exhibitors. By being a part of MFBF, the equine industry receives the backing of almost 6,000 members. MFBF helps the equine industry with support on a local, statewide and national level. In recent years, MFBF has worked on behalf of the equine industry to include horses under the sales tax exemption other livestock enjoy in the Commonwealth. By helping our bottom lines, and fighting to have equine treated equal to other livestock, our dollars spent being members in MFBF are worth it.



John Dougherty
Brigg's Stable

My family joined Farm Bureau in the 1940s, for the camaraderie that the organization provides. In Farm Bureau, farmers join to stand behind laws that benefit farms, support each other and learn from each other on how to survive in agriculture. It is important for the agricultural industry to stand as a united front to make sure laws don't get passed that would be detrimental to agriculture. Farm Bureau is an advocate for us and will help us with any agricultural issues we may have. It also is important because of the networking between its members as we learn from each other.



Barbara Rogers-Scharneck
Rogers Spring Hill Garden Center

Operating a public facing farmstand on our family dairy means community eyes are on us all the time. We love being a gathering space for our community to have an ongoing discussion about food and food systems, but politics can make things messy. Being Massachusetts Farm Bureau members gives us a voice in policies that impact our business without putting out lawn signs or showing up in every Zoom meeting. We can focus on farming, focus on our community, and know that MFBF is working with our best interest in mind. MFBF keeps us informed of opportunities to be involved directly, make connections with our policy makers, or write letters to our legislators. If we want to be seen we can, but as MFBF members we know we are always heard.



Denise Barstow
Barstow's Dairy Store and Bakery

...father, Albert, was heavily involved with Farm Bureau, the legislative action and helped me realize MFBF is a grassroots organization for farmers. As my father, ...use it did not seem as though public was going to support us. Then in my early twenties when I became more involved ...representatives about important agricultural issues and how these issues were important to keep agriculture Massachusetts ...on has realized how local farms benefit the population, wildlife, as well as local food sources. When my children were ...u's legislative work and how the legislature works. I certainly hope the spirit of volunteerism and agricultural activism ...n actively involved in young ranchers and farmers committee nationally as well as in the state. Danielle and her husband ...well as other Farm Bureau events.



...Today: *FarmBureau.co/online-application/*

...ualify for membership within Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation.

.../. Please select the category that best describes you and/or your business when applying for membership.

Allied Business Directory

Adams Farm
854 Bearsden Rd
Athol, MA 01331
978-249-9441
Products & Services: Full Service Slaughterhouse For Farmers & Mid-Sized Companies.

Blood Farm
94 West Main Street
West Groton, MA 01472
978-448-6669
Products & Services: We are a 7 generation, family run, slaughter and processing facility.

Cape Ann Tree Service
Ten Fernwood Lake Ave.
Gloucester MA 01930
978-768-7700
capeanntree.com
capeanntree@gmail.com
Products & Services: We improve the outdoor living spaces of our clients- from tree work, to lawn care, masonry to landscape design and installation... we can do it all.

Chickadee Hill Farm Services
Jeffrey Head
366 Central St
Rowley, MA 01969
chickadeehillfarmservices@hotmail.com
978-948-8620
chickadeehillfarmservices.com
Products & Services: firewood, screened loam and compost, mulch, wood chips, lawn mowing and landscaping, pumpkins, Christmas trees and vegetables.

Eastern Solar
Ken Nelson
P.O. Box 60
Wayland, MA 01778
508-882-0102
easternsolarservice.com
easternsolarservices@hotmail.com
Products & Services: Serving the solar industry for 40 years. Service, maintenance, training and repair of existing solar systems.

Franklin Agway
157 Cottage Street
Franklin, MA 02038
508-528-1333
franklinagway.com
franklinurbanfarmstore@gmail.com
Products & Services: Feed/ supplies for livestock and pets. Garden supplies, tools, seeds, plants, fertilizer & chemicals for organic gardening. Homebrew, cheese-making, canning and beekeeping supplies.

Harness / Horseman's Association of New England
POB 1811
Plainville, MA 02762
508-918-8852
www.hhane.com
president@hhane.com
Products & Services: We are a non-profit membership association

for harness horsemen and women. We promote harness racing both in Massachusetts and nationally.

Hyperion Systems, LLC
100 University Drive
Amherst, MA 01002
413-549-2900
www.HyperionSystemsLLC.com
Products & Services: Dual-use agricultural solar project development and research company. Funded by NREL and in collaboration with UMass Amherst.

M5 Landworks
1 Mathewson St
Plainville, MA 02762
508-510-2004
M5Landworks1@gmail.com
Products & Services: We specialize in undergrowth brush clearing/excavation. Give us a call for a free estimate!

