



# MASSACHUSETTS FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

The Voice of Agriculture

## News & Views

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### IT'S ALWAYS THE RIGHT TIME TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT MFBF

BY KATELYN PARSONS, MFBF DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND MEMBERSHIP



First I'd like to say thank you for the opportunity to serve as your director of marketing and membership. After several years away from the Bay State, it's been a blessing to move closer to my home and my farm roots. During the next few months, I'm looking forward to meeting you and learning about your operation, family, priorities and plans.

While there are many of you I have yet to meet, I know that you, our members, are the powerhouse behind Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation. As a grassroots organization you assist us in establishing state and national policy and direction through your participation in local board meetings, legislative visits, your attendance at the state annual meeting and more. Through your help, we are able to turn MFBF policy into action, something that isn't possible without you.

However, we need more than just one of you. We need everyone who supports Massachusetts agriculture to back our mission. And in order to get everyone involved, we need you to make the pitch to potential members you know, including your neighbors.

People like people. When you reach out to your local friends and share MFBF's messages and benefits you are helping us showcase the value of holding a MFBF membership to potential members. And when your

friends hear the pitch from you they likely will take action.

But don't feel like you have to go at this alone. Myself and my fellow MFBF co-workers can provide you with all the groundwork you need for a membership drive, from developing a prospective list to materials to training. All you have to do is ask. You are irreplaceable to us as a salesperson of Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation.

As a farmer's daughter, I know you all are busy. I also know that sometimes you visit with your neighbors or customers about the weather, price of fertilizer or families. Now is the time to turn that conversation into a discussion about what Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation has done for you and for farmers all across the state.

From helping you navigate 61A land taxation policy to assisting you with farm plates to providing you with updates on upcoming ballot questions and more, MFBF has been there for you and all other Massachusetts farmers since 1915. We are the only organization dedicated to representing our members' interests and directives through education for all levels of government and the public on the farming community's policy and positions.

By helping us grow our membership base, you are planting the seeds that will make Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation viable for years to come.

So pick up the telephone – or drive down the road for a quick chat – and make the ask. After all, MFBF is the only organization dedicated to seeking out initiatives, activities and ventures that will help enhance the profitability of your operation and ensure your viability in the Commonwealth.

Help us grow today!

Katelyn Parsons  
katelyn@mfbf.net

### AG OFFICIALS ANNOUNCE RECOMMENDATIONS TO PRESERVE MASSACHUSETTS CRANBERRY INDUSTRY

STATE'S CRANBERRY REVITALIZATION TASK FORCE RELEASES FINAL REPORT

Government officials and stakeholders on the Cranberry Revitalization Task Force have released their final report with recommendations to preserve and strengthen Massachusetts' cranberry industry. The report, adopted unanimously by members of the Task Force, outlines the complex challenges ahead, and recommendations geared towards stabilizing and revitalizing this critical sector of agricultural production.

"Cranberries are Massachusetts' number one agricultural food product, and the cranberry industry is a vital part of the environment and economy of southeastern Massachusetts," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Through the recommendations in this plan, we can work with stakeholders and the Legislature to address the challenges the cranberry industry faces and strengthen the industry for years to come."

"The Task Force's final report represents a true collaborative effort born out of hard work by both the private and public sectors," said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. "The ideas and commitment that resulted from this Task Force will allow us to better support Massachusetts agriculture and the cranberry industry."

The Cranberry Revitalization Task Force, composed of 18 government officials and stakeholders within the cranberry industry, was created by the Legislature in July 2015 to examine the status of the industry and the complex challenges ahead, and to develop a multi-pronged action plan geared toward stabilizing and revitalizing the cranberry industry. The Task Force has met at the UMass Cranberry Station in Wareham, engaging stakeholders and members of the public in order to develop sound, well-rounded recommendations.

CRANBERRY CONTIUNED ON PAGE 6...

### LAST CHANCE: GREG FINN SCHOLARSHIP

The Gregory Finn \$500 Scholarship was established in loving memory of a good friend to agriculture. Gregory L. Finn was Massachusetts Farm Bureau Information & Public Relations Director, a religious and devoted family man, who died of a heart attack in 1983 at the age of 55.

Born in Hyde Park, Greg attended Boston College, Suffolk Law School, and Leland Powers Broadcast School. He had been host of the WBZ "Countryside" program since its inception, an announcer for WBET in Brockton and WORL in Boston. On air, he was the high-energy host responsible for introducing the latest hit music as well as news broadcasts, "live advertisements" and on-air interviews with a long list of movie stars, pop-stars and celebrities.

Though not a farmer himself, Greg possessed a unique ability to bridge the gap between agriculture and suburbia. He was a natural at interpreting and conveying the problems facing farmers in a way that non-agricultural communities could understand. Greg was well aware that a whole generation had grown up without exposure to perhaps the single most vital industry in the Commonwealth.... Agriculture.

This scholarship is awarded in Greg's memory to foster an understanding and perhaps help to close the gap between the farm community and suburban Massachusetts.

Applicant must be a child or legal dependent of a Regular member in good standing of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation. Applicant must be at least in their junior year of college when the scholarship is awarded. Applicant must be majoring in communications, journalism, music or an agriculturally related field.

Application must be submitted to "The Greg Finn Scholarship Fund" by August 31st of the scholarship year.

Application must be accompanied by a sealed official copy of the applicant's college transcript; and a 250 word statement on why the applicant has chosen this particular field of study and projected career goals.

