

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MINUTES

Joseph F. Bilotta Meeting Room, Town Hall

April 10, 2018

Board of Selectmen: Jamie Toale, Chairman; Robert Ebersole, Vice Chairman; Paula Bertram, Clerk; Phyllis Luck, Member; Damon McQuaid, Member

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Toale announced both Town Manager and her Executive Assistant are sick with the flu so he asked for all to bear with them. He opened the meeting with a comment on the events at the close of the meeting last Tuesday. "As part of our public comment process, we ask speakers to identify themselves and give their addresses. This is to ensure that the public record is correct and it reflects accurately who was speaking. Last Tuesday a citizen made an attempt at humor when asked to follow this procedure and the response was considered offensive. It is my intent as the Chair of this Board to make sure that all citizens feel comfortable during our meetings and that the process of town government is inclusive and open to all. The newspaper reported that the comment drew laughs from the Board and for this I am sorry. I take my responsibility as Chair seriously and will work to improve the perception of the Board through my future actions. I ask my colleagues to do the same. "

Tom Alonzo, 284 Lancaster Ave., reminded all this Friday, April 13th at 8:00 p.m. is the Lunenburg Boys and Girls Club fundraiser, "Are You Smarter than a Sixth Grader?" at the Lunenburg High School Auditorium. It is free admission, family oriented and a lot of fun. Refreshments will be on sale in the lobby during intermission. We have a sixteen team slate so there should be a lot of questions which means a lot of humor, which is good and there will be prizes for the winning teams. You can donate that night, which is optional or you can donate at <http://bgcluboflunenburg.org/wp/> to celebrate a good cause.

Mr. Alonzo thanked the Charter Review Committee for their excellent meeting on Thursday. It had a lot of great speakers who had good information for the committee. The committee was very receptive. He acknowledged Mr. Ebersole for running a very crisp meeting and keeping people on point.

Jack Rodriquez, 178 Arbor Street, DPW Director, stated last week during the Board of Selectmen meeting there were some negative remarks directed toward himself as a resident from Flat Hill Road has been negatively impacted by some water. No doubt it is very important but there is more information that needs to be brought out and he thought it was appropriate that the Board directed this to be an agenda item. Hopefully this will result in a plan to her satisfaction. More disappointing were the remarks of a Selectman as she chimed in with the resident with her own criticisms. Mrs. Luck read from a prepared statement a quote that I made in December 2016. Those remarks were true then and they are true now. This was after she introduced to the Board someone she described as a drainage expert. No one knew the gentleman was coming. Somebody told me that's when I made the quote. To paraphrase is just that after 23 years I think my experience in the drainage in this town is sufficient enough to be the person in charge. After quoting me, she spoke of the Selectmen as the Road Commissioners, talked about the debt exclusion which was outside of public comment; both with a negative connotation. At that point she stated I was not living up to what I had said. Her criticism is without merit. In an open televised forum she made a public criticism of me, a personal evaluation of my efforts, specifically toward the stormwater and debt exclusion and that I have not kept my word. This is an insult to my integrity. Not keeping my word, that's all I have; that's what we all have. I find this unacceptable. Not only does it lack common courtesy and respect, it may even have a legal ramification in so far that my rights as a town employee may have been violated. This was a personal evaluation of my performance and as I understand it I have the option of choosing an executive session. I must be notified, have it in public session and have counsel present. I am a pretty proud person but in the end all I am is a husband, a father and a humble public servant.

You insulted me and when you insult me, you insult my family and the people who work with and for me. You should be ashamed of yourself. I could not defend myself because I did not know this was going to happen. Clearly it was a prepared statement because I don't think anybody could remember what I said a year and a half ago. So there was intent to criticize and I think that further violates responsibility as a Chairman and a public official. I am not going to stand here and defend myself with things that I think are great that I have done over the last two or the last twenty- three years. I live on my reputation and my word. I wasn't there to defend myself but I am here now. I will tell you the words, unsolicited, that happened six weeks ago from a gentleman that became our consultant. He told the Stormwater Task Force that the Town is in really good shape; the collection system, the drainage. He also said Jack and his crew have done a great job weaving in the drainage repairs with the pavement management program. Virtually tripling the work for me and my staff compared to past years. You have two things to weigh. Since this person we spoke of is a drainage expert in your estimation, I would expect his opinion would be an expert opinion. So we have the opinion of an expert and a personal criticism. He thanked the Board and exited.

Current Business:

1. Social Media Policy Discussion

Mr. Toale noted this Board adopted a social media policy on July 18, 2017. It was asked that we review that this evening. Mr. Ebersole read the Statement of Policy and noted it is posted on the Town Website. He wondered if it covered only paid town employees or does it include town volunteers as well. Mr. Toale stated the way he understood it covers anyone who speaks on behalf of the Town on social media.

Mr. Ebersole read the following aloud from the policy, "Employees representing the Town on town social media sites shall conduct themselves at all times as a professional representative of the Town and in accordance with all Town Policies.....Any employee authorized to post items on any of the town's social media sites shall not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. Posting shall only reflect the views of the Town. " "Employees shall refrain from using social media sites and tools for personal use while on work time or when using Town provided equipment, unless it is work-related as authorized by the Town Manager or his or her personal designee. Employees shall have no expectation of privacy when using social media sites during work hours, or when using Town computers, systems or technology. "

It also addresses employee's personal use of social media sites outside of work. "The Town is aware that employees may maintain or contribute to a form of social media outside of their job functions. Employees that post on social media sites outside of work should not discuss work-related information unless the matter about which that are communicating is a matter of public concern protected by the First Amendment. Employees shall not disclose any Town- related information that is not already considered public information. As representatives of the Town, employees should exercise caution with respect to comments they post concerning the Town, its employees or officials. "

Mr. Ebersole stated part of the discussion at one of the Massachusetts Municipal Association Annual Meeting's social media workshops was any official, appointed, employed or elected, should be very careful; we have an added responsibility. If more than a quorum of a Board is making comments on a social media website, it could constitute a violation of the Open Meeting Law if everyone is deliberating, so some towns don't post anything. He believed this policy balances the employees' and other official's rights to make comments on social media with the balance of the Town's needs.

Ms. Bertram believed the second paragraph is very murky, which reads,

"If employees personally access and/or use external social media platforms, they shall not reference the Town or any information that would identify the employee's relationship with the Town or Town Department in which they work in their identity (e.g., username, "handle" or screen name), nor shall the employee speak as a representative of the Town. If, however, an employee makes or expresses any comment about Town business or about the employee's job function or job-related activities because the matter is one of public concern, the employee must disclose his or her relationship with the Town. In doing so, the employee must also state that the comments he/she is making or posting concerning such Town-related business reflects his/her own personal views or opinions and that such comments are neither made on behalf of nor reflect the views of the Town, unless the employee is specifically authorized by

the Town to make such comments.” Ms. Bertram stated those two sentences contradict each other, you can’t do it, but if you do, this is how you do it.

Mr. Ebersole stated there probably isn’t a definition of what is a public concern. Ms. Bertram stated there are other social media sites such as Discussing Lunenburg, Lunenburg School & Community Information and they have many more viewers than the Town’s. She has seen in the past public service announcements about things that are ongoing, safety and road concerns that have proved to be beneficial and appreciated by the community. This policy appears to prohibit that. If a post is going to be made by an official on such a page or a redirection on such a page to the Town’s page; that type of activity would have to be sanctioned by the Town Manager, but this policy seems to prohibit that. One of our goals is to increase communication and public involvement but it seems that we are closing that door.

Mr. Toale stated our commitment to communicating and improving communication to the public has led to a couple of things; we now have a Town Facebook page in addition to the Town website. There is a site for the Police Department, Fire Department, Eagle House Senior Community Center, the Public Library, and Public Access Cable. Public Works is working on a site. The intent is that any information that we are trying to get to the public be published on those sites so people know it’s the official word. He had no problem if someone asks for Town information elsewhere if someone refers them to the official site. But it’s important they get the correct information. Ms. Bertram did not disagree but this policy appears to prohibit such a redirection.

Ms. Luck stated since we are just launching these sites, we need to give them a chance to go and try to encourage people to direct their attention to those sites. Mr. McQuaid stated people should not expect to get an answer from us through Facebook because that could start a dialogue outside of public meeting session. Ms. Luck clarified not an answer but announcements such as road closings, etc.

Further discussion ensued about using other sites other than the Town site and the consequences. Mr. Ebersole suggested revisiting this policy and defining what a public concern is after the new Town website goes live and to have legal counsel review the policy.

Ms. Luck noted Section III, #4’s wording regarding Town social media sites and use of personal email accounts was also murky.

2. Review of Skateboard Park Location Proposal at TC Passios

Mr. Toale reported he was at the presentation at the Senior Center and met with Town Manager Lemieux afterwards. She has created a map as a result of that meeting. This proposal was based on good visibility and location near the schools and Teen Center. The group needs to have a location in order to proceed forward to fundraise. Exact dimensions are not finalized.

Option #1 places the skate park between TC Passios and Eagle House Senior Center on Memorial Drive and Option #2 places it to the right side of the Public Library on Massachusetts Ave.