Major Landscaping
626 Lindsey Street
Attleboro, MA 02703
508-431-4336
majorlandscaping508@gmail.com
Products & Services: Landscaping & construction

Massachusetts Nursery & Landscape Association
P.O. Box 387
Conway, MA 01341
413-369-4731
http://www.mnla.com/
mnlaoffice@aol.com
Products & Services: MNLA is a statewide association dedicated to advancing the interests of "green industry" professionals.

Meatworks
287 State Rd
Westport, MA 02790
774-319-5616
Products & Services: An animal-welfare focused slaughter & processing facility for Southern New England

Mulch By The Yard
Stoughton and Cape Cod MA
781-341-2275
jphorigan@me.com
Products & Services: Kiln dried bagged shavings trailer loads US made. 60 days free storage on trailer.

Otis Poultry Farm
1570 North Main Rd
Otis, MA 01253
413-269-4438
www.otispoultryfarm.com
Products & Services: Selections of chicken & turkey pies with & without vegetables in assorted sizes. They have a large selection of sheepskin slippers & sugarfree candy.

Osprey Development Partners
21 Stanwich Lane
Greenwich, CT 06830
203-585-0225
jorum@ospreydevelopmentpartners.com
ospreydevelopmentpartners.com
Products & Services: Agricultural and non-agricultural land and building solar development

Paul Massad Landscaping
338 Turnpike Road,
Westborough, MA 01581
508-869-6977
www.paulmassadlandscaping.com
info@paulmassadlandscaping.com
Products & Services: We are a full service design-build landscape and nursery company, who supplies specialty trees, shrubs, boulders and granite pieces.

Pope Energy
Doug Pope
42 8th Street, #4413B
Boston, MA 02129
617-337-0199
doug.pope@popeenergy.com
Products & Services: ag solar development

Progressive Grower Inc.
81 Charlotte Furnace Road
West Wareham, MA 02576
508-273-7358
www.progressivegrower.com
Info@ProgressiveGrower.com
Products & Services: The company carries a full line of chemicals and fertilizers at competitive prices and an extensive stock of farm equipment, tools and clothing.

Structures of New England
155 Millenium Cir
Lakeville, MA 02347-1248
(508) 946-5555
gwatka@rsofne.com
www.rsofne.com
Product & Services: RSNE custom fabricates and installs energy efficient, high quality walk-in coolers and freezers and insulated doors.

Resource Management, Inc.
1171 NH RT 175
Holderness, NH 03245
605-536-8900
www.rmirecycles.com
RMI@RMIrecycles.com
Product & Services: We provide responsive, innovative and high quality organic residuals and recycling services to address our customer interests and needs.

Rice Fruit Farms
757 Main St
Wilbraham, MA 01095
413-596-4002
www.ricefruitfarm.com
info@ricefruitfarm.com
Products & Services: bakery, fruits and vegetables, coffee, homemade ice cream, milk, eggs, local products, honey and olive oil.

SEMAP, Inc.
P.O. Box 80625
South Dartmouth, MA 02748
508-524-2601
www.semaponline.org
kschwalbe@semaponline.org
Products & Services: local food promotion, sustainable farming education and healthy food initiatives.

Soares Flower Garden Nursery
1021 Sandwich Rd
East Falmouth, MA 02536
508-548-5288
www.soaresflowergardennursery.com
soaresfgn@gmail.com
Products & Services: retail greenhouse featuring locally grown annuals, perennials, vegetables and herbs and shrubs, as well as a landscape design, build and maintenance firm.

Sprague Energy
185 International Drive
Portsmouth, NH 03801
413-374-6280
www.spragueenergy.com
dbogan@spragueenergy.com
Products & Services: Energy supplier since 1870. We provide and deliver Heating Fuels, On-road and Off-road Diesel Fuels, Bio Fuels, Gasoline and Natural Gas.

The Big E
1305 Memorial Ave.
West Springfield, MA 01089
413-205-5011
www.thebige.com/p/agriculture
info@thebige.com
Products & Services: fairgrounds & annual fair

The Mane Place
510 W Hartford Ave
Uxbridge, MA 01569-1384
508-278-7563
themaneplace.com
linda@themaneplace.com
Products & Services: The Mane Place offers Poulin grain, hay, shavings, barn supplies, horse supplies, pet food and supplies, apparel, saddles, tack and gifts in a friendly family-owned setting.

World Farmers Inc.
769 Main St
Lancaster, MA 01523
978-706-7935
http://www.worldfarmers.org/
info@worldfarmers.org
Products & Services: education, beginning farmers and ranchers.

Due to space limitations, products and services listings will be limited to 20 words or less.