To request an application please contact Kelley Garufi at [kelly@mfbf.net](mailto:kelly@mfbf.net) or via phone at 508.481.4766

#### OUR MISSION:

TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS, ENCOURAGE THE GROWTH AND BE OF SERVICE TO  
OUR MEMBERS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF AGRICULTURE.

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## COUNTY FARM BUREAU ANNUAL MEETING DATES

August 29th	<b>PLYMOUTH COUNTY</b> <b>TIME:</b> 6:00 PM Social Hour, 7:00 PM Dinner <b>PLACE:</b> Monponsett Inn 550 Monponsett Street Halifax, MA 02338 <b>COST:</b> \$15 per person <b>RSVP:</b> Contact Lisa Blair at (508) 866-9150
September 20th	<b>BERKSHIRE COUNTY</b> <b>DETAILS TO FOLLOW...</b>
October 13th	<b>FRANKLIN COUNTY</b> <b>PLACE:</b> Greenfiled Elks <b>DETAILS TO FOLLOW..</b>
October 15th	<b>NORFOLK COUNTY</b> <b>PLACE:</b> Lafayette House 109 Washington St. Foxborough, MA 02035 <b>DETAILS TO FOLLOW...</b>
October 18th	<b>CAPE &amp; ISLANDS</b> <b>DETAILS TO FOLLOW...</b>
October 19th	<b>MIDDLESEX COUNTY</b> <b>PLACE:</b> Gibbett Hill Grill 61 Lowell Rd, Groton, MA <b>DETAILS TO FOLLOW...</b>

October 20th	<b>BRISTOL COUNTY</b> <b>PLACE:</b> Hillside Country Club 82 Hillside Ave. Rehoboth, MA <b>DETAILS TO FOLLOW...</b>
October 20th	<b>ESSEX COUNTY</b> <b>TIME:</b> 6:00 PM Social Hour, 7:00 PM Dinner <b>PLACE:</b> Diburro's Function Facilities Boston Road, Ward Hill, MA <b>DETAILS TO FOLLOW...</b>
October 21st	<b>HAMPSHIRE COUNTY</b> <b>TIME:</b> 6:00 PM Social Hour, 7:00 PM Dinner <b>DETAILS TO FOLLOW...</b>
October 24th	<b>HAMPDEN COUNTY</b> <b>PLACE:</b> Take Five Resturant <b>DETAILS TO FOLLOW...</b>
October 25th	<b>WORCESTER COUNTY</b> <b>TIME:</b> 6:00 PM Social Hour, 7:00 PM Dinner <b>PLACE:</b> Salem Cross Inn, 260 WestBrookfield, MA <b>COST:</b> TBD

## BERKSHIRE COUNTY SUMMER PICNIC SUNDAY, AUG 14TH AT 1:30PM

This year's pot luck style picnic will be held at Howden Farm located at 303 Rannapo Road, Sheffield, MA 0125. We are proud to have all current Legislators as well as candidates running for office in this years elections in attendance discussing issues that affect agriculture in Massachusetts. To RSVP call 413-229-8481 or [bruce@howdenfarm.com](mailto:bruce@howdenfarm.com).

## SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 2017 AFBF ANNUAL CONVENTION

If you are interested in attending the 2017 AFBF Annual Convention see information below.  
**Dates:** Jan. 8-11, 2017  
**Location:** Phoenix, AZ;  
**Meeting Type:** Program Meeting  
**Contact Name:** John Conners  
**Contact Email:** [john@mfbf.net](mailto:john@mfbf.net)  
**Phone Number:** 508-481-4766

## SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 2016 MFBF ANNUAL MEETING

If you are interested in attending the 2016 MFBF Annual Meeting hosted by Essex County Farm Bureau.  
**Dates:** Dec 1st & 2nd 2016  
**Location:** Marriott -Peabody, Ma  
**Meeting Type:** MFBF Annual Meeting  
**Contact Name:** Liz Smith  
**Contact Email:** [liz@mfbf.net](mailto:liz@mfbf.net)  
**Phone Number:** 508-481-4766

## DAIRY PRODUCERS CAN ENROLL 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](http://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.

## NATIONAL FARMERS MARKET WEEK IS AUGUST 7-13

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack signed a proclamation declaring Aug. 7-13, 2016, as "National Farmers Market Week." This year marks the 17th annual National Farmers Market Week to honor and celebrate the important role that farmers markets play in local economies.

Throughout the week, USDA officials will celebrate at farmers market locations across the country.

To help farmers market managers across the country promote and celebrate National Farmers Market Week, USDA is sharing online free farmers market related graphics that market managers and others can use to customize posters, emails, websites and other promotional materials. The graphics,

along with a short demonstration video, can be found at: [www.ams.usda.gov/resources/NFMW](http://www.ams.usda.gov/resources/NFMW)

Supporting farmers markets is a part of the USDA's Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food (KYF2) Initiative, which coordinates the Department's work to develop strong local and regional food systems. USDA is committed to helping farmers, ranchers, and businesses access the growing market for local and regional foods, which was valued at \$12 billion in 2014 according to industry estimates. You can also find local and regional supply chain resources on the newly-revamped KYF2 website and use the KYF2 Compass to locate USDA investments in your community.

## NEW LABOR RULES HIT SALARIED WORKERS

Agriculture's 24/7 workload poses special issues for payroll. Most farmers assume they are not required to pay overtime for any farm work performed by their employees, points out Paul Neiffer, a CPA with CliftonLarsonAllen in Yakima, Wash. But given the new rules imposed by the Department of Labor starting Dec. 1, you need to carefully review that policy and the impact on your labor expense, he advises.