Ms. Bertram preferred Option 1. She also wanted to present to this Board for discussion the feasibility of creating more green space where the Brooks House is currently located and removing the turnaround area in front of TC Passios and making that a public park. That entire green space would become a recreation area adjacent to the skate park as well as a potential community center at TC Passios. She was not in favor of Option 2. Mr. McQuaid preferred Option 1.. He suggested reserving some green space along Memorial Drive for future outdoor events.

Motion: R. Ebersole

2nd: P. Bertram

To approve Option #1 location, to the east of King’s Kingdom as a skate park and allowing for future parking for the TC Passios Building

Discussion: Anthony Caiozzo asked if stipulations such as size happen later. The Board concurred. He asked in terms of a project requiring reporting prevailing wages; is this subject to that? Mr. Ebersole stated it depends on who is doing the work and the funding source

Vote: All in Favor

Greg Roy, 105 Chestnut Street, is a civil engineer who would be donating his time to the project. He requested permission from the Board to place a crew there to do a topographical survey so they could get things rolling. Mr. Ebersole suggested contacting the Town Manager.

3. Minutes/ Warrants/ Action File Issues

An accounts payable warrant in the amount of \$466,509.25 and a payroll warrant in the amount of \$1331.20 were presented.

Action File Issues: Ms. Luck requested a discussion on the current practice of raising taxes by 2.5% annually. This will be a future agenda item.

Mr. Toale stated they would recess briefly to set up for their workshop.

Public Comment:

Heather Bowen, 188 Flat Hill Road, stated regarding the social media policy discussion, one of the things she asks her students to think about was what is something you posted on social media that you would not tell your parents or your boss? There was recently a Planning Board meeting that had to do with the Flat Hill Road water runoff. Matthew Allison, a Planning Board member, recused himself from the Flat Hill Road discussion and did not comment as an elected official of the Town, but as a private citizen because he has the experience of knowing the area. She was concerned the policy wording would remove the ability of private citizens to share their experience and knowledge even in their capacity as an elected official.

Jeffrey Mendoza, 162 Lancaster Ave., Agricultural Commission Chair, and former skateboarder, thanked the Board for approving the skate park.

Ryan Stober, 275 Pleasant St., stated during the snowstorms this year, the DPW issued a public service announcement on social media concerning how they would be handling the storm and received 100% positive public feedback. Why did the messages stop? Ms. Luck asked why people wouldn't be willing to go to a DPW website. The Board stated it would be discussed when reexamining the social media policy. After a five minute recess the meeting reconvened at 7:58 p.m.

JOINT MEETING WITH AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AS IT RELATES TO AGRICULTURE

The Planning Board and Agricultural Commission called their meetings to order.

Agricultural Commission members; Jeff Mendoza, Chair; Ryan Stober, Ashley Steele, Arthur Snow

Planning Board members: Greg Bittner, Chair: Matthew Allison, Kenneth Chenis

Also attending: Heather Bowen, Farmer's Market Manager; Land Use Director Adam Burney

Mr. Toale thanked everyone for coming. Jeff Mendoza stated the community wants agriculture to be at the forefront of the economic development in Town. Dragonfly Garden Café is providing retail/counter space to local farmers on Saturday mornings at the restaurant. Ms. Bowen reported the "Poopapalooza Farm Tour" sold out by Noon on the day of their event.

Ms. Bertram personally supported turning Town Hall into a future Farmer/Artist Collaborative space. She believed there was opportunity for utilization of the cafeteria at TC Passios. Is there strong interest in developing a Farmer's Collaborative? There are grants available that could help with building restoration and program implementation. There has to be a core group that is going to implement this and work with the farmers to get this off the ground.

Ms. Bowen stated Lunenburg's Farmer's Market is an eclectic group. Their biggest challenge is a working budget. Ryan Stober stated there is valuable open space in town. People come in for the beauty of the land and the farms and that is what we are trying to preserve. He would like to see more Lunenburg farms be more visitor friendly. Arthur Snow stated he moved to Lunenburg because he wanted to farm. Agritourism can generate a lot of money if you advertise properly. Snow mentioned if you "Google" Lunenburg farms, only three come up. Suggestion made to look at available building space for a collective. Another suggestion was made to host a quarterly Farmer to Table dinner at the TC Passions cafeteria.

Mr. Ebersole asked what is going on with the large farms that have their own farm stands versus the smaller ones who come to the market. Mendoza stated he spoke to Jerry Lanni (Lanni Orchards) and it was not economically viable for him to pay someone to set up/breakdown and participate at the market. A farmer with a smaller farm and a day job would welcome having a Farmer's Market venue to sell at. Stillman's Dairy has their own store and everyone knows where they are.

Ms. Bowen mentioned she went into a local business and saw maple syrup not from Lunenburg being sold when there are a couple of townspeople who sell it and it is possibly due to there not being a connection

between the local business and the maple syrup producer. She is hoping the newly formed business association could look at creating that type of connection. Question was asked if anyone had approached Stillman's Dairy to ask them to sell other farms' products because it would draw more people to them.

Mr. Ebersole asked if there was an inventory of all the farms, as well as employees and revenue made as well as what is locally sourced. This could build the case for a grant application.

Ms. Bowen stated she is trying to make a list of what products are available. She wondered whether the Agricultural Commission was authorized to ask personal questions such as income from these farmers. There are a lot of market gardeners and people who produce value added agricultural products in town too.

Mr. Toale asked everyone to think about who is "we?" What is the group we are focusing on, an Economic Development Committee or some smaller group? Ms. Bertram believed appointing an Economic Development Committee would be a starting point and could work with groups such as the Planning Board and Agricultural Commission. She suggested a Planning Board member be a part of that committee. Even though they have disbanded, the Building Reuse Committee is linked to economic development because having municipal space available to enhance existing farms and businesses is key. Marketing in partnership with the Town is key.

Mr. McQuaid stated the people who are actually selling their goods should form that coop. The Town does not have time or personnel who can do it. Ms. Bertram stated she agreed but a town committee needs to do the outreach and work with those groups.

Mr. Burney stated he saw three high level takeaways that would be action items; first establishing the Economic Development Committee. They can say we have these buildings, is there an economic purpose for them? They would identify and make recommendations. The second is to see if there is interest in forming the coop? It appears the Agricultural Commission is best suited to start that conversation with the farmers, maybe in conjunction with the Economic Development Committee. What location is going to make the most sense for them? Lastly, how are we going to define Agritourism? Maybe that could be in conjunction with this coop. What does it mean and how do we want to start it? Who are the participants? Again this should be a joint conversation with the Economic Development Committee and the Agricultural Commission.

Mr. Toale stated Town Manager Lemieux had suggested what an Economic Development Committee might look like; one member from Agricultural Committee, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Open Space Committee, Board of Selectmen and two citizens; totaling seven members.

He asked is that what we should attack, what we talked about tonight or are we looking for a more granular subcommittee to work this. Secondly, does this sound like the right composition?

Ms. Bertram thought it was a good start. She agreed with Mr. Burney that it is key that group works with the Agricultural Commission.

Mr. Ebersole liked the concept but the Economic Development Committee (EDC) will need to have a charge and the EDC is really bigger as far as lots of things. We have been focusing on agriculture topics and he did not want it to get lost within the bigger picture. Maybe there should be another subcommittee that works with that group.

Mr. Allison noted M.G.L. changes that promote farming. Large farms have basically gone away and people are learning how to do more with less. We need to embrace our right to farm status and lessen our farm size requirement and encourage citizens to endorse the public market.

Mr. Toale stated he would like to place "Discussion of Creation of an Economic Development Committee" on a Board of Selectmen agenda. They will need a charge. We will invite all of you to that meeting and we'll take that as a next step. He asked for public comment on this topic.

Mr. Mendoza stated he was brought here as a three year old and he's still here. Mr. Snow came here for a reason. It's important that this coop supports itself and that it makes money for everyone involved. He was concerned about the bigger but not big enough parcels of open space in town and wanted to support opportunities for small farms. Many farmers can't sell to big food chains due to their demands for so much produce per week. Lunenburg should try to make it commercially viable for these farmers. The Town should consider it an investment. A resident on Lancaster Road stated he was happy to see this group making Lunenburg a destination place. The Planning Board and Agricultural Commission adjourned their meetings.

1) To enter Executive Session, under M.G.L c. 30 §21, Reason #2; To discuss contract negotiations with non-union personnel, if any open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining position and the Chair declares so. (Town Manager contract) and
2) To enter Executive Session under M.G.L c. 30 §21, Reason #3; To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigating position and the Chair declares so (Public Employees Committee Negotiations for Health Insurance Changes) and not to return to open session

Vote: Mr. McQuaid- aye, Mr. Ebersole- aye, Ms. Bertram- aye, Ms. Luck- aye, Mr. Toale – aye

Ms. Bertram will be recusing herself from the session concerning Public Employees Health Insurance Changes.

The public session adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

*****Executive Session Minutes are Separate*****

Respectfully submitted,



Elaine M. Peterson

Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

Community Farmer's Market's first-ever Poopapalooza event.

SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE/JOHN LOVE

Cleaning up at Poopapalooza

Residents get their fill of manure in Lunenburg

By Amanda Burke
aburke@sentinelenterprise.com

LUNENBURG — One hour into Saturday's inaugural "Poopa-palooza," Elizabeth Boudreau hauled two 5-gallon buckets of premium alpaca manure into her pickup truck. "Come on, it's poop! Who doesn't want poop in the garden?" she said. "And now I know where to go for the poop that I want."

The poop that she wanted came from 10 long-necked animals in the pen a few feet away at In the Meadow Farm on Page Street, one of five farms that participated Saturday in the first annual Poopa-palooza fundraiser to benefit the Agricultural Commission.

Widely known for its hypoallergenic fleece, alpacas also produce nitrogen-rich manure ideal for spreading on vegetable gardens, said farm owner Jackie Chabot. Because the animals have several stomachs to break down food, its manure is



Heather Bowen, manager of the Lunenburg Community Farmer's Market, shows a map of the participating farms in Saturday's Poopapalooza to Lunenburg resident Bob Cutting.

practically odorless and doesn't need to be composted before use.

"You can take it right from the animal and you're good to go," said Chabot as she shoveled alpaca "beans" resembling rocky dirt mixed with twigs into a 5-gallon bucket.

Director of the Lunenburg Com-

munity Farmers' Market, Heather Bowed, said at 9 a.m., an hour into Poopapalooza, that 10 people had come to her own H & M Farm to pick up a bucket donated by Ambu-choon Hardware and a map.

Please see **POOP/6**

Please see **HICKORY HILLS/6**

Shortage in Narcan funds raises alarm

By Robert Mills
rmills@lowellsun.com

LOWELL — A state trust fund that enables police and firefighters to obtain the overdose-reversing drug Narcan at discounted rates has run out of

cash, prompting concerns that first responders could soon have to shell out more money to save lives.

Attorney General Maura Healey is making an additional donation to the fund, but also asking the Legislature, businesses and anyone else who wants to contribute to consider doing so.

The Municipal Naloxone Bulk Purchasing Trust Fund was established in 2015, and funded with \$100,000 from the Legislature and

Please see **NARCAN/5**

LOCAL



Something fishy

Fitchburg High School students and staff members recently had the chance to see some exotic sea creatures up-close and taste test a few fish recipes as well

ON THE WEB

TODAY'S QUESTION

Which game show would you like to appear on?

- Wheel of Fortune
 - Jeopardy!
 - Family Feud
 - Price Is Right
 - Joker's Wild
- Vote at sentinelenterprise.com

CONNECT WITH US

W/7/10

Tragedy in Canada

A bus carrying a junior hockey team was hit by a truck Friday, killing 15 and injuring 14 others, including players and team personnel. **Page 9**

TODAY'S WEATHER

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digitalfirst

A  Medialias Group PUBLICATION

ilar situation: A developer wanted to buy land in the neighborhood, and residents wanted to protect the local watershed. The newly-acquired land con-

really important to me as a lake conservationist, and it was a really good feeling to know that it was as important to everyone else."

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Lunenburg hosts Poopapalooza

POOP/From Page 1

The map displayed the five farms that gave away animal poop Saturday morning. Bowen said Poopapalooza exposed residents to some of the town's smaller farms where they could introduce themselves to the farmers and hopefully lay the groundwork for a reliable supply of manure for their gardens.

"Besides just getting it today, they can go back and have a relationship with the farmer," she said.

Cars lined up outside Pine Fall Farm on Elmwood Road, but most of them weren't there for the poop. Students arrived for horseback riding lessons at the sprawling academy and boarding stable.

The stable's 27 horses produce no shortage of manure, said owner Tammy Callahan. Mixed with sand, it becomes loam ideal for agricultural crops and home gardens.

Her husband, software engineer and occasional farm hand Bill Cassidy, said the cold of the early-spring day may have kept some people away.

He hoped more people would come out as the weather warmed to learn about the barn and Lunenburg's farming tradition.

"It's good exposure for the barn, it gets people out to see what we're all about," he said.



Gerard Chabot scoops alpaca manure during Saturday's Poopapalooza.

SENTINEL & ENTERPRISE/JOHN LOVE

COMMUNITY Voices

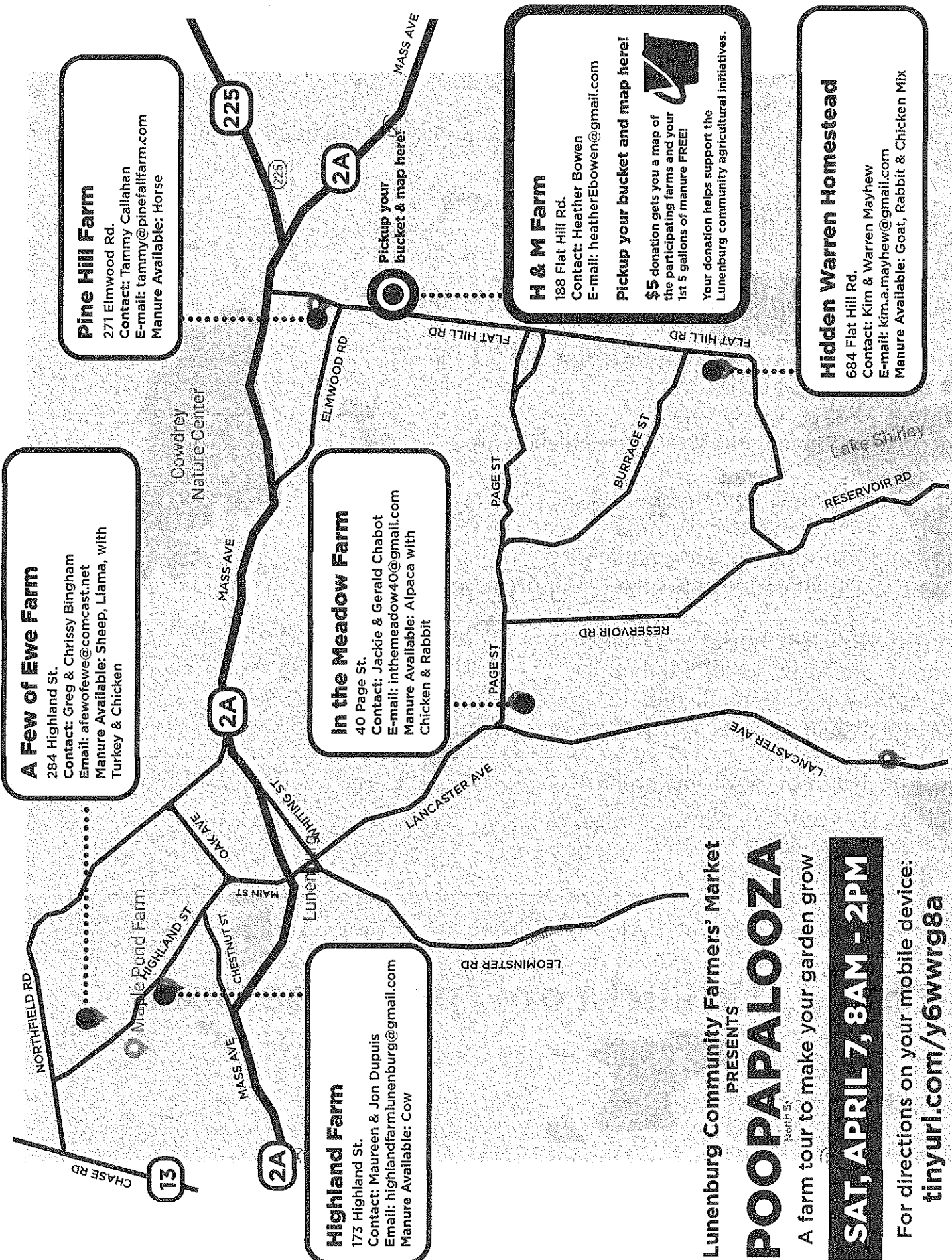
Supports and resources for those who have experienced crime

April 10, 2018, 4-7pm

Free, Family-Friendly Event

Leominster City Hall, 25 West Street

Info@LUK.org or 800-579-0000



A Few of Ewe Farm

284 Highland St.
Contact: Greg & Chrissy Bingham
Email: afewofewe@comcast.net
Manure Available: Sheep, Llama, with Turkey & Chicken

Pine Hill Farm

271 Elmwood Rd.
Contact: Tammy Callahan
E-mail: tammy@pinehillfarm.com
Manure Available: Horse

In the Meadow Farm

40 Page St.
Contact: Jackie & Gerald Chabot
E-mail: inthemedow40@gmail.com
Manure Available: Alpaca with Chicken & Rabbit

H & M Farm

188 Flat Hill Rd.
Contact: Heather Bowen
E-mail: heatherEBowen@gmail.com

Pickup your bucket and map here!

\$5 donation gets you a map of the participating farms and your 1st 5 gallons of manure FREE!

