



# MFBF Young Farmers Update

Leading Farm Bureau into the Future

Upcoming YF&R Social - Aug. 16 At Island Creek Oysters

Have you seen an oyster farm? Do you want to learn more about aquaculture in Massachusetts? Join us on Aug. 16 at 11 a.m. for a social. We will start with a tour of Island Creek Oysters, which is located at 457 Washington Street in Duxbury.

**We ask that you RSVP to this tour by emailing, Katelyn, MFBF Director of Marketing and Membership at [katelyn@mfbf.net](mailto:katelyn@mfbf.net) by Monday, Aug. 7. Please include if you are willing to bring a four-wheel drive truck or SUV. There is limited availability for this tour, so please sign up today.**



If you plan on joining us, please arrive on time. Because we will be out on the water, timing of the tide is important.

Things to note:

- There is parking by the Maritime School, on the street, or in the town lot by the boat ramp on Mattakeeset Court.
- Dress in layers in case of weather: rain jackets, sunglasses, sunscreen, bug spray, hats, and comfortable clothes that are okay to get a little bit dirty.
- For those that have rubber boots or waders, wearing them is highly recommend.

Following the tour, anyone in the group can join us for food at a local spot. Joining us for food is completely optional but everyone is welcome to join.

*Please note: you do not have to be a formal member of the Young Farmers and Ranchers committee to participate in this social event. Please bring friends who you think would be interested in this tour.*

We look forward to seeing you on Aug. 16!

Join Us For MFBF's 2017 Twilight Meetings: Policy Days!



Do you want to see changes in the agricultural policy that your local representatives and senators are passing on Beacon Hill and in Washington, D.C.? Come to a twilight meeting near you this summer to learn how you can make a difference in their decision-making process.

This twilight meeting series, known as Policy Days, will be sponsored by Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) and aims to gather input from local farmers about policy

initiatives that should be considered by this organization and to discuss how MFBF's policy development process works.

In addition to learning about the policy process at the farm bureau, these events will be focused around networking with fellow farmers and agribusinesses. During these forums, there will be a spot for local agribusinesses, who are Farm Bureau members, to network with farmers in the community in a trade show atmosphere.

We also encourage all farmers to come to this - and bring a farmer friend. MFBF will provide the coffee and everyone is invited to bring desserts and snacks to share. This is your chance for an evening off the farm in August, during which you can learn, network and just enjoy your evening with good company. Please note: dinner will not be served.

The following dates and locations are set:

Aug. 22 at 6 pm  
Plainville Farm  
135 Mt. Warner Rd.  
Hadley, MA, 01035

Aug. 24 at 6 pm  
Carlson Orchards  
115 Oak Hill Rd  
Harvard, MA 01451

We look forward to seeing you - and a friend - there!

If you have any questions, please contact MFBF Director of Marketing and Membership at [katelyn@mfbf.net](mailto:katelyn@mfbf.net).

## Consider Joining Us...

On Sept. 6 at 6 p.m. the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation's Young Farmers & Ranchers board will meet at the office in Marlborough. Anyone is invited to come to this, however, only those appointed by their counties can vote on issues.



If anyone would like to participate but does not want to drive to Marlborough, we do have video conferencing capabilities. Please contact Katelyn Parsons, [katelyn@mfbf.net](mailto:katelyn@mfbf.net) if you plan to video call into this conference.

## Make Plans Now: MFBF's YF&R Planning Legislative Trip To Montreal



In November, Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation's (MFBF's) Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) committee is planning to cross the longest undefended border in the world to head to Montreal to learn about U.S.-Canadian trade relations. This is particularly timely as President Donald Trump discusses the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

If you are thinking about going on this trip, please make plans now starting by ensuring you have an up-to-date passport. Start the process of renewing your documents now if your current passport expires before May 2018. Please visit the State Department website, <http://www.state.gov> for information on obtaining of renewing a passport.

If you are interested in this trip and would like to participate please email Heidi Cooper at [cooper.heidi.jo@gmail.com](mailto:cooper.heidi.jo@gmail.com). Due to the extensiveness of this trip, MFBF will be limiting this group to a relatively small size, so in order to be included please indicate your interest quickly.

## Livestock on the Common: A Success

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) members brought their livestock to the Boston Common on June 20 to answer legislators' and consumers' questions about the care and management of livestock.

During these interactions, farmers and MFBF staff discussed bills of importance that they are supporting this session. Those bills included:

HB 3323 - An Act to establish estate tax valuation for farms, Representative Hogan  
SB 1584 - An Act to establish estate tax valuation for farms, Senator O'Connor-Ives

- Massachusetts has an estate tax that is levied when the value of an inherited estate exceeds \$1 million. The estate tax is based on the "highest and best use" of the land - typically the development value, rather than the ag value.
- This has proven to be a challenge for many farmers inheriting farmland, who want to continue to farm the land rather than develop it. Often, they do not have cash on hand to pay the estate tax and are forced to sell some or all of the land to do so.
- This bill would value farmland at agricultural value for estate tax purposes. The



land would need to remain in agriculture for at least 10 years to fully enjoy this benefit. If the land is developed within 10 years, back-taxes would need to be paid as well as an Elevated capital gains tax.