The DOL announced final regulations on new overtime rules May 18, greatly expanding who qualifies for overtime treatment.

"Direct" agricultural work still is generally exempt from overtime, so if you're pressed to run full speed during planting and harvest, you simply pay field hands their hourly rate multiplied by time worked. Immediate family members employed on the farm also are completely exempt from overtime rules. Neither of those exemptions have changed, says Angie Ziegler who advises clients on payroll issues for the accounting firm of EideBailly in Mankato, Minn.

However, today's farms also include a number of business entities, some which will qualify as "farm" and some which may not. Frequently non-farm sidelines can include commercial trucking, custom hire work or perhaps a commercial grain elevator. In those cases, the work performed is no longer exempt from overtime rules.

For example, hourly employees who haul for someone other than the farm would need to be paid time-and-a-half on hours that exceed 40 hours per week. That's the case, even if they worked 40 hours on the farm and 20 hours for your trucking company.

"The problem is there aren't a lot of specific rules and regulations on this. This is not something that's been pinned down by DOL. But that's my educated guess, based on discussion with attorneys and reviews of revenue rulings," Neiffer says.

The big change in a new rule is white-collar employees who have been paid more than \$455 per week (\$23,660 per year) and were exempt from overtime in the past because of their job category. In the past, managers, administrative staff and technical workers who worked on farms were still considered farm labor. "As long as they were paid at least \$455 per week, they were entitled to nothing for overtime," Neiffer says.

Beginning Dec. 1, 2016, however, the overtime-wage standard for white-collar jobs jumps to \$913 per week, or \$47,476 per year. "White-collar" employees who earn less than \$47,476 a year and who work in non-farm businesses must be paid overtime at time-and-a-half for all hours above 40 hours a week.

However, "white-collar" employees who work for the farm and earn under the \$47,476 salary threshold - and are not involved in any non-farm sideline businesses - won't need to be paid time-and-a-half, Neiffer emphasizes. Still, these workers will need to be paid their flat hourly wage for all hours above 40 hours per week, he says.

"Under the old rules, a farm's white-collar workers were no big deal since almost everyone earned more than \$23,000 a year if they were on salary, so they weren't collecting any overtime pay. But with non-taxable benefits like housing and company vehicles, many farm employees do earn less than \$47,476 a year and will now need some compensation for those excess hours," Neiffer says.

It's common at certain times of the year that a farm's clerical staff or other managers put in 60 or more hours per week, so there's a chance that farm labor costs will go up if employers don't monitor the situation, EideBailly's Ziegler says. Besides salary, the rules could affect FICA taxes and retirement plans.

"Farm employers may need to work out their options," she says. "They can jump salaried employees to a higher pay rate to avoid overtime rules; keep them at current salary and pay overtime; convert salaried workers to hourly workers; or reduce an employee's hourly wages but pay over-time that will keep them at their current annual earnings."

CliftonLarsonAllen recommends that employers now require all employees (even those on salary) to complete time sheets and acknowledge accuracy of those hours. What's more, developing formal job descriptions and annual reviews will establish precisely who is and isn't eligible for overtime pay. In some cases, it might be worth it to raise a worker's salary to qualify for the exemption. In other cases, you may want to require pre-approval on overtime hours, to help you keep labor costs under control.

Farmers and ranchers are advised to consult an attorney or accountant to make sure employees actually qualify for exemptions.

## FFA'S SECOND ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL EXPO AT NORFOLK AGGIE



This September, Norfolk County Agricultural High School will be celebrating its 100th year of agricultural education. To mark this historical event the Norfolk Chapter FFA will be hosting our 2nd Annual Agricultural Exposition on our campus. We will be inviting agricultural vendors from across Massachusetts to join us and would be honored if you came to showcase your role in Massachusetts agriculture.

This event would run on September 25, 2016 as a fundraiser for the Norfolk FFA Chapter and scholarship fund. Vendors are welcome to come showcase and/or sell goods or services related to their agricultural occupation. Here at Norfolk Aggie we believe in the future of agriculture and respect those whose hard work and motivation help us sustain our way of living. We are asking for donations to set up.

We hope that you will join us in Walpole this fall to show off your hard work. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact us at the phone number listed above or at [mmckenna@norfolkaggie.org](mailto:mmckenna@norfolkaggie.org).

# LOVES



four wheeling, summer nights, cooking farm fresh meals, and record-keeping.

Preparing timely records may not be most people's idea of a good time, but for Farm Credit East financial specialist Jennifer Adduci, nothing says fun like record-keeping. In fact, all of our accounting professionals love helping our clients maintain solid records and create timely reports — all with a view to healthy finances and maximum profitability.

Sure, Jennifer's love of record-keeping may seem a little unusual, but when it comes to making sure that your records are up-to-date and accurate, we wouldn't have it any other way — because WE ARE YOU.

*Our associates love what they do. How about you? Send us your selfie at [FarmCreditEast.com/WeAreYou](http://FarmCreditEast.com/WeAreYou).*



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# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BY DOUGLAS GILLESPIE, MFBB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings to all during these Dog Days of Summer! I often tell people who ask me about what I do for a career that "I'm involved with agriculture, without getting my hands dirty!". It's the days like today when I am sure glad I work in an air-conditioned office. Our course, my statement above is not really accurate as I've always "gotten dirty" at both our Massachusetts livestock farm and Texas ranch, but it makes for a good line of conversation!

I want to talk a bit about Farm Bureau membership this month, as MFBB has just completed its membership year, and we are seeing a slight increase in membership. However, dues revenues are not keeping pace with the costs of providing the services that our farmer members have come to expect. Your Farm Bureau has become reliant upon a substantial investment portfolio that resulted from the sale of Farm Family Insurance Company a number of years ago.