Assessing Risks On Your Farming Operation

Farmers hopefully undergo an annual physical. It's a good opportunity to discuss with your physician the various health issues that you have been experiencing and then discuss a plan to address those issues.

As an agricultural producer you deal with risk(s) on a daily basis since in a lot of instances you have no other choice but to deal with those risks as they arise. But how many producers actually sit down and perform an annual risk assessment of their farming operation? An annual risk assessment of your operation can help you plan for the upcoming year as well as come up with a strategy in advance to address many of those critical risks you face. It's also a good time to research federal, state and private programs that may help you address some of those risks. There are a couple of excellent tools available to help you with the risk assessment on your farming operation.

The Risk Management Checklist (https://www.rma.usda.gov/-/media/RMA/Publications/Risk-Management-Publications/risk_management_checklist.ashx?la=en) is a handy tool to capture in a single document a consolidation of risk areas on your operation, which in turn allows you to weigh the importance of each item. You likely will find that you can check off a number of items as things that you have already addressed leaving you time to focus on those items that are not checked off.

The SWOT Analysis (https://www.rma.usda.gov/-/media/RMA/Publications/Risk-Management-Publications/swot_brochure.ashx?la=en) allows you to take a look at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats on your operation and is a useful tool if you are starting up an operation, expanding your operation, or even just taking a look at your current operation. The SWOT Analysis takes a look at the internal items that you have control over (strengths & weaknesses) as well as the external items that you personally cannot control (opportunities & threats). The SWOT Analysis is always more effective when you utilize the knowledge of your family members or your farm management team to get as many diverse observations as possible.

Federal Crop Insurance, sold by private crop insurance agents, and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Program (NAP) available through the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), can help protect your operation against weather-related risks. Federal Crop Insurance is available on corn (silage & grain); sweet corn and potatoes (Franklin & Hampshire Counties). Coverage on all other spring-seeded crops is available through NAP. The Whole Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) policy insures the total revenue on your operation and is also available through Federal Crop Insurance. While the deadline for obtaining coverage on spring-seeded crops and WFRP is March 15, 2021, now is a good time to contact a crop insurance agent or your local FSA office to explore coverage options!

USDA Announces Quality Loss Assistance Now Available For Eligible Producers Affected By 2018, 2019 Natural Disasters

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that signup for the Quality Loss Adjustment (QLA) Program will begin Jan. 6, 2021. Funded by the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020, this new program provides assistance to producers who suffered eligible crop quality losses due to natural disasters occurring in 2018 and 2019. The deadline to apply for QLA is Friday, March 5, 2021.

"Farmers and livestock producers nationwide experienced crop quality losses due to natural disasters in 2018 and 2019," said. Bill Northey, USDA Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation. "We have worked diligently over the past couple of years to roll out meaningful disaster assistance programs to help alleviate the substantial financial loss experienced by so many agricultural producers and are pleased to offer quality loss assistance as added relief. Many of the eligible producers have already received compensation for quantity losses."

Eligible Crops
Eligible crops include those for which federal crop insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage is available, except for grazed crops and value loss crops, such as honey, maple sap, aquaculture, floriculture, mushrooms, ginseng root, ornamental nursery, Christmas trees, and turfgrass sod.

Additionally, crops that were sold or fed to livestock or that are in storage may be eligible; however, crops that were destroyed before harvest are not eligible. Crop quality losses occurring after harvest, due to deterioration in storage, or that could have been mitigated, are also not eligible. Assistance is based on a producer's harvested affected production of an eligible crop, which must have had at least a 5 percent quality loss reflected through a quality discount; or for forage crops, a nutrient loss, such as total digestible nutrients.

Qualifying Disaster Events
Losses must have been a result of a qualifying disaster event (hurricane, excessive moisture, flood, qualifying drought, tornado, typhoon, volcanic activity, snowstorm, or wildfire) or related condition that occurred in calendar years 2018 and/or 2019.

Assistance is available for eligible producers in counties that received a qualifying Presidential Emergency Disaster Declaration or Secretarial Disaster Designation because of one or more of the qualifying disaster events or related conditions.

Lists of counties with Presidential Emergency Disaster Declarations and Secretarial Disaster Designations for all qualifying disaster events for 2018 and 2019 are available here. For drought, producers are eligible for QLA if the loss occurred in an area within a county rated by the U.S. Drought Monitor as having a D3 (extreme drought) or higher intensity level during 2018 or 2019.

Producers in counties that did not receive a qualifying declaration or designation may still apply but must also provide supporting documentation to establish that the crop was directly affected by a qualifying disaster event.

To determine QLA eligibility and payments, FSA considers the total quality loss caused by all qualifying natural disasters in cases where a crop was impacted by multiple events.