HB 441 - An Act to promote the care and well-being of livestock, Representative Kulik

- Creates a Board within the Department of Agricultural Resources consisting of farmers, local humane organizations, veterinary organizations and relevant state agencies.
- The Board will be charged with ensuring livestock is treated humanely, and will be given the ability to create relevant regulations, guidance, etc.
- The bill is intended to ensure that future policy regarding the humane treatment of livestock is based on science and broad consensus.

"We are pleased that this annual event was well received," said MFBF President Ed Davidian, who farms in Northborough. "The farmers who attended helped disperse our message to the crowds in Boston. Through events like this one, we are educating legislators and the public about bills that are critical to maintaining farm profitability in the Commonwealth."

Ice cream that was served during the day was provided by Davidian Bros Farm in Northborough and Cooper's Hilltop Farm in Rochdale.

Thank you to everyone who helped with this event!

## Thank You For Joining Us At Adams Farm in Athol!



Thanks to everyone who joined us at Adams Farm in Athol on July 12. We had an excellent tour of the plant and a great discussion with the Beef Checkoff. We hope to see everyone at our social in August!

## AFBF Information

## American Farm Bureau Federation's Competitions and Challenges

### **American Farm Bureau Federation's Achievement Award**

The Achievement Award recognizes Young Farmers & Ranchers who have excelled in their farm or ranch and have honed their leadership abilities to superiority. Participants

are involved in production agriculture with a majority of their income subject to normal production risks. Judges evaluate competitor's excellence in management, growth and scope of their enterprise and self-initiative that have been displayed throughout the farm or ranch.

Click [here](#) to download an application.

### **American Farm Bureau Federation's Excellence in Agriculture Award**

The Excellence in Agriculture Award spotlights young Farm Bureau members who are agricultural enthusiasts but have not earned a majority of their income from an owned production agriculture enterprise in the past three years. Competitors are evaluated on their understanding of agricultural issues, leadership experiences and achievement, and their ability to communicate their agricultural story.

Click [here](#) to download an application.

### **American Farm Bureau Federation's Discussion Meet Competition**

The American Farm Bureau Federation Discussion Meet competitive event simulates a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each participant. This competition is evaluated on an exchange of ideas and information on a pre-determined topic. Participants build basic discussion skills, develop a keen understanding of important agricultural issues and explore how groups can pool knowledge to reach consensus and solve problems.

Click [here](#) to download the 2018 Discussion Meet Questions. Please contact Heidi Cooper at [cooper.heidi.jo@gmail.com](mailto:cooper.heidi.jo@gmail.com) or Katelyn Parsons at [katelyn@mfbf.net](mailto:katelyn@mfbf.net) if you are interested in participating in this competition.

## 2017 YF&R Tentative Social Calendar

Aug. 16 - Island Creek Oysters Tour & Social  
Sept. 8 & 9 - Farm Fresh Fest at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area  
September (TBD) - Jekanowski Tobacco Farm Tour & Social  
Oct. 3rd -Forgotten Farms Screening at UConn in Storrs, CT. Sponsored by CT YF&R  
October (TBD) - Topsfield Fair  
November (TBD) - Road trip to Montreal for farm tours and legislative visit.  
Nov. 30 - Dec. 1 - MFBF Annual Meeting in Framingham  
Dec. 12-14 - New England Vegetable and Fruit Conference, Manchester NH

***To add to this we still have Harvest for All activities and fundraising opportunities to nail down; stay tuned!***

## 2017 YF&R Formal Committee Meetings

*Anyone is welcome and invited to attend and take part in discussion/planning. Only designated county representatives (2 spots per county) can vote.*

Sept. 6 @ 6 PM - MFBF Headquarters in Marlborough

Nov. 29 - Location/time TBD. Likely in Framingham before MFBF annual meeting.



If you would like to receive the twice-monthly e-newsletter that covers congressional and regulatory action related to agriculture from American Farm Bureau, please reply to this email and let us know. We will submit your email address to get on their mailing list for FBNews. If you decide it's not for you, you can opt-out at any time.

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To learn more about MFBF's YF&R programs and upcoming events visit [mfbf.net](http://mfbf.net)

Don't forget to find us on [Facebook](#). We are looking at increasing our following and look forward to having young farmers around the state "hijack" the page over the summer to share their farm stories.

Invite your family and friends to follow us!

Stay Connected



Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, Inc, 249 Lakeside Ave, Marlborough, MA 01752

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