



Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions: Making a Difference in Our Communities



Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions' Conference

January 23-24, 2009

The Crowne Plaza, 10 Lincoln Square, Worcester, MA 01608

***** Conference Registration Packet*****

Register now to attend the first statewide Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions' Conference!

AGENDA (please visit www.massagcom.org/conference for updates)

Friday, January 23, 2009

- 7:00 am – 5:00 pm Registration
 7:00 am – 8:30 am Refreshments
 8:30 am – 9:15 am Opening Remarks: Doug Petersen, Commissioner, MA Department of Agricultural Resources
 9:45 am – 12:15 pm Workshops
- A1. Public Relations: Raising the Visibility of Agriculture in the Community
 - A2. Inventories of Agricultural Land, Farms & Farmers at the Local Level
 - A3. Massachusetts Buy Local Programs and Campaigns
 - A4. Farmer Preservation, Farm Transfer-How to keep farmers on the land
 - A5. Laws & Regulations Affecting Agriculture: Zoning, Health, RTF, Chapter 61 & Working with Town Boards
 - A6. The Wetlands Protection Act & Agriculture; Working with Your Conservation Commission
 - A7. Funding AgCom Efforts

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm Lunch & Guest Speaker: Kathryn Ruhf, Land for Good

- 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm Workshops
- B1. Farmland Protection Tools
 - B2. Inventories of Agricultural Land, Farms & Farmers at the Local Level
 - B3. Massachusetts Buy Local Programs and Campaigns
 - B4. Farmer Preservation, Farm Transfer – How to keep farmers on the land
 - B5. Laws & Regulations Affecting Agriculture: Zoning, Health, RTF, Chapter 61 & Working with Town Boards
 - B6. The Wetlands Protection Act and Agriculture; Working with Your Conservation Commission
 - B7. Funding AgCom Efforts

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm Social

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm Dinner & Guest Speaker: Daniel Ross, Executive Director, Nuestras Raices

Saturday, January 24, 2009

- 7:00 am – 8:30 am Breakfast
 9:00 am – 12:30 pm Workshops
- C1. Farmland Protection Tools
 - C2. Future of AgComs: Should We Organize Statewide? Facilitated Discussion
 - C3. Conflict Management and Resolution
- 12:30 pm Adjourn

View Agenda, Workshops and Speakers:
www.massagcom.org/conference/

Contact: Irene Winkler, Coordinator, Pilgrim RC&D
 508 291 1317 x130 (ph)
 508 291 2368 (fx)
 irene.winkler@ma.usda.gov

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

- A1. **Public Relations: Raising the Visibility of Agriculture in the Community**
Diane BaedekerPetit, USDA, NRCS Public Affairs Officer & Tracy Anderson, Organizer, CLASH, Cape Land and Sea Harvest
 Speakers will cover how AgComs can plan and execute effective public relations campaigns, intended to raise the visibility of agriculture in the community. They will address how to determine your objectives, develop a message, and plan so that your message not only reaches your target audience, but also inspires them to take action. You will learn hands on how to develop a communications plan by working through a series of practical exercises. This session will also provide visual examples of a successful Massachusetts community event that encourages community involvement in agriculture.

-Continued on Back-

A2. & B2. Inventories of Agricultural Land, Farms & Farmers at the Local Level

Jon Jaffe and Rick Hermanot, Business Consultants, First Pioneer Farm Credit; Inventory and Assessment of Economic Impact of Agriculture on the Town of Carver June House, Rehoboth AgCom; "Bringing us Together: a Project to Develop and Strengthen the Connections to our Farms" Inventory of agriculture and agricultural needs.

Clem Clay, Trust for Public Lands; "Analyzing Agricultural Parcels for Potential APR Enrollment in Pioneer Valley Towns."

Katherine Beauchamp, Association for the Preservation of Cape Cod and Tom Stone, Woods Hole Research Center; "Agricultural Land Use on Cape Cod, Past, Present and Future."