Applying for QLA
When applying, producers are asked to provide verifiable documentation to support claims of quality loss or nutrient loss in the case of forage crops. For crops that have been sold, grading must have been completed within 30 days of harvest, and for forage crops, a laboratory analysis must have been completed within 30 days of harvest.

Some acceptable forms of documentation include sales receipts from buyers, settlement sheets, truck or warehouse scale tickets, written sales contracts, similar records that represent actual and specific quality loss information, and forage tests for nutritional values.

Payments Calculations & Limitations
QLA payments are based on formulas for the type of crop (forage or non-forage) and loss documentation submitted. Based on this documentation FSA is calculating payments based on the producer's own individual loss or based on the county average loss. More information on payments can be found on farmers.gov/quality-loss.

FSA will issue payments once the application period ends. If the total amount of calculated QLA payments exceeds available program funding, payments will be prorated.

For each crop year, 2018, 2019 and 2020, the maximum amount that a person or legal entity may receive, directly or indirectly, is \$125,000.

Payments made to a joint operation (including a general partnership or joint venture) will not exceed \$125,000, multiplied by the number of persons and legal entities that comprise the ownership of the joint operation. A person or legal entity is ineligible for QLA payment if the person's or legal entity's average Adjusted Gross Income exceeds \$900,000, unless at least 75% is derived from farming, ranching or forestry-related activities.

Future Insurance Coverage Requirements
All producers receiving QLA Program payments are required to purchase crop insurance or NAP coverage for the next two available crop years at the 60 percent coverage level or higher. If eligible, QLA participants may meet the insurance purchase requirement by purchasing Whole-Farm Revenue Protection coverage offered through USDA's Risk Management Agency.



Massachusetts Farm Bureau Member Discount



\$500 off 5000 series and up

\$250 off 1-4 series Compact Utility Tractor



\$50 off D100 - X700 Riding Lawn Equipment



Padula Brothers is pleased to offer an exclusive discount on equipment purchases to MFBB members. Just show a current membership card to receive your discount of \$50-\$500 dollars off your purchase of a new John Deere!

Lancaster.....978-537-3345
Raynham.....508-824-4494
Greenfield....413-475-3801

WWW.PADULABROTHERS.COM

Bear & Deer Crop Damage Reporting

The Massachusetts Sportsmen's Council is working to arrange a meeting with the Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife Board to discuss the issue of crop damage from bear and deer in Massachusetts.

To help obtain this meeting and gain a full overview of crop damages, the Massachusetts Sportsmen's Council is requesting information on damages including farm name and location. Please fill out the form here: <https://www.farmbureau.co/news/bear-deer-crop-damage-reporting/>, with your estimated damages or visit: https://www.farmbureau.co/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Bear_Deer_Damage_Report.pdf to download a printable pdf that can be email to their Subcommittee Chairman, Don Graves at jadeskunk@gmail.com. He also can be contacted with questions via phone at 413-530-1108.

Being A Farm Bureau Member Pays

MFBF Members Enjoy Discounts From National & Local Business Partners

Please visit www.MFBF.net for more information.

American National Insurance offers special rate plans for MFBF members on personal auto, business owners policies, SFP-10 and Country Estate insurance.



The personal auto special rate plan will represent a 5% savings on your American National personal auto policy if it's associated with an active MFBF membership. The business owners policy special rate plan will save up to \$100 off your business owners policies if associated with an active MFBF membership. The SFP-10 and Country Estate special rate plan will afford about a 3% savings on you Farm Family farm policy if it's associated with an active MFBF membership.


Visit americannational.com to find your local agent.



Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation members can save up to \$2,500 on eligible Cat® machines. On top of that, members receive an additional \$250 credit on work tool attachments purchased with new Cat machines.

Visit <http://www.farmbureau.co/member-benefits/> for more information.

MFBF members receive \$300-\$500 off Farmall, Maxxum and more! Visit <http://www.farmbureau.co/member-benefits/> and enter your membership ID number and zip code to print a certificate to use towards your next Case-IH purchase. Please print before heading to your local dealer.






Whether you are looking for an upscale hotel, an all-inclusive resort or something more cost-effective, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts has the right hotel for you! As a Massachusetts Farm Bureau member, you will save up to 20% off the Best Available Rate* at over 8,000 participating hotels worldwide. Discover the benefits of booking your vacation with Wyndham Hotels & Resorts as a Massachusetts Farm Bureau member. Our vast portfolio of hotels and resorts offer a variety of accommodations to meet your travel needs. Wherever people go, Wyndham will be there to welcome them.

