

APR - Program Overview

The Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program is a voluntary program that offers a non-development alternative to farmland owners for their agricultural lands who are faced with a decision regarding future use and disposition of their farms. The program offers farmers a payment up to the difference between the “fair market value” and the “fair market agricultural value” of their farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction, which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability.



APR Protected Farm in Sunderland, MA

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Visit Us on the Web

www.Mass.gov/agr/landuse/APR

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**Department of
Agricultural
Resources**

Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program



*Preserving Our Heritage,
Sustaining Our Future*



An Economic and Environmental Imperative

By preserving farmland through the APR Program, we help to keep local taxes low, strengthen farms as economically viable businesses, and maintain an inventory of farmland for future generations. Over 80 percent of our farms are family-owned. Farming is an integral part of the environmental character and economic viability of the food and fiber industry of Massachusetts.



APR Protected Farm in Deerfield, MA

Annually, the Bay State's 7,691 farmers generate \$490 million in cash receipts and help supply fresh farm products to the state's \$6 billion food manufacturing and retailing industry. More importantly, they employ over 13,000 workers earning more than \$131 million dollars in wages and keep 518,000 acres of farmland in active production.

Applications are available on the web or by phoning your field representative. Contacts are listed on the back panel.

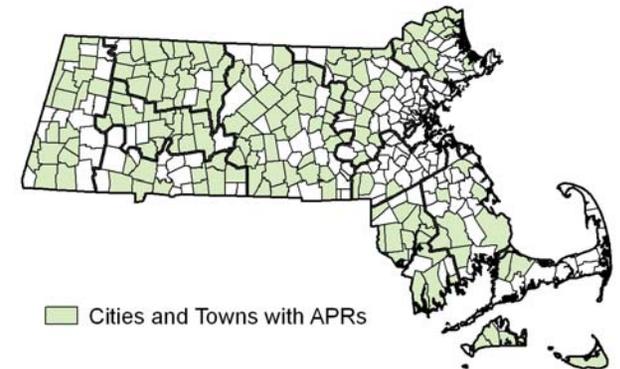
Criteria to apply:

- Farm must be at least five (5) acres in size
- Land has to have been actively devoted to agriculture for the two (2) immediately preceding tax years
- At least \$500 in gross sales per year for first 5-acres; plus \$5 for each additional acre or 50 cents per each additional acre of woodland and/or wetland

Other criteria staff weigh when considering potential APRs:

- Suitability and productivity of land for agricultural use based on soil classification, physical features, location
- The degree of threat to the continuation of agriculture on the land due to circumstances such as owner's health, retirement, financial difficulties, development pressure, or land rental agreements
- The degree to which the land is of a size or composition to be economically viable for agricultural purposes and the likelihood that it will remain in agriculture for the foreseeable future

162 Cities and Towns in Massachusetts are home to APR protected farms.



Farmland Works for Your Community

- **Tax Savings** - undeveloped land, even under reduced assessment, can be a significant net gain over developments that require costly local services
- **Environmental Buffering** - to protect watersheds, habitat, reduce noise and provide visual breaks
- **Locally Grown Food** - is fresh, and tastes better, supports local families, has a lighter carbon footprint and preserves genetically diversified food and fiber products
- **Aesthetics/ Quality of Life** - scenic working landscapes that are attractive for residents, travelers and employers seeking livable environments