Speakers will address why the inventories and assessments were conducted, how they were conducted, their results, and how the information has been, or will be used to support agriculture. There will be discussion on how AgComs can support these efforts as well as how these efforts can be replicated in Massachusetts municipalities that do not have local data.

A3. & B3. Massachusetts Buy Local Programs and Campaigns

An overview of Massachusetts' Buy Local Programs and Campaigns will be provided by:

Kelly Coleman, Program Director, Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown®, Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA)

Sarah Cogswell, Buy Local Coordinator, Buy Fresh Buy Local Southeastern Massachusetts, Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP)

Barbara Zheutlin, Executive Director, Berkshire Grown Buy Local, Berkshire Grown

Jim O'Brien, Campaign Coordinator, Essex County and the Merrimack Valley Buy Fresh Campaign

Jessie Gunnard, Program Coordinator, Buy Fresh Buy Local Cape Cod, Barnstable County

Speakers will address why it is important to Buy Local, how the regional programs and campaigns are raising awareness of the value and benefits of buying local, and how they promote local growers and buyers. There will be discussion on how AgComs can support these regional programs and Massachusetts growers and buyers.

A4. & B4. Farmer Preservation, Farm Transfer-How to keep farmers on the land

Kathryn Ruhf, Principal, Land for Good & Katie Cavanagh, Coordinator, Farms Forever Program, SEMAP

This conference workshop will cover methods and programs for keeping farmers on the land. The value of farm succession and transfer planning will be addressed. Programs and services available to assist landowners with transfer planning will also be presented. How to "grow new farmers" will be discussed and new and beginner farmer success stories will be showcased.

A5. & B5. Laws and Regulations Affecting Agriculture: Zoning, Health, RTF, Chapter 61 & Working with Town Boards

Bob Ritchie, General Counsel, MA Department of Agricultural Resources & Frank DiLuna, ESQ, Murtha Cullina, LLP

This conference workshop will cover zoning and health laws and regulations that affect agriculture. Local Right to Farm bylaws will be discussed as will Chapter 61 and Right of First Refusal. Discussion will take place on how AgComs can work with town boards and staff to address or resolve issues related to agriculture, planning, zoning, health and Chapter 61.

A6. & B6. The Wetlands Protection Act & Agriculture; Working with Your Conservation Commission

Laurell Farinon, Conservation Agent, Rochester, MA & Dan Lenthall, District Conservationist, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

This conference workshop will cover the Wetlands Protection Act. The Act exempts "work performed for the normal maintenance or improvement of land in agricultural use." The Wetland Protection Act Agricultural Regulation defines this exemption and will be covered in some detail. Examples of real situations involving agricultural activities and wetlands will be provided. Technical assistance farm planning services provided through the Natural Resources Conservation Service will be explained. Discussion will take place about how AgComs can work with Conservation Commissions and Agents to educate farmers and their community and reduce potential violations of the law and regulation.

A7. & B7. Funding AgCom Efforts

Paul LeBeau, Town Administrator, Holliston, MA & Mary Greendale, Grant Writer specializing in agriculture

Paul LeBeau will provide an overview of the rules and guidelines that govern municipal budgeting, handling money, and accepting grants and gifts. Actual funding related situations will be discussed and Paul will discuss how each situation fits into the rules and guidelines.

Mary Greendale will provide instruction on "How to Get Grants." She will cover how to interpret and respond to RFP's, how to write proposals including, planning actions and "deliverables", budgets and timelines and how to manage grant funds. An overview of grant programs available to agriculture will be provided.

B1. & C1. Farmland Protection Tools

Cris Coffin, New England Director, American Farmland Trust & Ben Bowell, New England Field Representative, American Farmland Trust

Cris Coffin and Ben Bowell will provide workshop participants with an overview of programs and planning techniques that may be used to protect working farmland in Massachusetts.

In this workshop you will learn about APR and Farm Viability, Chapter 61A and use of right of first refusal, planning and zoning bylaws, agricultural districts and municipal agincentive agreements, tax policies, installment purchase agreements and other methods for farmland protection.