To take advantage of this valuable travel discount rate please call 877-670-7088 to connect with a dedicated travel expert and be sure to mention you are a Farm Bureau member or go to www.wyndhamhotels.com/farm-bureau to book.

Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University in North Grafton will apply a 10% discount to Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation regular members in good standing. Call: 508-839-7926



*Tufts University is a referral medical facility and should not replace your primary veterinarian service. This program is only for pre-qualified medical services provided at Tufts University's Large Animal Hospital when referred by your veterinarian.

Massachusetts Farm Bureau members now receive a \$500 Bonus Cash offer from Ford Motor Company or \$750 Lincoln Motor Company on a purchase or lease of a new qualifying vehicle. You must be a Farm Bureau member in Massachusetts for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase or lease.



Visit fordfarmbureauadvantage.com or LincolnFarmBureauAdvantage.com or see your authorized Ford or Lincoln Dealer for qualifications and complete details.

Ford Program Disclaimer:
Farm Bureau Bonus Cash is exclusively for active Farm Bureau members who are residents of the United States. This incentive is not available on Shelby GT350®, Shelby GT350R, Mustang BULLITT, Ford GT, Focus RS and F-150 Raptor. This offer may not be used in conjunction with most other Ford Motor Company and Lincoln Motor Company private incentives or AXZD-Plans. Some customer and purchase eligibility restrictions apply. Must be a Farm Bureau member for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase and take new retail delivery from dealer by January 2, 2020.


John Deere now offers GreenFleet Loyalty Rewards to members of Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation. Farm Bureau members receive discounts, special low rate financing and all other benefits associated with GreenFleet Platinum 2 status.



It's easy to become a GreenFleet member too! Just sign up for John Deere GreenFleet Loyalty Rewards program using a valid member ID and zip code for membership verification and become a Platinum 2 level by visiting www.JohnDeere.com/FarmBureau.

Massachusetts Farm Bureau members save 20% off published at almost 5,000 Choice Hotels Worldwide! Save 20% off at participating Comfort Inn®, Comfort Suites®, Quality Inn®, Sleep Inn®, Clarion®, MainStay Suites®, Suburban Extended Stay®, Rodeway Inn® and Econo Lodge® hotels. Call 800.258.2847 and mention your Massachusetts Farm Bureau ID or go to choicehotels.com and enter your Massachusetts Farm Bureau ID to book online (*if you don't know the MFBF ID call our office today at 508-481-4766).







Osterman Propane is pleased to offer a discount to any MFBF member when you become a new customer.

If you currently use propane, but are with a different supplier, then contact Osterman today for special rates. Being a member gives you the buying power to great pricing. When switching to Osterman, they will swap out your tanks at no charge At this time a safety and pressure test will also be performed at no charge.

Contact: Colleen Gilpin at 508-341-9775 (cell) | 508-234-9902 or visit Osterman Propane on the web at: www.ostermangas.com.

MFBF members enjoy exclusive savings when renting from AVIS. Use Avis Worldwide Discount code: A298821 Visit: www.AVIS.com/mafb





Farm Bureau members also enjoy exclusive savings when renting from BUDGET. Use Budget Customer Discount Number: Y775721 Visit: www.budget.com/mafb

Meg Gennings Re-Appointed To AFBF Issues Advisory Committee

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) is pleased to announce that Meg Gennings from Amherst has been re-appointed by American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) President Zippy Duvall to AFBF's animal care advisory committee.



building the communications bridge between AFBF and our state. I look forward to hearing the information she brings back.”

Gennings works at UMass in the animal science department, where she assists with the day-to-day management of the university's livestock. She previously worked as the livestock manager of Lilac Hedge Farm in Rutland.

AFBF's advisory committees play an important role in the organization's policy implementation and development. Committee members make contributions to AFBF's mission, from participating in advocacy fly-ins and doing media interviews to helping the organization development comments on proposed regulations and providing input into the resolutions process.

“We are pleased Meg was re-appointed to this issue advisory committee for American Farm Bureau Federation,” said MFBF President Mark Amato. “She has grown into an excellent leader as part of our organization and is an excellent communicator. Meg will assist in

She has been involved in the Worcester County Farm Bureau board of directors; chairs the statewide promotion and education committee; and serves on the equine and young farmers and ranchers (YF&R) committees. She also is involved in the Nunoa Project, which helps camelids in Peru and the United States, and volunteers at Bureau of Land Management Wild Horse and Burro adoption events in the Northeast.

She was re-appointed in January 2021 and will serve a two-year term.

Congratulations, Meg!