Your donation helps support the Lunenburg community agricultural initiatives.

Hidden Warren Homestead

684 Flat Hill Rd.
Contact: Kim & Warren Mayhew
E-mail: kim.a.mayhew@gmail.com
Manure Available: Goat, Rabbit & Chicken Mix

Highland Farm

173 Highland St.
Contact: Maureen & Jon Dupuis
Email: highlandfarmlunenburg@gmail.com
Manure Available: Cow

Lunenburg Community Farmers' Market
PRESENTS

POOPAPALOOZA

A farm tour to make your garden grow

SAT, APRIL 7, 8AM - 2PM

For directions on your mobile device:
tinyurl.com/y6wwrg8a

Poopapalooza Participating Farms 2018

H&M Farm, 188 Flat Hill Rd

contact: Heather Bowen

Start HERE! \$5.00 Donation gets you a 5-gallon bucket to fill at one of the area farms below.

A Few of Ewe Farm, 284 Highland St

contact: Greg & Chrissy Bigham

afewofewe@comcast.net

manure available: sheep, llama, with turkey & chicken

Hidden Warren Homestead, Flat Hill Rd

kim.a.mayhew@gmail.com

contact: Kim & Warren Mayhew

manure available: goat & rabbit & chicken mix

Highland Farm, 173 Highland St

contact: Maureen & Jon Dupuis

highlandfarmlunenburg@gmail.com

manure available: multiple mixed, inquire at farm

In the Meadow Farm, 40 Page St

contact: Jackie & Gerald Chabot

inthemeadow40@gmail.com

manure available: alpaca with chicken & rabbit

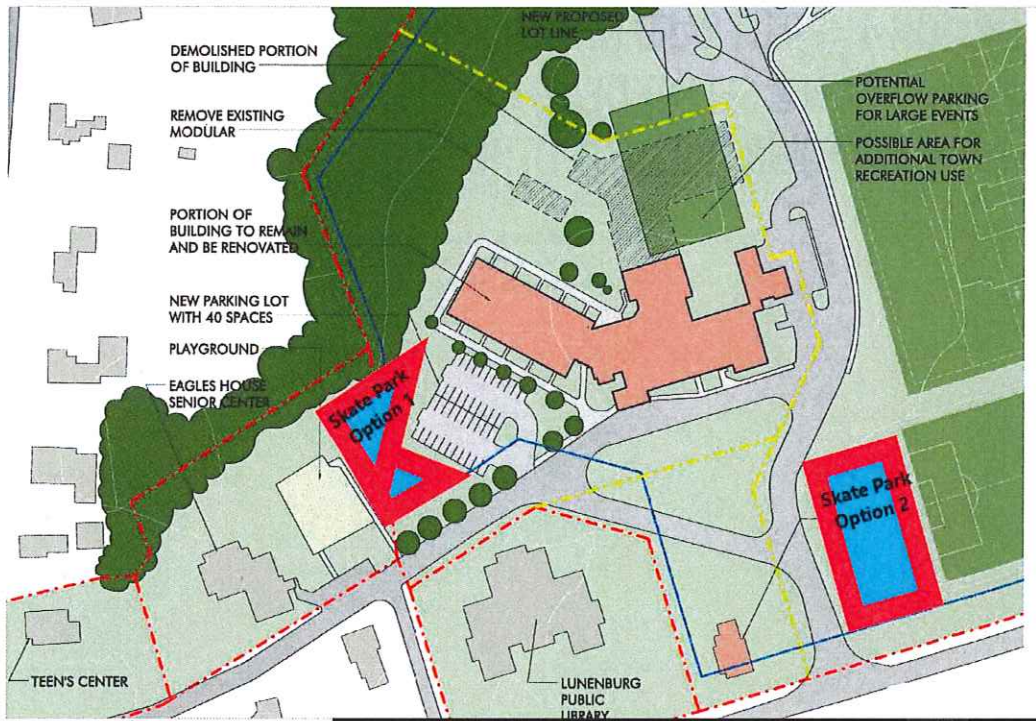
Pine Fall Farm, 271 Elmwood Rd

contact: Tammy Callahan

tammy@pinefallfarm.com

manure available: horse

<https://tinyurl.com/poopapalooza>





Helping to keep Massachusetts' food supply safe and secure

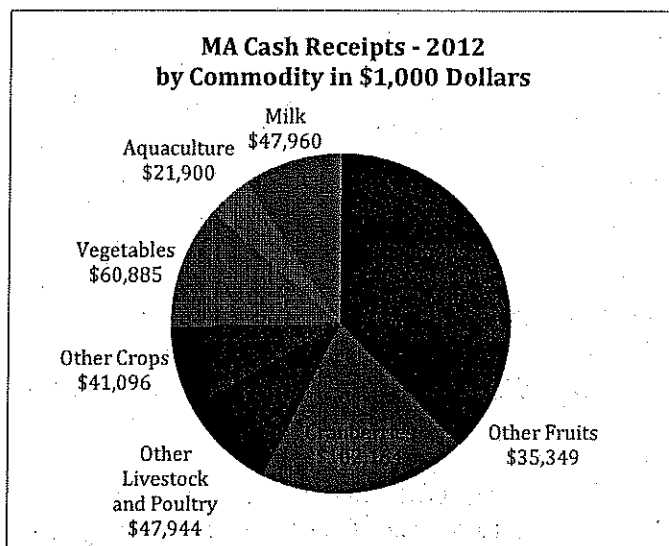
Working to keep Massachusetts agriculture economically and environmentally sound

www.mass.gov/agr

Industry Trends for Massachusetts Top Agricultural Products

The **greenhouse and nursery industry** is made up of approximately *1,000 commercial businesses* and accounts for approximately *28% of the state's agricultural output* at an annual value of *\$158 million*. Recent years have seen hardship primarily due to *competition and marketplace uncertainty*. Competition has been a result of the expansion of garden centers at "big-name" national home improvement stores, which benefit from economies of scale and competitive pricing, while market uncertainty has been driven by the inherent link to the housing market, now on the rebound from the 2008 housing market downturn.

With an annual market value of *\$102 million*, making up *20% of the state's agricultural output*, the **cranberry industry** is the second largest agricultural sector in the state and ranks **2nd nationally** in cranberry production.



There are approximately *400 growers* in the state, 70% of which are *small family farms* with less than 20 acres of bogs. Concern continues over *market volatility* as the result of extreme oversupply due to increased domestic and international production, met with stagnant demand, causing prices to often fall far below the cost of production.

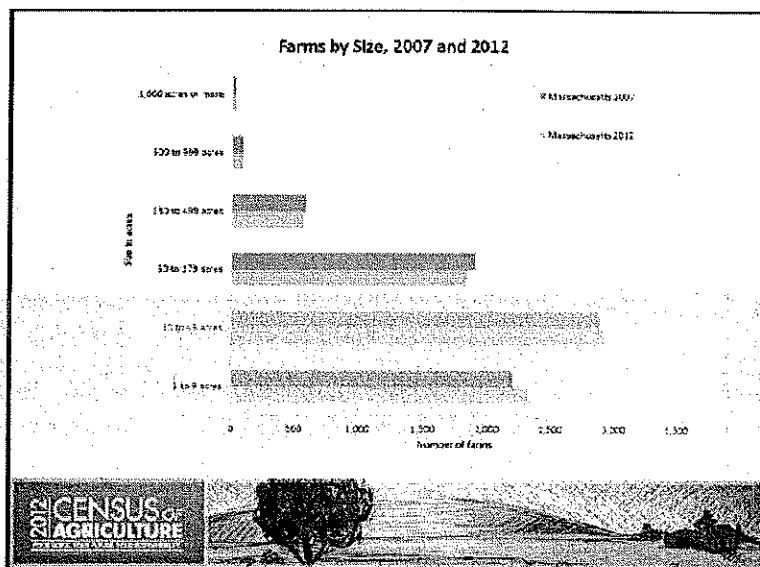
The **produce sector** has an annual market value of *\$96 million* and nearly *1,600 producers*, 40% growing vegetables and 60% growing fruit. Growers are preparing for the requirements and implications of the Food Safety Modernization Act.