C2. Future of AgComs: Should We Organize Statewide? Facilitated Discussion

Mary Greendale, facilitator, Public Affairs/Communications Specialist & Executive Director of State Association (proposed)

This is a facilitated session that will provide the opportunity for AgCom members to discuss their future and whether or not they should organize statewide. Why organize will be discussed. AgCom members will identify the needs, benefits, and drawbacks to organizing beyond municipal boundaries. They will further discuss and weigh the needs, benefits and drawbacks of organizing. If a consensus develops in favor of organizing then a discussion will take place on how to organize and steps will be outlined.

C3. Conflict Management and Resolution

Lorraine Della Porta, ESQ, Deputy Director, MA Office of Dispute Resolution

In this workshop participants will discover productive ways to handle conflicts – ways that make a difference in your work with AgComs. Often AgCom members are called upon to serve as conflict management facilitators or neutral party facilitators to help resolve a conflict where agriculture is affected.

In this workshop you will learn about your conflict management style, tools and techniques for managing and resolving conflict, facilitating communication, principles of negotiation, basic mediation skills, and crafting an agreement.

REGISTRATION FORM

Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions: Making a Difference in Our Communities

Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions' Conference

January 23-24, 2009

The Crowne Plaza, 10 Lincoln Square, Worcester, MA 01608

Please complete this registration form and send with a check payable to: The Pilgrim RC&D Area Council, Inc.
Please complete a separate registration form for each person attending.

Downloadable Registration Forms and conference information are available at <http://www.massagcom.org/conference/>

REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Name: _____ Organization or AgCom: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Friday & Saturday Registration \$40 \$ _____
(Includes: conference program booklet, all Conference breaks, boxed lunch (Fri), plated dinner (Fri) and full breakfast (Sat))

Friday Only Registration \$35 \$ _____
(Includes: conference program booklet, Friday conference breaks, boxed lunch and plated dinner)

Saturday Only Registration \$30 \$ _____
(Includes: conference program booklet, Saturday conference breaks)
Breakfast will be served at 7:00 am - 9:00 am.

Will you be coming for the Saturday Breakfast Yes No

Friday Dinner for Guests \$35 \$ _____
(A guest is an individual not registered for the conference and only attending the Friday night dinner)

Name of Guest: _____

HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION

Will you be staying overnight? Yes No

Please make your reservations directly with the Hotel. Confirmed room rates for the conference will be \$92 per night plus tax and will be held until December 26th, 2008. A block of rooms has been reserved for the Conference. Please reference Agricultural Commission Conference when making your reservation. Complete room descriptions and hotel information are available at the Crowne Plaza Website www.cpworcester.com

The Crowne Plaza
10 Lincoln Square
Worcester, MA 01608
Tel: 1-800-628-4240 or (508) 791-1600

MENU SELECTION

Please select a meal for Friday evening.
(A meal ticket will be provided to each registrant and guest)

- Grilled Portobello & Vegetable Stack _____
- Sliced Roast Sirloin of Beef _____

Please list any dietary restrictions below:

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Please make checks payable to The Pilgrim RC&D Area Council, Inc. and mail them to:

The Pilgrim RC&D Area Council, Inc.
15 Cranberry Highway
West Wareham, MA 02576

Questions: If you have any questions, please contact Irene Winkler, (Pilgrim RC&D Coordinator) at (508) 295-1317 x 130 or email irene.winkler@ma.usda.gov; fax: 508 291 2368.

**No refunds will be given after January 1, 2009. Prior cancellations will be given a full refund minus a \$5 processing fee. If you are unable to attend, you may send a substitute in your place. please notify us of their name by January 1, 2009.*

*Sponsored by: Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) * Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture (MSPA) * Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) * American Farmland Trust (AFT) * The Pilgrim Resource Conservation & Development Area Council, Inc. (Pilgrim RC&D)*