

What Is Working in Small Towns and Rural Communities



**Consumers, decision
makers, chefs, schools,
hospitals, and
community activists are
redesigning our food
system**



For Massachusetts' family farmers
who are struggling to survive, as they
compete against mega farms in the
west and foreign imports,
*Local Support Can Not Come
Soon Enough*



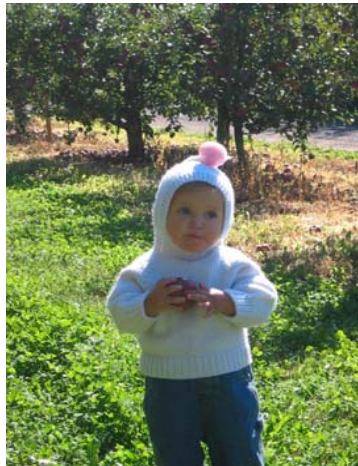
Farms Are A Community Treasure

Our survey showed that 20 percent of the farms had been in the family for at least 5 generations.



Farmers want to be part of our future

Almost 75 percent of the farmers who responded to our survey report that they have a family member interested in carrying on the farm.



Future in Jeopardy

- ★ 60 percent of farms in state reported an operating loss.
- ★ 253 farms report their loss was more than \$50,000. (USDA Ag Census)
- ★ In our survey 63% of the farmers borrowed money in 2006



As farmers approach retirement age, if farming is not profitable, farmland is sold.

Between 1997 and 2002, MA lost 33 acres of farmland each day.



When Farmland is Lost

Both the rural and urban culture losses:

Open Space – Wildlife Habitats --
Scenic Viewsheds – Rural Character-
Historic Resources.

Sprawl Continues with Increasing
Taxes for Services.



We Also Lose

- ★ A little more of our food security.
- ★ Farm stands brimming with good tasting food
- ★ Mornings eating fresh cider donuts and afternoons tasting new varieties of wine.
- ★ Apple picking, hay rides, and places to cross country ski.



Our Buy Local Effort Needs Your Partnership

- ★ 80 percent of the farms in our survey report that they want to stay in farming for at least the next 10 years.

Their goal is now our goal.



Connecting Consumers & Farmers

- ★ Education
- ★ Awareness
- ★ Building Partnerships to understand the issues & build sustainable communities.



Major Issues Farmers Face

Lack of:

Labor Customers Land	Retail Space Parking Product
Restrictions on:	
Water Usage Land Use	Signage



You Can Help

A Simple Way To Begin

Spend \$7.25 a week on local food and nursery products.

You'll increase net farm income by 50% and get to know the source of your food.

Food shopping will become fun again!







Thank you for caring