The **dairy industry** is a small but critical part of the state's agricultural economy, with a market value of *\$48 million*. *155 dairy farms remain*, the majority of which belong to

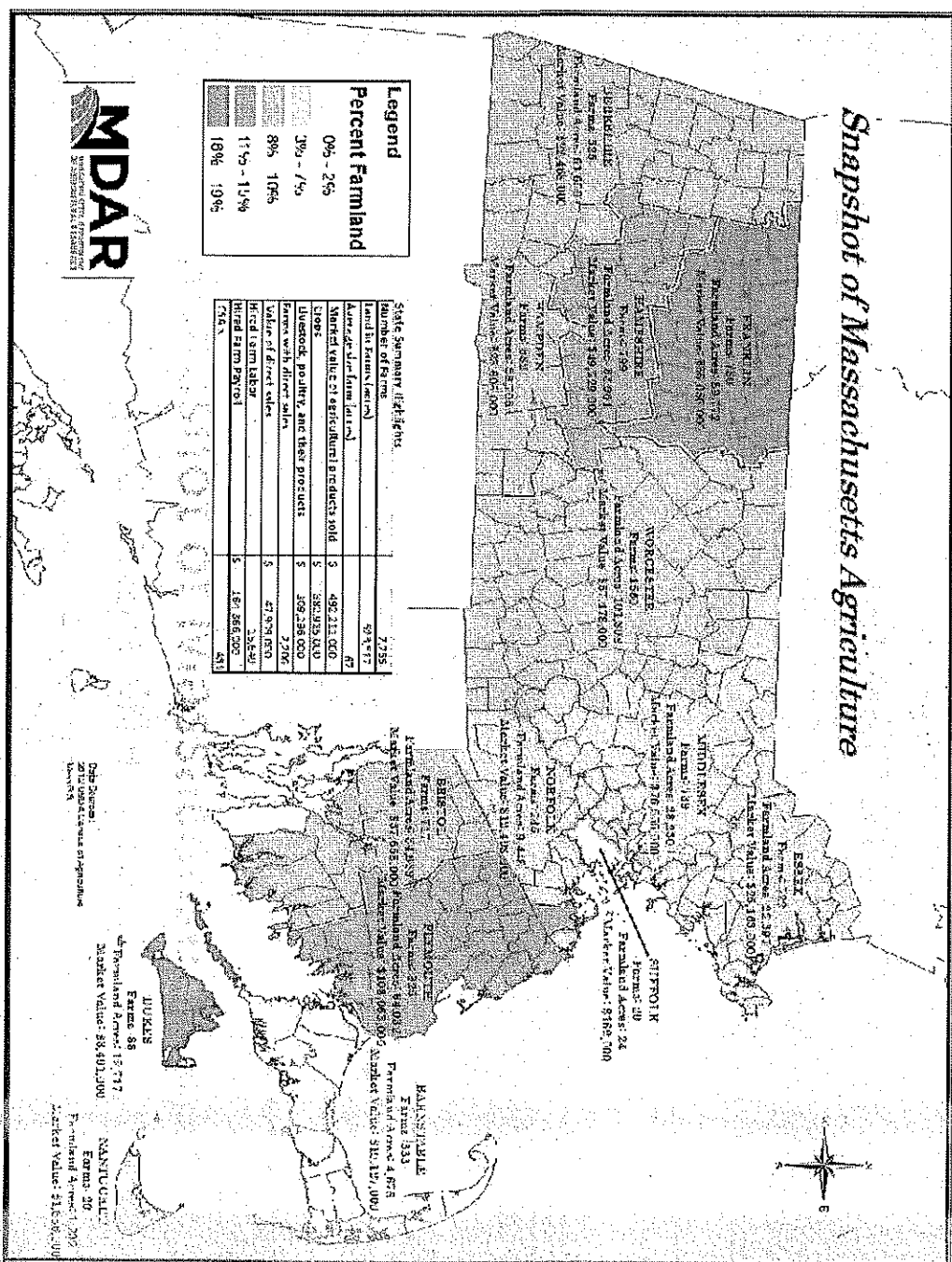
cooperatives, 16 of which produce, process, and market their own milk. Difficulty continues over managing *fluctuating federally set milk prices*, paired with the high cost of production characteristic of the state.

With an annual market value of *\$48 million*, the **livestock and poultry sector** has seen a *large increase in demand* for local meats and poultry. Growers have access to the Boston market where consumers are willing to pay a premium for local products. However, concern continues over whether the state's producers can meet the increasing momentum and demand for these products due to the *limited number of slaughter and processing facilities*.

The **aquaculture industry** is responsible for an annual market value of nearly *\$22 million*. With the exception of a few major finfish producers, the majority of the state's aquaculture is comprised of approximately *300 shellfish farmers* producing primarily oysters and quahogs on *1,000 acres* of intertidal and sub-tidal land. In recent years, harvest areas have faced challenges over managing outbreaks of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, a bacteria that can cause gastrointestinal disease, and have adopted practices to help minimize the risk of contamination and illness.



Snapshot of Massachusetts Agriculture





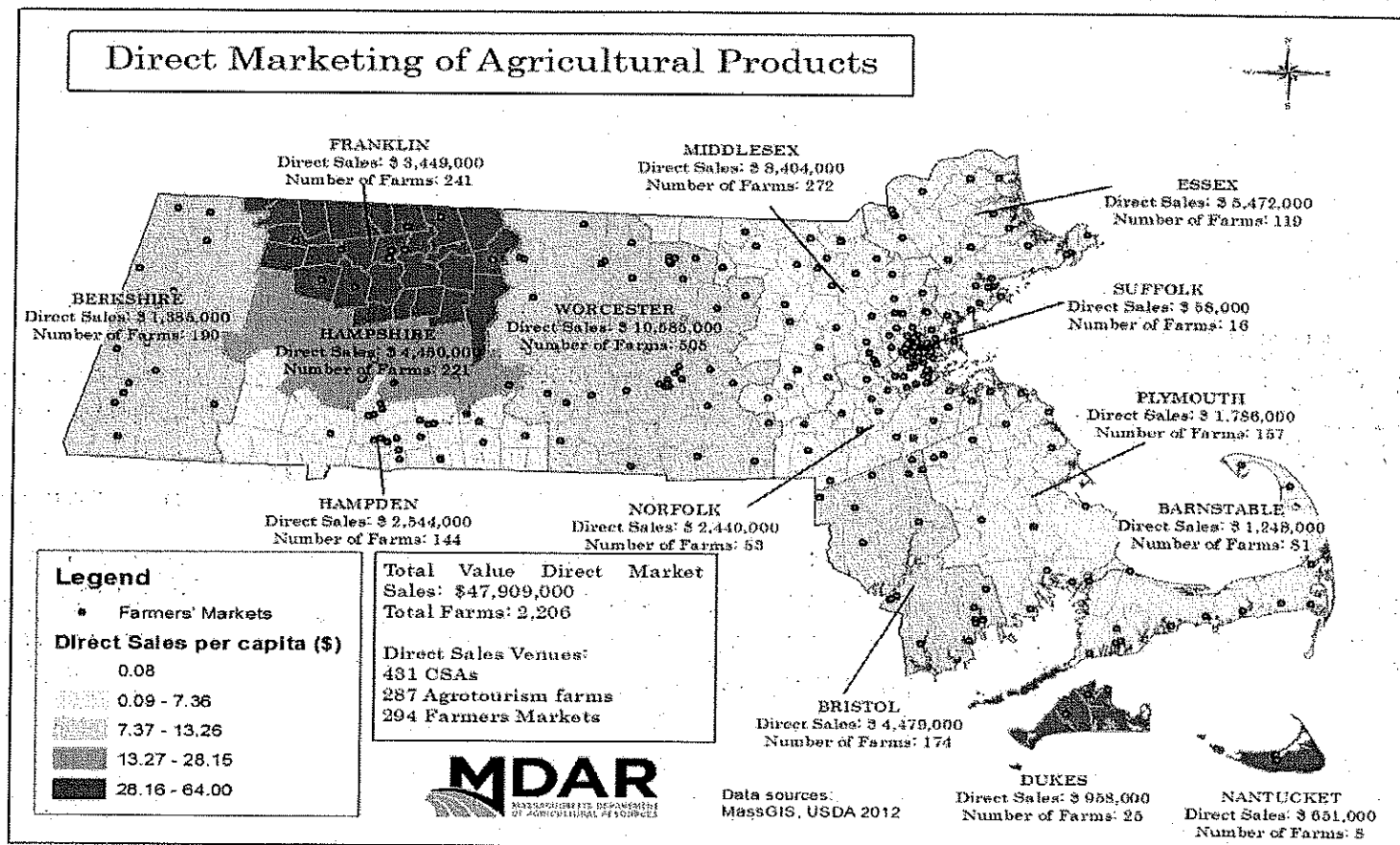
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Driving Forces

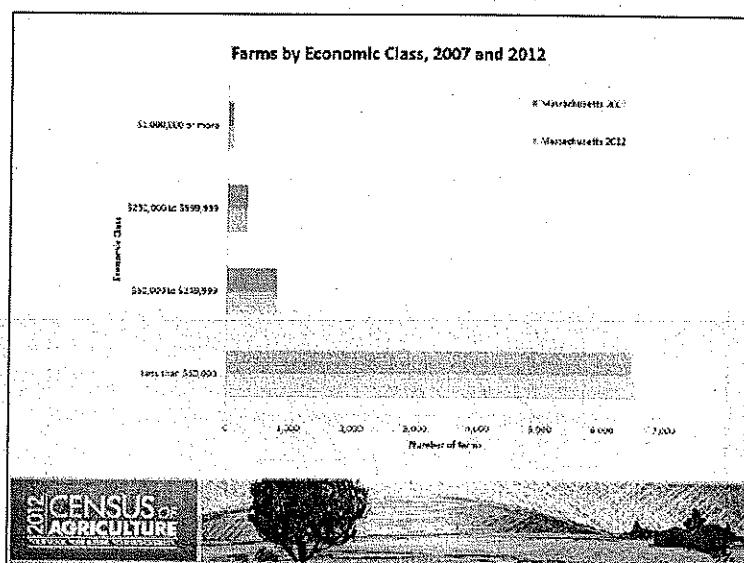
Massachusetts is the 3rd most densely populated state in the country and among the top three states for farmland value at \$12,000 per acre. In addition, factors such as a short growing season and high national competition make farming in Massachusetts a unique and challenging occupation. As a result, Massachusetts farmers have emerged as agricultural entrepreneurs, with many taking advantage of small scale and diversified farming to meet upcoming trends and demands. In 2014, the trend towards increasing numbers of smaller farms continued.