Barbara Rogers-Scharneck Re-Appointed to National Farm Bureau Committee

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) is pleased to announce that Barbara Rogers-Scharneck from Ward Hill has been re-appointed by American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) President Zippy Duvall to its Promotion and Education (P&E) committee. This national committee is focused on bridging the gap between farmers and consumers by providing tools and resources to other Farm Bureau members who are eager to help share agriculture's story.



focus our statewide P&E committee and we look forward to her continuing this effort during the next two years.”

Rogers-Scharneck is a fourth-generation farmer in eastern Massachusetts. On the farm, Rogers-Scharneck and her family raise replacement heifers and grow feed hay, silage, corn, strawberries, pumpkins, apples, butternut squash and carrots. They also have a You-Pick operation and offer school tours. The farm also includes a full-service garden center, where the family grows their own annuals and perennials.

She has been involved in Essex County Farm Bureau board of directors, the statewide P&E committee and recently was appointed to MFBF's board of directors as her county representative. She also is involved in the Topsfield Fair and Soroptimist International. Rogers-Scharneck also actively volunteers in her children's school events and fundraisers.

She will be re-appointed in March 2021 during the AFBF's FUSION conference. She will serve for another two-years until 2023.

Congratulations, Barbara!

Do You Want To Maximize Your Donations To Your Local Food Bank?

The Promotion and Education committee is looking for farms who already donate to local food banks and would be willing to donate more if monetary assistance was available. The committee is considering developing an online platform to collect monetary donations to pay farms for their donations of product at-cost.

If you are interested in learning more, please email our committee coordinator at katelyn@mfbf.net.

Support Massachusetts Farmers - Join MFBF

Name: _____ Farm Name: _____ Date: __/__/____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ DOB: __/__/____

Referred by: _____

I hereby make application for an annual membership in the _____ County Farm Bureau and Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, whose purpose is to promote, protect and represent the economic, social and educational interests of Massachusetts' farmers, as well as encourage the protection of agricultural areas and rural interest within the state. I understand acceptance or denial and classification of my membership are determined by the County Farm Bureau.

Contributions, gifts or membership dues to a County Farm Bureau, or MFBF, are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. However, they may be tax deductible under other provisions of the IRS code. Membership dues are non-refundable and non-returnable.

A service fee of \$15 may be assessed for a returned check.

Signature: _____

Membership dues (please select one):

Voting Members

☐ Regular Member: \$225 for 1 year

☐ Gold Member: \$350 for 1 year

☐ Platinum Member: \$500 for 1 year

Non-Voting Members

☐ Associate Member: \$70 for 1 year

☐ Allied Business: \$225 for 1 year

☐ Student: \$25 for 1 year

☐ Friend: \$25 for 1 year

Please indicate which commodity areas best fit the product(s) you produce:

☐ Ag/Open Space Supporter

☐ Aquaculture

☐ Equine

☐ Forestry

☐ Fruits

☐ Horticulture

☐ Livestock

☐ Poultry

☐ Vegetables

☐ Other: _____

Method of Payment

Credit Card:

☐ American Express

☐ Visa

☐ MasterCard

☐ Discover

CC#: _____

CVV: _____ Exp. Date: __/__/____

Signature: _____

Check:

Make checks payable to: Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation

Mail completed application and payment to:

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation
249 Lakeside Ave
Marlborough, MA 01752

Thank you for your support!

Recipe: Winter Squash Quick Bread

Ingredients

- 1 cup butternut squash puree (from 1 small roasted butternut squash)
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup canola oil
- 1 cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon cardamom
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 Tablespoons brown sugar



How to make

- 1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a loaf pan with nonstick spray.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the squash puree, eggs, oil, and sugars until very well combined. In another bowl, whisk together the flour, cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg, cardamom, and salt. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients all at once, and stir just until combined. Pour into the prepared loaf pan. Sprinkle the 2 Tablespoons brown sugar on top.
3. Bake in the preheated oven for 60-70 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Set on a wire rack to cool completely.

From: <https://blog.debbiemacomber.com/winter-squash-quick-bread>

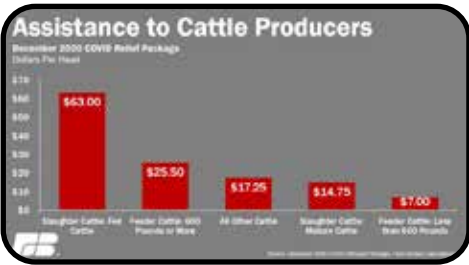
COVID-19 Relief Package

Continued From Page 3

system, dealers frequently buy and resell livestock, often grouping them to meet the volume and type needs of their customers. Dealers are allowed to take possession of livestock and pay for them later, and dealers do not maintain a trust account to guarantee payment.

