



February 15, 2011

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Thursday, February 17th! FSA Meeting for Dairy Farmers on Dairy Gross Margins Insurance

Come Join the Round Table Discussion, Thursday, February 17th, 1:30pm.
Littleton Electric Light & Water Department, 39 Ayer Rd, Littleton, MA 01460

The Session will be led by:
Gene Gantz, Risk Management Specialist, RMA/USDA

Program Overview:

Concepts & Illustrations
Enrollment History to Date
Producer Scenario Analysis

For Questions – Please Contact: Lynn Ann Vozniak, County Executive Director, Middlesex/Essex County Farm Service Agency, 978-692-5163, ext. 102

2011 Directory of Farms Interested in Institutional Sales: Call for Submissions

It's time to revise and reprint the Mass. Farm to School Project's directory of farms interested in selling to institutions. Farms are listed by county, with contact information and available products, in order for food service professionals to easily locate farms from which they can purchase food for their cafeterias and dining halls. If you are a Massachusetts farmer interested in being included in the 2011 Directory, please call (413)253-3844 or email emily.farmtoschool@gmail.com. Deadline for revisions is March 15.

Farm Visit Sites Needed For Spring!

If your farm is within an hour of Worcester and you would like to host kindergarten field trips, please contact mafarmtoschool@gmail.com right away. The Mass. Farm to School Project is coordinating the Worcester Kindergarten Initiative and we're scheduling field trips for agricultural activities during the months of March - May, including greenhouse tours, baby animals, or early "U-Pick". Funds are available to pay admission fees for students.

State Law Allows School Districts to Buy Direct from Mass. Farms Without Bids and Requires Public Colleges to "Buy Local First"

In July the Mass. Legislature passed a school nutrition bill. In addition to allowing public school districts to make multiple purchases of locally grown foods from farmers in contracts of less than \$25,000 without bids, the bill directs state agencies and public colleges to purchase agricultural products grown in Massachusetts. It also instructs both the Mass. Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Mass. Dept. of Agricultural Resources to collect data about local farms and public schools doing business together. For more information contact mafarmtoschool@gmail.com or call the Mass. Farm to School Project office at 413-253-3844.

Sign Up Period Opens for Domestic Asparagus Producers Affected by Marketing Losses

Ted Smiarowski, County Executive Director of the Hampshire/Hampden County Farm Service Agency recently announced that a total of \$15 million is available to domestic asparagus producers to compensate them for marketing losses resulting from imports during the 2004 through 2007 crop years.

"America's asparagus producers were financially affected by a substantial increase in asparagus imports," said Smiarowski. "This resulted in lower domestic production and a lower market share for U.S. producers. This program will provide assistance to American asparagus producers whose livelihoods were affected."

The Asparagus Revenue Market Loss Assistance Payment Program (ALAP) is authorized by the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill). The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) will provide an allocation of \$7.5 million for payments for asparagus marketed as fresh, and \$7.5 million for payments for processed asparagus. The sign up period is on now until April 8, 2011. ALAP provides a one-time payment to eligible asparagus producers. Maximum per pound payment rates are \$1.06 per pound for fresh market asparagus and \$1.08 per pound for asparagus marketed for processing. Payments to asparagus producers will be calculated for each asparagus farm operation based on their 2003 marketed production quantities.

If the total value of payments claimed at the maximum payment rates exceeds available funding, payments will be factored uniformly by the CCC to limit total payments to the funds available. ALAP Program payments to producers will be capped at \$100,000 per producer per marketing category (fresh and processed). Producers who have an average gross income (AGI) in excess of \$2,500,000 for calendar years 2003 through 2005 will not be eligible for program benefits. Eligible producers must also have produced and marketed asparagus in commercial quantities in commercial markets in the U.S. during both of the 2003 and 2007 crop years. A producer that did not harvest asparagus in 2007 does not meet that eligibility requirement.

For more information on the ALAP Program, contact the nearest Farm Service Agency county office or go online to <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

The Samuel Adams Brewing the American Dream Program Offering a FREE Speed Coaching and Networking Event

The Samuel Adams Brewing the American Dream Program is offering a FREE speed coaching and networking event for food, beverage and hospitality entrepreneurs in Springfield, MA. The event will take place at the Scibelli Enterprise Center on February 28th from 6-8:30, and will offer individuals an opportunity to sit down one-on-one and in small groups with experts at Samuel Adams and local business planning coaches. Join us for food, drinks and great advice. Registration is required. Call ACCION at 617-616-1582 or register online at <http://springfieldspeedcoaching.eventbrite.com/>.



MDAR's mission is to ensure the long-term viability of local agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – [Agricultural Development](#), [Animal Health](#), [Crop and Pest Services](#), and [Technical Assistance](#) – MDAR strives to support, regulate, and enhance the Commonwealth's agricultural community, working to promote economically and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture's role in energy conservation and production. For more information, go to www.mass.gov/agr or follow us at www.twitter.com/agcommishsoares for the latest agricultural trends and updates. To keep up to date on workshops and events, visit www.mass.gov/agr/events/coming_up.htm.