The investment portfolio has allowed MFBB to purchase our headquarters building in Marlborough, and to maintain program and staffing levels to meet the needs of today's farmer members. But with the stock market and bond market lacking stability and strength, Farm Bureau finds itself dipping into our principal, and that's not something that the MFBB Board of Directors, or I, believe is good for our organization long term.

At the June meeting of the MFBB Board of Directors, a proposal to update membership dues levels was discussed at length, and the board voted to recommend changes to the delegate session at the MFBB Annual Meeting, December 2 in Peabody. If approved, the new dues schedule would likely be implemented effective either April 1 or July 1, 2017.

The Board is recommending modest dues increases for nearly every dues category. Farmer or Regular membership would be set at \$225 annually (up from \$195); while the Gold and Platinum memberships would stay the same at \$350 and \$500 respectively. Allied Business memberships would rise from \$200 to \$225, Associates from \$60 to \$70, and Friends from \$20 to \$25. Student memberships would remain at \$20.

If the dues increase is approved by the delegate session it is projected to increase MFBB revenues by about \$100,000 annually. This will help to reduce the approximately \$350,000 that we have been taking from investments in the past few years. It only makes sense that we make this prudent adjustment to our business operations so that we can maintain service levels that our farmer members need, while ensuring the long term stability of the organization. If you have specific questions about the proposal, or the need for it, I welcome your emails at [doug@mfbf.net](mailto:doug@mfbf.net).

The final piece to solving MFBB's revenue challenges that was voted by the Board was the creation of a committee to explore alternative revenue ideas. Warren Shaw Jr. of Dracut, Nathan L'Etoile of Northfield, and I will start exploring ways that MFBB can either provide additional services on a fee basis, or other income-generating projects. We welcome your ideas.

This month MFBB welcomes Katelyn Parsons to the staff as Director of Marketing & Membership. Katelyn comes from a Massachusetts farm family in the Pioneer Valley, and most recently worked at the US Grains Council in Washington, DC after graduating from Oklahoma State University. Katelyn will complement the existing staff team in providing service to the membership.

MFBB will be hosting American Farm Bureau's President, Zippy Duvall, for a two-day visit to our state in early August. We expect to visit farms in Essex, Worcester, Franklin, Hampshire and Plymouth counties, as well as the Boston Public Market, so that President Duvall better understands what Massachusetts agriculture is all about. We will be meeting with Congressman Jim McGovern during the tour, and hopefully other members of our state's delegation. Watch for details and photos in our next newsletter.

Douglas Gillespie  
[doug@mfbf.net](mailto:doug@mfbf.net)

## HOW DRY WAS JUNE?

The following chart shows rainfall figures from select weather stations located across Massachusetts:

Location	Normal June Rainfall	June 2016 Rainfall	% of Normal
Barre	4.24	1.60	37.7
Belchertown	4.35	2.07	47.6
Beverly	3.64	0.37	10.2
Fitchburg	4.25	1.04	24.5
Foxboro	4.32	2.08	48.1
Lawrence	4.07	1.70	41.8
Maynard	4.21	0.38	9.0
New Bedford	3.95	2.21	55.9
North Adams	4.96	2.86	57.7
Northbridge	4.20	1.86	44.3
Pittsfield	4.40	2.50	56.8
Plymouth	3.95	0.95	24.0
Vineyard Haven	3.32	0.20	6.0

Data was obtained from the Northeast Climate Center at: <http://www.nrcc.cornell.edu/wxstation/nowdata.html>. The Northeast Climate Center tracks approximately 75 weather stations that track weather data in Massachusetts.

While percentages were significantly below normal in most cases, most weather stations received over 50% of the month's rainfall on one day during June.

According to the United States Drought Monitor at: <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>. 99.3% of Massachusetts is classified at least as "Abnormally Dry" and within that percentage 54.99% of Massachusetts is classified as "Moderate Drought" and 29.65% of Massachusetts is classified as "Severe Drought". Figures were as of 7/5/16 and released on 7/7/16. The "7/5/16" report was the first instance of any part of Massachusetts being classified as under a "Severe Drought". Updated figures are released every Thursday.

Reminder: as soon as a grower notices a potential crop problem, they must contact their crop insurance agent (crops covered by Federal Crop Insurance), or, their Farm Service Agency Office (crops covered under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program - NAP). This must be within 72 hours of the initial discovery of damage. Failure to provide proper notification can affect a potential indemnity payment.

UMass Extension works in partnership with the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) to educate Massachusetts producers about Federal Crop Insurance and Risk Management Programs. For more information, please visit [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov) or contact UMass Risk Management Specialists Paul Russell at [pmrussell@umext.umass.edu](mailto:pmrussell@umext.umass.edu) or Tom Smiarowski at [tsmiarowski@umext.umass.edu](mailto:tsmiarowski@umext.umass.edu)

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## PRESIDENT OBAMA TO SIGN LANDMARK GMO DISCLOSURE BILL

A landmark bill mandating disclosure of genetically engineered food ingredients is headed to President Obama's desk. The House is expected to give final congressional approval to the Senate-passed legislation on July 14th.

House Agriculture Chairman Mike Conaway, R-Texas, and ranking member Collin Peterson, D-Minn., told Agri-Pulse in an exclusive interview that they expect the bill to pass easily with a majority of both Republicans and Democrats. "Now that the Senate Democrats are for it that will bring a bunch of people," said Peterson. The bill passed the Senate 63-30, with the support of 21 Democrats.