Other Livestock Provisions

This bill included a one-year authorization to livestock mandatory reporting, extending the law that requires buyers and sellers of meat and livestock to report the price and volume of certain commodities. The bill also aims to assist meat and poultry processing facilities in making improvements to allow for interstate shipment. While doing this, it would require a study on programs for meat and poultry processing and slaughtering facilities. This bill also includes additional inventory-based direct payments for cattle producers based on the difference between the CARES Act inventory payment rate, the Commodity Credit Corporation payment rate and the CFAP 2 payment rate multiplied by a percentage factor. For example, fed cattle had a CARES Act inventory payment rate of \$214 per head, and the CCC payment rate and the CFAP 2 payment rate were \$33 per head and \$55 per head, respectively. When subtracting the CCC and CFAP 2 payment rates, and then multiplying by 50 percent, the plus-up payment for fed cattle is \$63 per head.



Supplemental Coverage for Dairy Margin Coverage Program

The bill would provide necessary cash flow assistance to small and mid-sized dairies by establishing supplemental dairy margin coverage based on 75 percent of the difference between recent actual production (based on 2019 marketings) and the established production history currently used by DMC. Program payments under this supplemental program would be based on the

additional 2019 production and the elected DMC coverage level. Many small and mid-sized dairies have grown their operations since their production history was established and locked in in previous farm bills (based on 2011 through 2013 milk marketings). This legislation would allow those operations to qualify for additional coverage for 75 percent of any increases in milk production up to 5 million pounds. This bill would not reopen registration for DMC for 2020, but producers who sign up for DMC in subsequent years would also be allowed this option for higher milk production coverage.

Dairy Donation Program and Food and Agricultural Product Purchase Program

Following up on USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box program, the bill includes two donation-style programs. The first is a dairy donation program that will pay milk processors the full value of milk used to produce and donate dairy products into food assistance channels. The \$400 million dairy donation program is also retroactive, meaning milk processors may be eligible to receive financial payments for milk previously processed and donated during 2020.

In addition to the dairy-only donation program, the bill would provide \$1.5 billion for the Agriculture

Secretary to purchase food and agricultural products and distribute these products through nonprofit organizations. This support would include fresh dairy, produce, meat and seafood products. It would also provide grants and loans to small and mid-sized food processors and distributors, seafood processing facilities and processing vessels, farmers markets, producers and other organizations to respond to COVID-19 and protect their workers.

Summary

The recently passed COVID-19 stimulus package provides \$13 billion, approximately 1.4 percent of the \$900 billion package, in financial assistance to help livestock, poultry, dairy, non-specialty and specialty crop producers continue to recover from COVID-19 disruptions. In addition to the direct support for agriculture, the bill includes other agriculture-related provisions including improvements to and additional funding for the Paycheck Protection Program, an extension to livestock mandatory reporting, several tax extender provisions, such as a \$1.01 per gallon credit for the production of second-generation biofuels and a \$0.50 per gallon excise tax credit for alternative fuel and alternative fuel mixtures, as well as \$7 billion to increase broadband access.

Remembering Farm Bureau Members Who Have Passed

- **David A. Shepard**, 83, of Warren, died on Monday, Nov. 16, 2020, at Baystate Wing Hospital. To read his full obituary, please visit: <https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/18980631/David-A-Shepard/West-Brookfield/Massachusetts/Varnum-Funeral-Home>
- **David Prouty** from Sheffield, Massachusetts, passed away in his home on Dec. 19, 2020, at the age of 92. He was Bruce Howden's partner for more than 40 years. There are not yet plans for a funeral but more information will be announced soon.
- **George A. Hunt Sr.**, 83, of South Main Street and patriarch of the Hunt Farm, died peacefully at home on Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2020. To read the obituary, please visit: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/george-hunt-obituary?pid=197358204>
- **William A. Colby**, age 78, longtime resident of Newburyport and Newbury, died at home on his farm early Saturday morning Dec. 26, 2020. To read the obituary, please visit: <https://obituaries.newburyportnews.com/obituary/william-colby-1081338193>
- **Dot Angley, age 91**, of Carver passed away recently. More details will be provided soon.

8th Biennial Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference & Trade Show Set For Feb. 24th - 25th

The 8th biennial Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show which draws hundreds of farmers and farm industry members to idea-laden workshops and hear motivational speakers from across the region, will be held virtually for the first time Feb. 24-25 and join your regional agriculturists for two half days of workshops!

This year's conference theme is Diversifying for Agri-Businesses: Strategies for Weathering the Storms. Kicking off the educational workshops on Wednesday, Feb. 24 at 8:45 am

is conference keynote speaker and seventh generation farmer and author, Forrest Pritchard from Berryville Virginia. His talk, entitled Lessons from 2020, Opportunities for 2021, will examine what the past year taught us not only about our operations, our markets and marketing, but most importantly, ourselves, and how farmers can use these lessons to sustainably pivot into 2021 and beyond.

