



Join Us On Wednesday, June 6 For Livestock on the Common

General Information

Please join us on Wednesday, June 6 for Livestock on the Common. This annual event will be held on Boston Common right across the street from the State House. This once-a-year event is our premiere opportunity to talk one-on-one with legislators and the public about issues related to farming.

The tentative schedule of events for the day is as follows:

- 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. Set-up, Boston Common
- 11:00 - 11:30 a.m. Distribute ice cream vouchers to legislators, State House
- 12:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Discuss legislative priorities with legislators and public, Boston Common
- 1:30 - 2 p.m. Pack up, Boston Common



The two bills we will be focusing on at this event are H.B. 3915, an act to establish an estate tax valuation for farms and H.b. 3908, an act relative to the dairy farm tax credit. Please see the key talking points on the bills below.

HB 3915 - An Act to establish estate tax valuation for farms

- 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. For farmland this is typically its development value, rather than its agricultural value.
- This is a challenge for many 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 the land to do so. This is contrary to the intent of several state laws and programs intended to preserve farmland.
- This bill would calculate the value of the farmland for estate tax purposes at its agricultural value. If the land is developed within 10 years, the owner would be responsible for back-taxes.

HB 3908 - An Act relative to the dairy farm tax credit

- Dairy farming in New England is challenging financially, with the cost of producing milk sometimes exceeding the price paid to dairy farmers. The price paid to these farmers is dictated by federal programs.
- Under Massachusetts law, dairy farmers are allowed a refundable tax credit for periods of time when the cost of production exceeds the price of milk.
- The law currently limits the total amount allocated annually toward the credit to \$4 million. Unfortunately, this has been insufficient. This bill would increase the limit to \$8 million.

If you are planning to attend Livestock on the Common, please RSVP back to this email address.

Livestock On The Common Preparation Day



To prepare for this event, including scooping ice cream into bowls and reviewing legislative talking points, please join our group on May 30 at 9 am at Davidian Bros Farm Stand in Northborough. As we prepare the ice cream for distribution, MFBF Deputy Director Brad Mitchell will be present to answer any policy related questions.

Prepare For Meeting Legislators At Livestock On The Common

Preparation Step 1: Identify Your Legislators & Bills You Want To Advocate For

Please take the time to identify your Representatives and Senators. You can easily find out who your legislator is at <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>. Simply type in your address and it takes you to a page with a profile for both your Senators and Representatives.

Please also take time to identify the active bills in legislature that you want to advocate for. To find which bills are active, please visit: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/Search>.

Preparation Step 2: Review MFBF's White Paper

Please review MFBF's white paper, which outlines the bills that have been filed that the organization supports, by clicking [here](#). The document also contains brief talking points on these bills that can help you during Livestock on the Common.



Preparation Step 3: Dress Appropriately

Livestock on the Common's dress code is business casual. This means farm shirts with collars, polo shirts, pants in good repair and clean shoes.

To learn more about MFBF's YF&R programs and upcoming events visit mfbf.net

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