More than 1,100 food and agriculture groups and companies signed a letter urging the House to pass the bill, and their lobbying has had an impact, said Conaway. "The folks who want this have done a pretty good job of urging members to support this. The Farm Bureau is out there. All the producers are calling members," he said.

No amendments will be allowed, under terms of a rule for the debate approved Tuesday by the House Rules Committee. The no-amendment rule was critical because any changes to the bill would send the legislation back to the Senate, and Congress will be out of session after this week until September.

Neither Conaway nor Peterson is particularly enthusiastic about the bill. Both preferred to make GMO disclosure voluntary, and both lawmakers have misgivings about the discretion it gives the Agriculture Department.

The bill would give USDA two years to write a rule that, among other things, would implement a definition for what ingredients and breeding techniques are covered under the legislation. USDA's general counsel said in a letter to the ranking Democrat of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, that the definition could cover highly refined ingredients such as oils and also would cover a broad range of bioengineering techniques.

When USDA has broad discretion in writing regulations, they will vary depending on "whoever has the ear of the USDA folks who are doing this at the time it gets done," said Conaway.

USDA also must set definitions of "small" and "very small" businesses and set a limit for the amount of a biotech material in a product that makes it subject to disclosure. In addition, the department will have to do a study of consumer access to electronic information. Once the study is done, the department may require, for example, that grocery stores provide a landline for shoppers to call food makers for information about biotech ingredients, Conaway said.

Peterson said he expects Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to start work on the rule before President Obama leaves office in January, which would give the next administration a head start. "He's put a bunch of time into this already... He's really into this issue," said Peterson.

USDA has been providing technical advice while both the Senate bill and an earlier House version were under development, and the department's general counsel provided a letter to Conaway as well as the one to Stabenow addressing concerns as to how the bill would be interpreted. A July 8 letter to Conaway assured him that the legislation would immediately preempt Vermont's GMO labeling mandate, which took effect July 1, and bar any other states from imposing requirements that differ from the new federal standards.

Conaway told the Rules Committee that the House had no choice but to accept the Senate bill as is, given that Vermont's mandatory labeling law is now in effect. "The Senate ran the clock out on purpose," he said.

*Article re-published courtesy of Agri-Pulse Communications*

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM (AFSIP) DEADLINE EXTENDED

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](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/about/divisions/afsip.html).

## FAA RULE CLEARS DRONES FOR TAKE-OFF IN AGRICULTURE



While the Federal Aviation Administration's recently released drone rule does not include all of the recommendations Farm Bureau made to the agency last year, the regulation provides a path to integrating this emerging technology into agriculture.

"Drones are the next evolution in American agriculture technology," said RJ Karney, American Farm Bureau Federation drone policy specialist. "Used properly they allow farmers to grow more food on available land using less water and fewer pesticides. High-tech cameras and other airborne sensors provide farmers with important data to make better environmental decisions. This is important not just for farmers but for anyone else who cares deeply about the environment."

Among the things AFBF prioritized in its comments to the FAA on the proposed rule was farmers' need for performance-based standards that promote innovation while keeping safety a top priority. In addition, the organization noted that, for all the good they do, new technologies are not without risk. Farmers and ranchers need to be able to manage these tools safely and should be assured that their farm data is secure and cannot be used unfairly against them.

FAA's new regulation-effective in late August-and much more will be discussed at the Drone World Expo, a two-day conference that focuses on the latest advancements in the commercial drone industry.

Through its partnership with the DWE, Farm Bureau is offering members free registration for the event, which will take place November 15-16, 2016, at the San Jose Convention Center.

The conference will feature sessions and case studies addressing the ever-evolving regulatory environment for commercial drone use, as well as the

most up-to-date and critical information for professionals using drone technology for agriculture, mapping and surveying, utilities, oil and gas, conservation initiatives, real estate and much more.

Farm Bureau members who are end-users of drone technology qualify for a complimentary full conference pass. Non-end-users will receive free expo passes, which include admission to exhibits, keynotes, Tech Talks, demos and receptions. To register, go to [www.droneworldexpo.com/register.asp](http://www.droneworldexpo.com/register.asp) and use code FBNEWS.

For further information about the expo, go to the Drone World Expo website here: <https://xpressreg.net/register/dwex1116/landing.asp?sc=&aban=&hkey=&iq=&vip=&tm=>

Following are a few highlights included in the final rule:

- The UAS must weigh less than 55lbs., including the payload
- Maximum altitude is 400 feet above ground level.
  - If a structure is higher than 400 feet, then the UAS must remain within 400 feet of the structure in order to fly more than 400 feet above the ground.
- Daylight operations only (30 minutes before official sunrise to 30 minutes after official sunset is permissible with appropriate anti-collision lighting).
- Visual line-of-sight required.
  - Visual observer is allowed but not required.
- Operator must be 16 years or older.
- No flying over people not participating in the flight operation.
- UAS operators must obtain a remote pilot certificate.
  - Pass an aeronautical knowledge test at a FAA-approved testing center.
  - Vetted by Transportation Security Administration.
  - Certificate is good for two years.
- Airworthiness certificate is not required.
- Insurance is not required.

## ...CRANBERRY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“The commercial cranberry industry started in Massachusetts 200 years ago this year, so it is only fitting that the Task Force complete its work in the bicentennial of cranberry production,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton. “The recommendations made in this report will help lay the framework for the next 200 years of Massachusetts cranberry production.”

