

# **RIGHT TO FARM BY-LAW**

Littleton Massachusetts

## Section 1 Legislative Purpose and Intent

The purpose and intent of this By-law is to state with emphasis the Right to Farm accorded to all citizens of the Commonwealth under Article 97 of the Constitution, and all state statutes and regulations there under including but not limited to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 3, Paragraph 1: Chapter 90, Section 9, Chapter 111, Section 125A and Chapter 128 Section 1A. We the citizens of Littleton restate and republish these rights pursuant to the town's authority conferred by Article 89 of the Articles of Amendment of the Massachusetts Constitution ("Home Rule Amendment")

This General By-law encourages the pursuit of agriculture, promotes agriculture-based economic opportunities, and protects farmlands within the Town of Littleton by allowing agricultural uses and related activities to function with minimal conflict with abutters and Town agencies. This By-law shall apply to all jurisdictional areas within the Town.

## Section 2 Definitions

The word "farm" shall include any parcel or contiguous parcels of land, or water bodies used for the primary purpose of commercial agriculture, or accessory thereto.

The words "farming" or "agriculture" or their derivatives shall include, but not be limed to the following:

- farming in all its branches and cultivation and tillage of the soil;
- dairying;
- production, cultivation, growing, and harvesting of any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural, viticultural, or horticultural commodities;
- growing and harvesting of forest products upon forest land, and any other forestry of lumbering operations;
- raising of livestock including horses;
- keeping of horses as a commercial enterprise;
- keeping and raising of poultry, swine, cattle, ratites (such as emus, ostriches and rheas) and camelids (such as llamas and camels), and other domesticated animals for food and other agricultural purposes, including bees and furbearing animals.

"Farming" shall encompass activities including, but not limited to the following:

- operation and transportation of slow-moving farm equipment over roads within the Town;
- control of pests, including, but not limited to, insects, weeds, predators and disease organism of plants and animals;
- application of manure, fertilizers and pesticides;
- conducting agriculture-related educational and farm-based recreational activities, including agri-toursim, provided that the activities are related to marketing the agricultural output or services of the farm;

-processing and packaging of the agricultural output of the farm and the operation of a farmer's market or farm stand including signage thereto; maintenance, repair or storage of seasonal equipment, or apparatus owned or leased by the farm owner or manager used expressly for the purpose of propagation, processing, management, or sale of the agricultural products; and  
-on-farm relocation of earth and the clearing of ground for farming operations.

### Section 3 Right to Farm Declaration

The Right to Farm is hereby recognized to exist within the Town of Littleton. The above-described agricultural activities may occur on holidays, weekdays, and weekends by night or day and shall include the attendant incidental noise, odors, dust and fumes associated with normally accepted agricultural practices. Moreover, nothing in this Right To Farm By-law shall be deemed as acquiring any interest in land, or as imposing any land use regulation, which is properly the subject of state statute, regulation, or local zoning law.

### Section 4 Public Notification

The Town shall use available media as appropriate to notify and educate the public regarding its commitment to encourage

1. the pursuit of agriculture,
2. the promotion of agriculture-based economic opportunities and
3. protection of farmlands within the Town of Littleton by allowing agricultural uses and related activities to function with minimal conflict with abutters and Town agencies.

Should the Town establish an Agricultural Commission, this shall be one of its ongoing tasks.

The Board of Health, except in cases of imminent danger or public health risk, may forward a copy of the grievance to the Agricultural Commission or its agent, which shall review and facilitate the resolution of the grievance, and report its recommendations to the Board of Health within an agreed upon time frame.

### Section 6. Severability Clause

If any part of this By-law is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the remainder of this By-law. The Town of Littleton hereby declares the provisions of this By-law to be severable, or to take any other action in relation thereto.