At nearly \$48 million, the state ranks 5th in the nation for direct market sales and 3rd in the nation for direct market sales per operation. Direct market sales account for 10% of the state's total sales of agricultural products.

Massachusetts ranks 6th in the nation for number of farms with Community Supported Agriculture (CSA); a 95% increase since 2007. Over this same time period the state saw growth in agri-tourism sales of 127%.

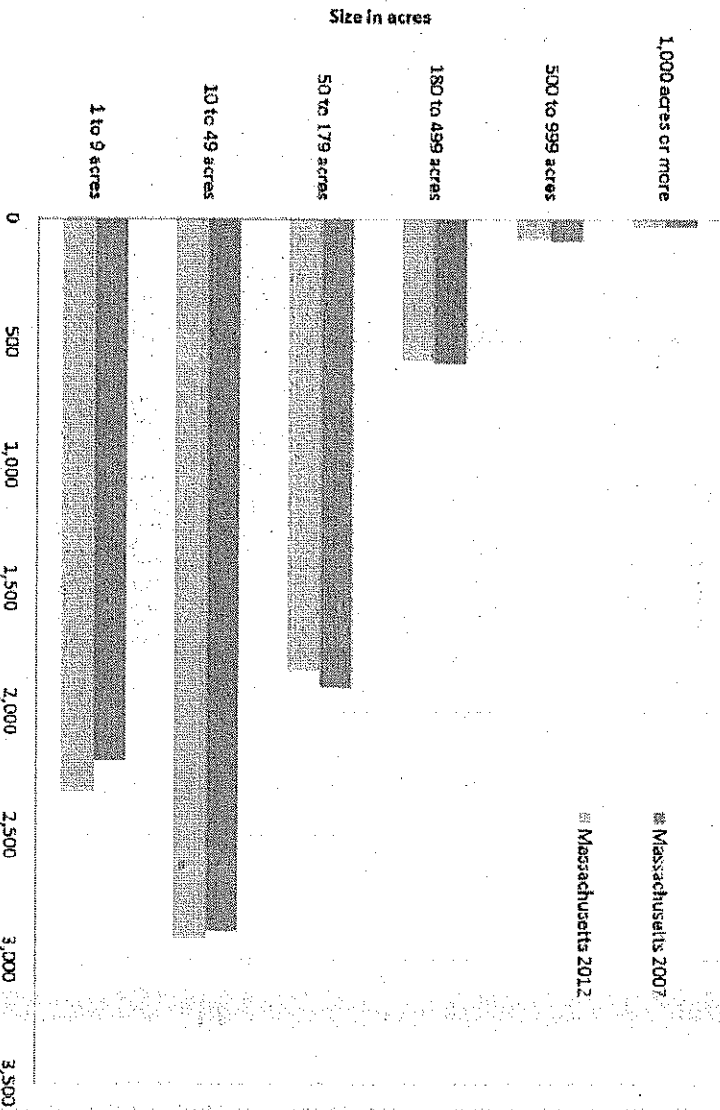
80% of Massachusetts farms are family owned. 95% fit the category of "small farms" according to the USDA definition of sales below \$250,000.



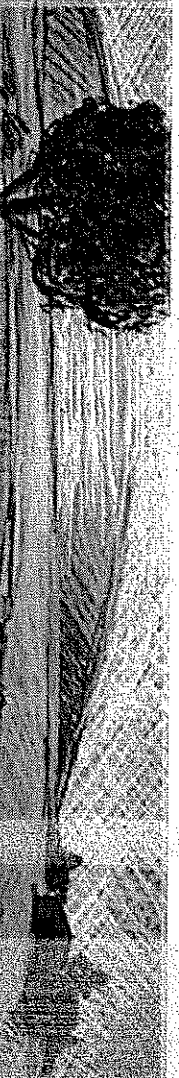


Census Statistics: Farm Size

Farms by Size, 2007 and 2012



2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE
YOUR VOICE. YOUR FUTURE. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.



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The **Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources** (MDAR) mission is to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance, Agricultural Markets, Animal Health, and Crop and Pest Services – MDAR strives to support, regulate and enhance the rich diversity of the Commonwealth's agricultural community, to promote economically and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture's role in energy conservation and production.

Key Department Initiatives

Agricultural Energy Grant Program (Ag-Energy) - provides reimbursement of up to \$20,000 and funds projects pertaining to energy efficiency and renewable initiatives.

Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP) - supports agricultural operations looking to install conservation practices that prevent direct impacts on water quality, ensure efficient use of water, and address impacts on air quality. Participants are reimbursed up to \$25,000 for the cost of materials and labor necessary for the installation of the approved practice.

Agricultural Food Safety Improvement Program (AFSIP) – provides funding for agricultural operations looking to upgrade their food safety measures, thereby allowing them to maintain or increase their competitive market access while reducing food safety risks. Participants are reimbursed up to \$20,000 or 75% of the total project costs.

Agricultural Preservation Program (APR) - preserves and protects agricultural land, including state designated prime farmland soils, from being developed into non-agricultural operations. Participants are paid the agricultural value of the land in exchange for a permanent covenant.

Commonwealth Quality Program (CQP) - assists members in improving their farm operations in order to maintain and improve market access. The CQP seal helps consumers, buyers, and business partners identify products produced and harvested in Massachusetts. Members must incorporate food safety practices and Best Management Practices (BMPs) that promote environmental sustainability

and stewardship. Currently, CQP supports the produce, forestry, lobster, aquaculture, dairy, and maple sectors.

Massachusetts Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) - provides elders, women, and children in the Federal Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), with coupons redeemable at farmers' markets. Participation benefits farmers with additional sales opportunities.

Farm Viability Program - improves the economic viability of participating farms through the development and implementation of farm viability plans. Participants receive environmental, technical, and business planning assistance to expand and upgrade their existing operations.

Massachusetts Grown & Fresher – a logo program for consumers to identify and purchase local Massachusetts grown farm products, specialty foods, and agri-tourism as well as culinary tourism activities.

Matching Enterprise Grants for Agriculture Program (MEGA) - offers individual business planning and technical assistance to support the special needs of beginning farmers. Financial assistance is available for capital needed to implement strategies recommended through the planning process.

Urban Agriculture – provides funding to address challenges facing urban farmers and to support municipalities with technical assistance with the development of zoning ordinances, public education, and land assessments.

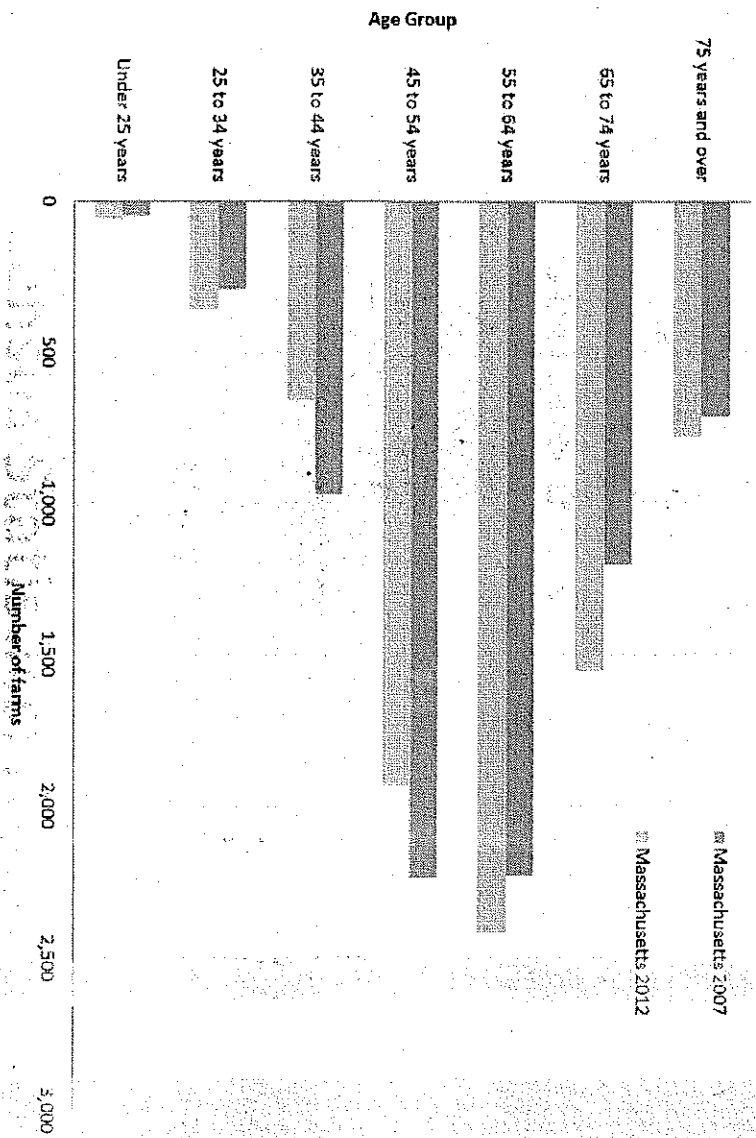
For more information on all of MDAR's programs, please visit our website