“Part of the revitalization effort focuses on utilizing or modifying existing state programs, the latter to better reflect the needs of today’s farmer,” said Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) Commissioner John Lebeaux. “We are optimistic that sound programs and policy will help to sustain our cranberry farms.”

The final report identifies potential strategies to support the industry, divided into three main categories. The first category, “Renovation”, focuses on potential funding for cranberry growers to renovate their bogs, allowing for more efficient production and cultivation of the larger, higher-yield fruits that have gained a large percentage of the market share.

The second category, “Technology & Innovation”, examines opportunities like making renewable energy options more viable to growers and implementing environmental enhancements to conserve natural resources, particularly water. The third category, “Exit Strategies”, deals with developing the means and incentives to retain “retired” cranberry bogs as open, protected space.

“The Cape Cod Cranberry Growers’ Association (CCCGA) is thankful for the dedication and commitment shown by the members of the Cranberry Industry Revitalization Task Force,” said Keith Mann, President of CCCGA. “Their vision will help set the framework for Massachusetts Cranberries for years to come.”

The collaboration of ideas and alternatives emanating from this Task Force will lend much needed support to the cranberry industry, most importantly, to individual growers striving to maintain their farms,” said Susan Meharg of Cedar Meadow Cranberry Inc. “This, in turn, will help to ensure agricultural diversity within the state of Massachusetts. As a grower I can appreciate the beauty of the cranberry bogs and hope to share this with others well into the future.”

The recommendations presented in the report will require a collaborative effort to be implemented. Part of the revitalization effort focuses on utilizing or modifying existing state programs to better reflect the needs of today’s farmer. Other programs will need to be created, through legislative, executive or industry-led efforts. Some recommendations will involve the renovation of cranberry bogs and require financial assistance.

“The cranberry industry is a crucial part of the Commonwealth’s economy and has been for 200 years,” said State Senator Marc Pacheco (D-Taunton). “Our task force has been dedicated to promoting and revitalizing the cranberry farming community, and our final report represents a thoughtful framework for its long-term vitality. I look forward to the industry’s next 200 years.”

“I am convinced that the Task Force’s recommendations are a balanced list of regulatory and statutory changes, which if undertaken, would assist cranberry growers and handlers in continuing to be an important part of the Commonwealth’s heritage and economy,” said State Representative Bill Strauss (D-Mattapoissett).

“The Task Force set out to reassess the cranberry industry and present concrete solutions to the problems facing cranberry bog farmers in Massachusetts,” said State Senator Michael Rodrigues (D-Westport). “The final report celebrates 200 years of cranberry commercial production, and looks ahead to revitalizing the industry as a thriving part of the Commonwealth’s agricultural economy.”

“Cranberries have been a defining feature of the landscape of southeastern Massachusetts and a critical economic engine for generations,” said State Representative Paul Schmid (D-Westport). “As House Chairman of the Joint Committee of the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture, it was an honor to be part of a public/private effort to support the family farms that produce cranberries.”

“It was a privilege to work with community leaders and industry professionals on this task force,” said State Senator Vinny deMacedo (R-Plymouth). “The cranberry industry is vital to the economic health of our region and I believe our work will be instrumental in ensuring its continued success.”

“It was an honor to be appointed to serve as a member of this Task Force and also that the UMass Cranberry Experiment Station in my home town of Wareham was chosen as the venue for our meetings,” said State Representative Susan Williams Gifford (R-Wareham). “My District, which also includes Carver and south Middleborough, is the heart of the cranberry industry in the Commonwealth and I am very proud of the work we have done.”

Massachusetts is the oldest cranberry growing region in the country. Today, there are approximately 13,500 acres of commercial cranberry bogs in the state, primarily in Plymouth, Bristol, and Barnstable counties. In 2012, the total value of utilized Massachusetts cranberry production was \$99.8 million.

The final Cranberry Revitalization Task Force report can be found here:

[www.mass.gov/eea/docs/agr/boards-commissions/cran-rtfinal-5-24-16.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/agr/boards-commissions/cran-rtfinal-5-24-16.pdf)

## BAKER-POLITO ADMINISTRATION AWARDS \$50,000 FOR STEWARDSHIP IMPROVEMENTS AT PROTECTED FARMS

The Baker-Polito Administration today announced grants totaling \$50,000 for projects that will help farmers improve the overall utilization of land resources permanently protected from development under the Department of Agricultural Resources’ (DAR) Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program (APR).

“By choosing to protect their land from development, these farmers have committed to supporting a strong agricultural industry that benefits our local and regional economies,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “This assistance to dedicated farmers illustrates our administration’s ongoing support for the Commonwealth’s vibrant agriculture industry, which provides fresh, healthy food for our state’s residents.”

“Restoring and stewarding farmland to ensure fields remain in active, agricultural use will help these farms continue to be successful for future generations,” said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. “We are proud to provide this valuable assistance to farmers across the state who are committed to the enhancement of their land for agricultural purposes.”

The grants are being provided through a new DAR grant program, Stewardship Assistance and Restoration on APRs (SARA). SARA will fund activities related to restoring and preparing land for active agricultural use, design or engineering plans, project implementation costs associated with resource restoration, legal or professional fees to address land ownership problems or compliance issues, and other activities that assist with enhancing the purposes of APR.

The first round of grants has been awarded to three farms in the towns of Ashfield, Dartmouth, and Greenfield. These grants will fund projects to remove stumps from an abandoned orchard to replant new apple trees, restore hayfields through brush clearing, apply fertilizer and lime, reseeding and reclaim old overgrown pasture land for active production.