Five additional workshops will follow on Wednesday and Thursday. These workshops will include farmers and experts from across the region,

with a focus on product and market diversification. Information about all of the workshop, including workshop descriptions and speaker biographies, can be found at www.harvestnewengland.org.

Harvest New England is also developing a New England Farmers Market Mangers Seminar to be held in conjunction with the conference. More details will be announced soon.

Registration is now open, and in 2021, the conference will be offered at no cost to attendees. Harvest New England recognizes that this year has

been unprecedented for producers in many ways, and feels strongly that now more than ever, it's important to provide agricultural businesses throughout the Northeast with the tools to remain viable, cultivate innovators, and foster the next generation of farmers.

Harvest New England (HNE) is a cooperative marketing program created by New England's state departments of agriculture in 1992. It has sponsored this regional conference since 2007. For more information, visit www.harvestnewengland.org.

MFBF Members' Classifieds

FOR SALE

FOR SALE: 5+ Acres with farm stand already on premises. Some farmable land currently in use. Huge possibilities for expansion. Incredible year round community and established relationships with other businesses in the area. Population triples in the Summer due to the beach crowd. Approximately 16,000 sq. ft. of greenhouse space Owner encourages a visit to check out the property – please contact first - email@nessrallas.com

FOR SALE: Tires: Great prices, all sizes, tire repairs, road service, calcium chloride service. Hoey Tire, Worcester. Call 508-755-6666, www.hoeytire.com

FOR SALE: Hay 1st and 2nd cutting. 4' X 5' round and small square bales. Conway Farms, Lakeville, MA 508-821-0149.

FOR SALE: Marlborough MA, Farm / Nursery Land for lease. Lease period and cost is negotiable. Seven acres in two adjacent fields with street access. Call Bob, 978-315-6861

SERVICES

SERVICE: Custom Grazing. Goats & Sheep. Solar fields. Ivy/Brush Removal. Shave ~30% off your maintenance contract. All natural & environmental-friendly mowers. The new way of getting things cut! Goats To Go Georgetown, MA. www.goatstogo.farm/services. Call/Text Alan 508-451-1987.

REAL ESTATE APPRAISER/CONSULTANT: Valuations and consulting for estate planning/gifting, buying/selling, APR/CR, Chapter 61, 61A, 61B tax appeals. William King 508-867-2600 or whking2005@gmail.com

HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED: ORCHARD MANAGER. Massachusetts farm is seeking a reliable Farm Manager responsible for the planning, planting, growing and harvesting of apples, stone fruit and some vegetable crops. This person will be responsible for all aspects of crop production, managing the property and workers, chemical spray program practicing I.P.M, harvest, pruning

and equipment maintenance. This position requires an independent, motivated self-starter who values working in a team setting. Formal education, technical certificate, and/or extensive work experience in the area of orchard production, or management is necessary. Experience producing cider would be helpful but not necessary. Candidate must have a minimum of three years experience and a pesticide license. This is a year-round position located in Central Massachusetts. Compensation will be based on experience, plus benefits. Please apply by email at davisfarms@verizon.net

*Want to advertise with us?
Please contact Katelyn Parsons at
katelyn@mfbf.net for more details!*

We Need You!

Consider Serving On One Of Our Advisory Committees!

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation has a number of committees that provide leadership and staff with guidance and assistance throughout the year. Many of these committees meet on an as-needed basis, however, some meet more.

- These committees include:
- Apiary • Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) • Cannabis
 - Equine • Fruit and Vegetables • Livestock • Membership
 - Promotion and Education • Resolutions • Young Farmers and Ranchers

Are you interested in serving on one of these committees? Please get in touch with your county





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TAX PREPARATION Just as 2020 was a year unlike any other, filing your 2020 taxes will also be different. The financial circumstances brought on by COVID-19 could have a significant effect on the deductions and allowances available to your business. This year, more than ever, you will need a reliable ag tax specialist to help guide you through your unique tax situation. Contact Farm Credit East to keep your business Strong at the Roots.

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YOU KNOW YOUR BUSINESS WE KNOW HOW TO HELP YOU INSURE IT



Whether you own a cattle ranch or a dairy farm, specialize in horses or llamas or grow cash crops — you recognize that a one-size-fits-all insurance policy isn’t the smart way to run a business. **YOUR OPERATION IS UNIQUE AND WE UNDERSTAND THAT.**

Our agribusiness insurance can provide you with a flexible farm package that allows you to customize a policy to match your specific needs. For more information, contact a local agent.



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