www.mass.gov/agr

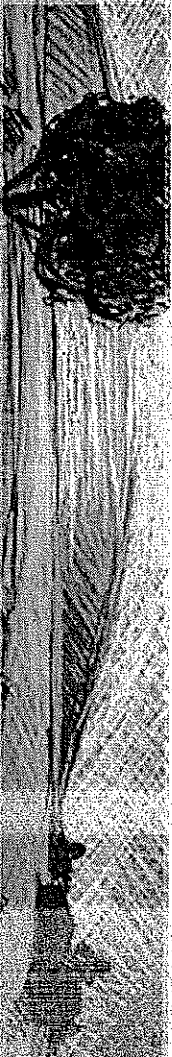
Topics discussed here will be covered in greater detail throughout the various presentations of the NAAMO conference.

Census Statistics: Age of Operator

Principal Operators by Age Group, 2007 and 2012



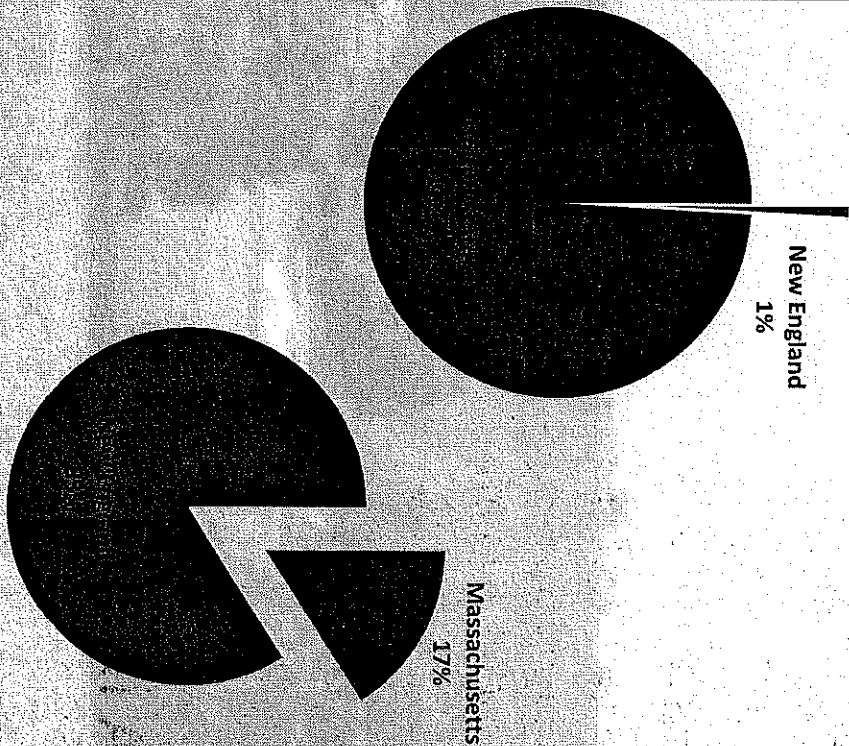
2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE
TO AVOID FURTHER YOUR RESPONSIBILITY





Perspective: U.S. National Agricultural Production

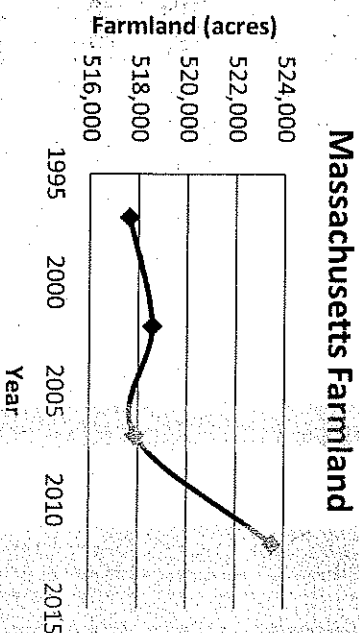
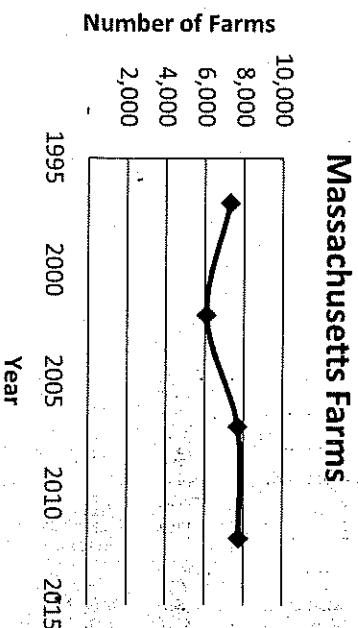
Annual Agricultural Value



- Total Agricultural Value
\$395 Billion
- New England Total Value
\$2.8 Billion
- Massachusetts Total Value
\$492 Million

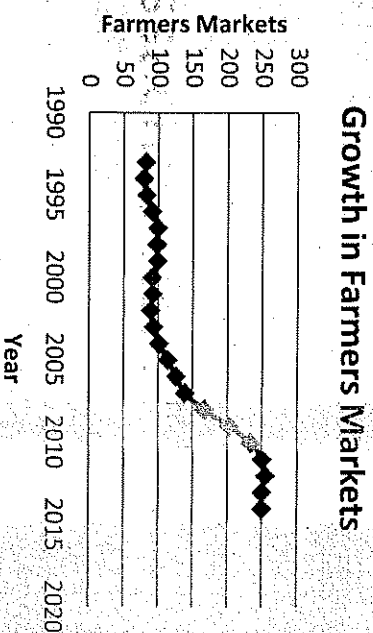
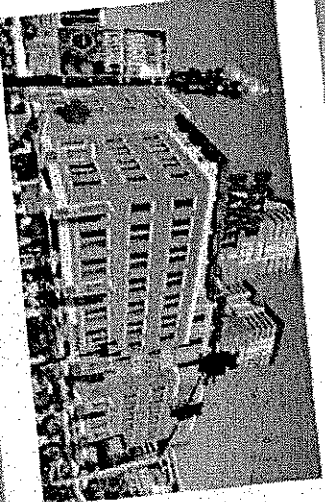
Trends in Massachusetts Agriculture

Increasing numbers of farms



Consumer demand for locally produced foods

- Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs)
- Farm Stands
- Farmers Markets
- Farm to School Programs
- Boston Public Market





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MDAR Perspective: MA Agriculture

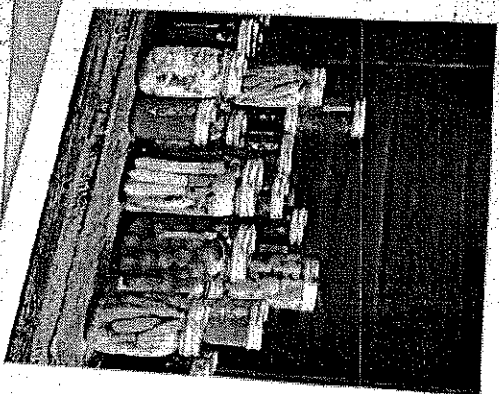
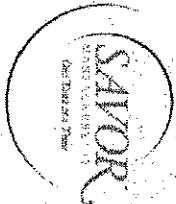
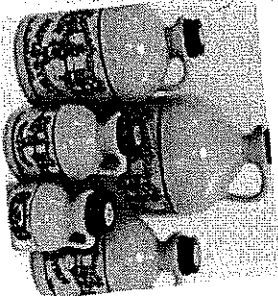
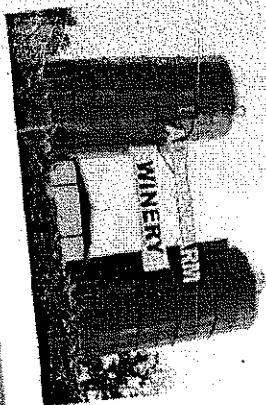
- Annual market value \$492 million
- 7,755 farms
- Over 523,000 acres
- Average farm
 - 68 acres
 - \$64,000 annually
- Agricultural Processing and agricultural support industries add value and jobs to state's economy

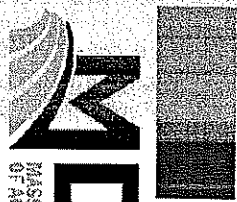


New Product Opportunities for Farmers

Farmers are moving from commodities to selling services and value added products --
diversification/differentiation is key:

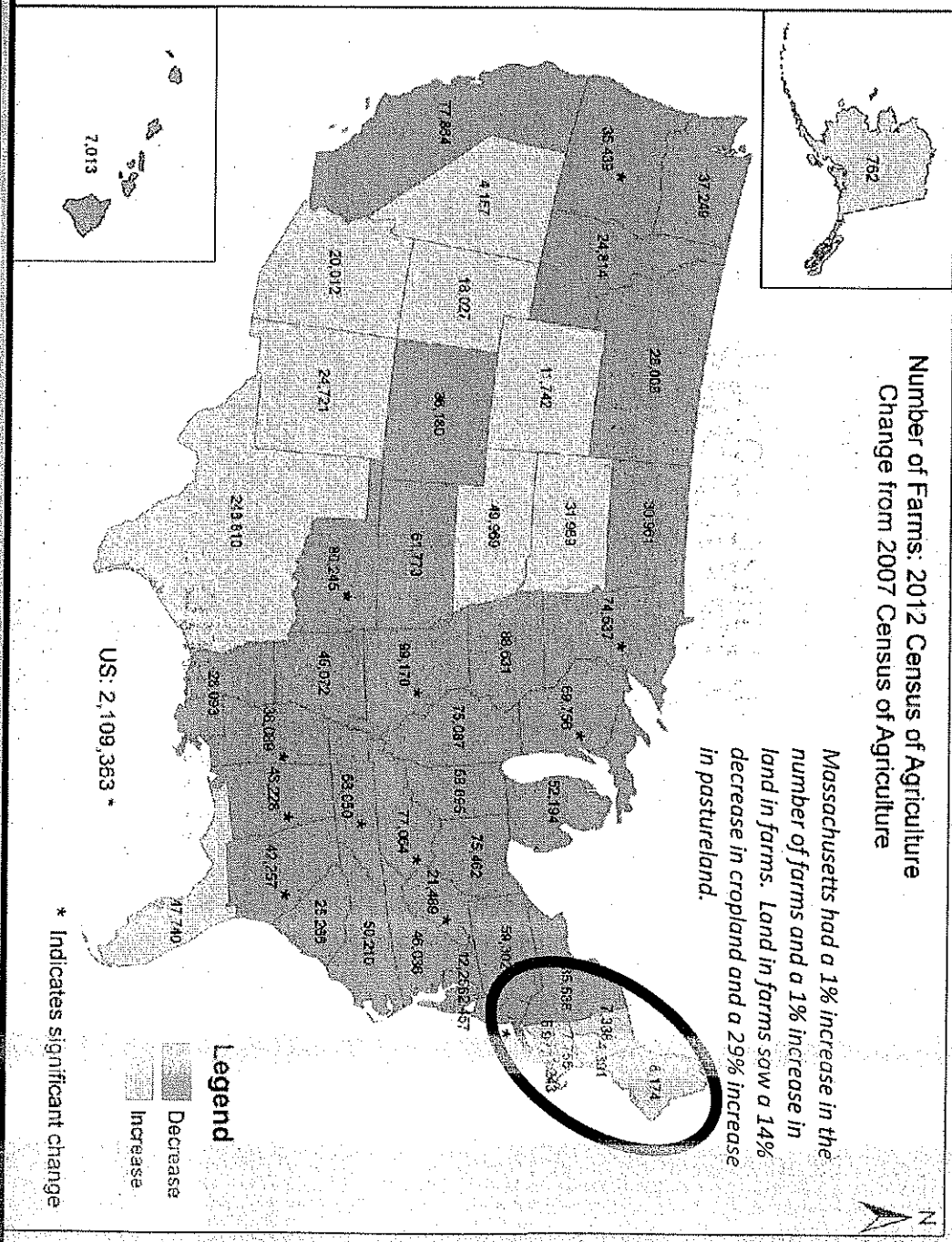
Agri-tourism, Culinary Tourism, Value Added products

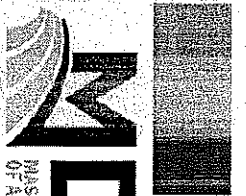




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National Trends in Agriculture





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MDAR Greenhouse and Nursery

Market value of \$144,188,000

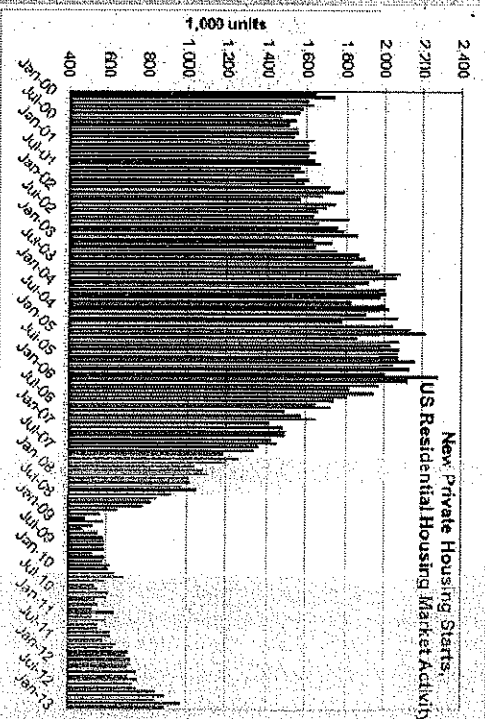
31% of MA agricultural output

Over 1,000 commercial greenhouse and nursery operations

- Potted plants
- Perennials
- Bedding plants
- Cut flowers
- Vegetables & herbs
- Trees

Biggest Concerns:

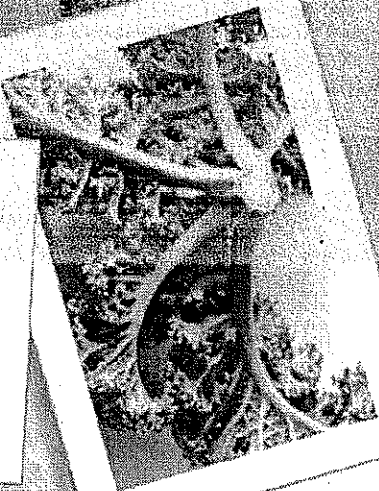
- Competition (e.g. Home Depot, Lowes)
- Housing
- Marketplace uncertainty





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Fruits and Vegetables



Market value of \$103,354,000

1,634 Total Produce Farms

- 1,428 Vegetable farms
- 206 Fruit farms (excludes berry growers)

Biggest concern: Food Safety Modernization Act

- Economic Analysis based on FDA methodology:
 - 166 farms covered by the rule
 - Remainder falls under exemptions



Market value of \$44,250,000
9% of MA agricultural output

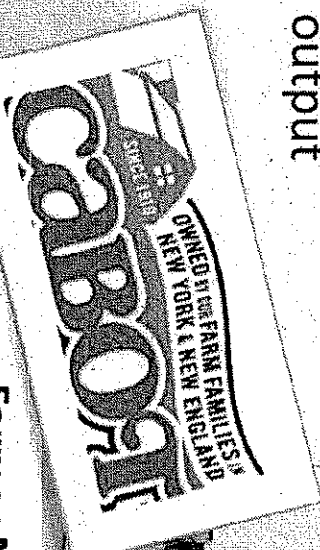
147 dairy farms
9 producer dealers
13,000 milk cows

Value added: Cheese guild

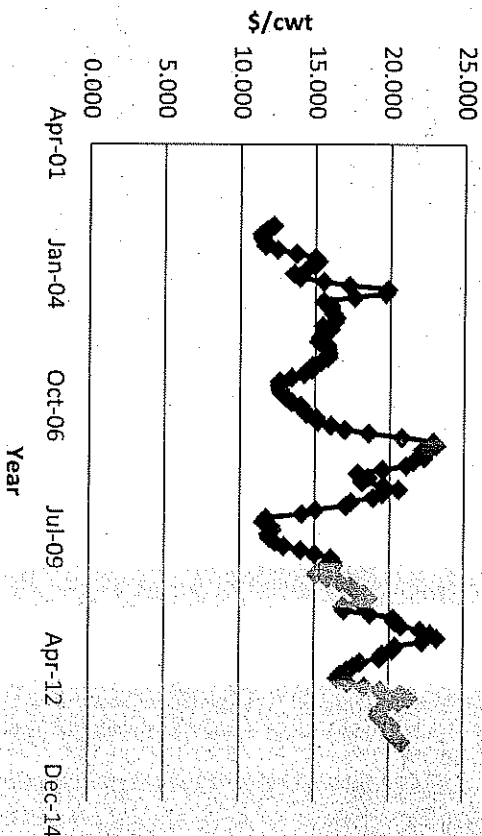
Dairy Tax Credit

Biggest Concerns:

- Fluctuating FMMO prices
- COP > FMMO price



Farmer Milk Prices



Livestock and Poultry



Livestock market value of \$14,523,000

• Over 2,000 farms

Poultry market value of \$11,748,000

• Over 1,200 farms

• Value-added

• Increasing demand

• People willing to pay a premium

Biggest concerns:

• Demand > supply

• Need for additional processing and slaughterhouse facilities