“We are excited to introduce this new stewardship program to ensure greater overall productivity of land protected under APR and to maximize the commercial potential of the land,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matthew Beaton. “The APR program helps keep Massachusetts’ agricultural economy strong and viable, so it’s important we help farmers keep their APR land in active agricultural use.”

“This grant program helps ensure that we continue to invest in our APR landowners by funding stewardship tools to help them improve their farms and enhance their long term viability,” said DAR Commissioner John Lebeaux. “The importance of implementing responsible land stewardship practices to grow our agricultural potential is increasingly important, especially for new owners who have invested in these protected farms.”

The SARA program is one of several programs within DAR’s Division of Agricultural Conservation and Technical Assistance (DACTA), whose mission is to advance the conservation and utilization of agricultural resources through preservation, environmental stewardship, technology, technical assistance and education in order to enhance the viability of agricultural enterprises and safeguard natural resources.

Today’s grant awardees:

Bear Swamp Orchard - Stump removal for orchard restoration - \$1,700  
Gidley Farm - Restoration of hayfields - \$24,724  
Bree-Z-Knoll Farm - Reclamation of land for pasture - \$23,576

“I thank the Baker-Polito Administration and MDAR for their commitment to the Stewardship Assistance and Restoration program on APR protected farmland,” said State Representative Stephen Kulik (D-Worthington). “I congratulate Bear Swamp Orchard in Ashfield on receiving this competitive grant to support its efforts to restore and make valuable improvements to the Orchard to strengthen its agricultural business”

“I am pleased to see that Bree-Z-Knoll farm was selected through this competitive process to reclaim overgrown pasture land and put it into renewed agricultural use,” said State Representative Paul Mark (D-Peru). “I applaud the Department of Agricultural Resources for implementing this innovative program that will help keep farms in western Massachusetts viable and sustainable by improving their productive capacity.”

Since 1979, the Massachusetts APR program has permanently protected over 800 farms and a total land area of over 68,000 acres. The primary purpose of the APR program is to preserve and protect agricultural land from being built upon for non-agricultural purposes or used for any activity detrimental to agriculture.

# CLASSIFIEDS

## SALE

FOR SALE: New High Flotation Farm Service Tires: 11L-155L 8Ply Tube 3 Tires/\$120. 40Hp Electric Pump: with 4 inch Berkley Irrigation Pump (panels included) \$1500/BO. JD 6414: Late 80's Runs well/needs radiator \$3500/BO. P225/70R18 Tires: - 5 Tires Good Tread \$100. Call 508-866-1149.

FOR SALE: Good quality mixed grass baleage off our own farms. \$60 per 1,000 pound bale loaded onto your truck. Call (401) 742-7393.

FOR SALE: Ford Double Bottom Plow with three point hitch in good condition. Asking \$725. Call 508-393-6350 (Northborough).

FOR SALE: Hereford Calves for sale: 9-10 months old, hand raised & tame, both steers and Heifers, for your feed lot or pasture 617-840-2074.

FOR SALE: Scrapper Blade Landpride Model RBT4084 84" Manual Hydraulic \$1,700. Call 508-212-0467 evenings best.

FOR SALE: Hay – 1st, 2nd & Alfalfa cuts available – no dust guaranteed. Wholesale & retail we deliver & unload. Also in Lg. square bales 3x3x7 upon request. Cell 774-259-6960 or office 508-252-3535. Skip & Tish at Homestead Farms.

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 Farm's Lakeville, MA. 508-821-0149.

## SERVICE

SERVICE: Homestead Agricultural Services: Services include but not limited to: red brand certified fence installer, field reclamation, custom field works, brush hogging & manure removal. Visit [www.homesteadagservices.com](http://www.homesteadagservices.com) or call 508-386-6229.

SERVING THE FARMERS IN MASS: Helping farmers keep what they make. Experienced in dairy, beef, fruit & vegetable farming; experienced with APR, retirement planning, estate planning & taxation, tax free exchanges. Contact Donald E. Graves, CPA, MST, MPFP, or Alexander V. Siano, CPA, at: Donald E. Graves, CPA, LLC 377 Main Street, Suite 1, Greenfield, MA 01301-3332, 1-800-286-6036, info@donaldegravescpa.com

FARM MAINTENANCE: All types arena work, construction & renewal. Paddock areas built, fencing new & repairs, hydrant work, & brush work. CRF Maintenance Services. [www.cringfarm.com](http://www.cringfarm.com) 508-278-9824.

REAL ESTATE APPRAISER/CONSULTANT: Reports/consultation provided for estate planning/tax returns/business dissolution, APR/CR and buying/selling. William King 508-867-2600 or [whking2005@gmail.com](mailto:whking2005@gmail.com).

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## 2016 NEWSLETTER AD RATES

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Classifieds: First 20 words for \$10.00, every word thereafter is \$0.50.  
2 Page Spread: \$1050.00  
Full Page: \$625.00 (11" x 17")  
Half Page: \$450.00 (5.5" x 8.5" or 11"x 8.5")  
Quarter Page: \$305.00 (4" x 5")  
Eighth Page: \$200.00 (3" x 4")

### NON-MEMBERS:

Classifieds: First 20 words for \$12.00, every word thereafter is \$0.60.  
2 Page Spread: \$1250.00  
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### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MFBB, Inc. · 249 Lakeside Ave., Marlborough MA 01752, 1-866-548-MFBB

#### Annual Dues

#### VOTING MEMBERS:

- REGULAR MEMBER: \$195  
For those who derive income from an agricultural commodity. May vote on issues, sit on committees & receive member services.
- GOLD CLUB MEMBER: \$350  
A regular member who makes a supplemental donation in support of agriculture Receives special statewide recognition
- PLATINUM CLUB MEMBER: \$500  
Platinum members provide financial support Farm Bureau at the highest level. May vote on issues & sit on committees

#### NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

- ASSOCIATE MEMBER: \$60  
Must not receive agricultural income. Receive member benefits.
- ALLIED BUSINESSES: \$200  
Supply companies and other service providers essential to agriculture.
- STUDENT: \$20  
Ages 16-25, full-time. School grade/year

Name:

Farm Name:

Mailing Address:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

Referred by:

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

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ag/Open Space Supporter | <input type="checkbox"/> Horticulture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aquaculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Livestock    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equine                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Poultry      |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Fruits                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other        |

I hereby make application for an annual membership in the

\_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY FARM BUREAU

County Farm Bureau and Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (which is a member of the American 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 am interested in promoting these objectives through membership. 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 MFBB 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:

All art should be CMYK (not RGB)

Rasterized ads should be set at 600.

Text or line art scans should be set at 600.

Halftones/photos should be at 300 dpi. If 300 is not available, we encourage no lower than 170 dpi.

Back cover space is available at a 20% premium.

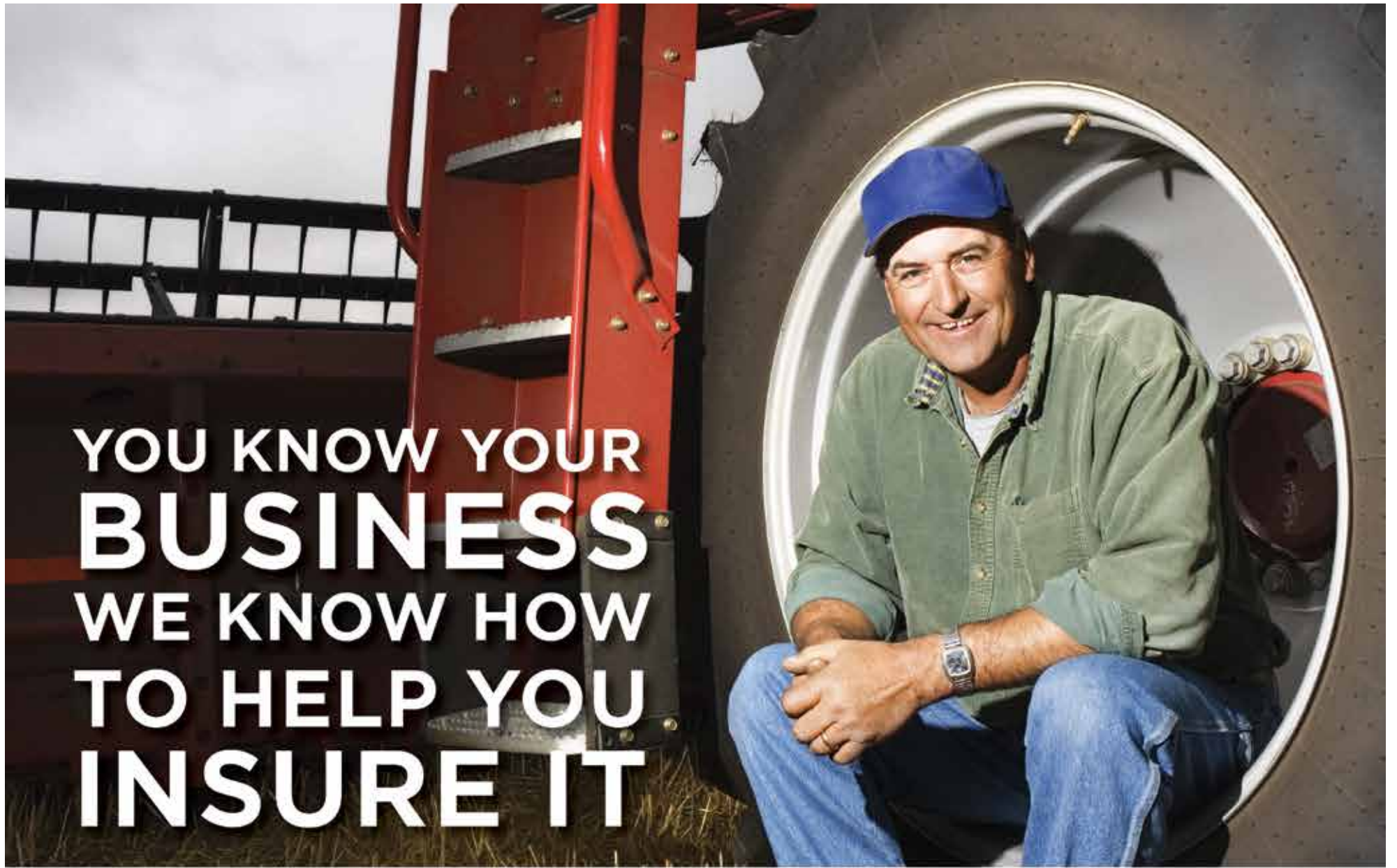
All prices are on a PER ISSUE basis.

When you prepay to run an ad in 10 issues, you receive a 10% discount.

### SUBMISSIONS:

Advertisements must be received by the Mass Farm Bureau office by the 12th of the month PRECEDING the month you would like the advertisement to run (i.e., for the September issue of News & Views, all ads must be received by August 12th).

\*\*FARM BUREAU RESERVES THE RIGHT NOT TO ACCEPT ADVERTISING IT DEEMS UNSUITABLE FOR ITS LITERATURE FOR ANY REASON



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