NOFA/Mass Policy Priorities for the 2019-2020 Legislative Session
Full list of policy priorities at www.nofamass.org/policy - Updated 3/20/19

An Act to promote healthy soils and agricultural innovation within the Commonwealth

This bill creates a Healthy Soils Program within the Commission for Conservation of Soil, Water and Related Resources, which, subject to the availability of funds, will seek to optimize climate benefits while supporting the viability of agriculture in the commonwealth by providing incentives, including loans, grants, research, technical assistance and educational material on healthy soils practices.

An Act to protect Massachusetts pollinators
H.763: Rep. Carolyn Dykema, Attorney General Maura Healey and 152 cosponsors

This bill would restrict the sale and use of neonicotinoid pesticide products to certified commercial applicators, private applicators, or licensed applicators only. The Department of Agriculture would include pollinator protection in the licensing and evaluation materials for applicators. MassDOT would be directed to consider the potential for installation of native forage on department-owned property.

An Act empowering towns and cities to protect residents and the environment from harmful pesticides

This bill would return power to communities to protect their families, food and water from harmful pesticide exposure. With the approval of a municipality's Board of Health, a city or town government would be able to “restrict or prohibit the use and application or disposal of pesticides within the city or town that are more stringent than the standards and restrictions [adopted by the state].”

An Act relative to improving pesticide protections for Massachusetts schoolchildren
H.791: Rep. Carmine Gentile and 41 Cosponsors

H.791 updates the outdated list of pesticide products eligible for use on the outdoor grounds of schools, child care centers and school age child care programs within the state of Massachusetts (See Chapter 132B, Section 6G of General Laws). It would allow only pesticides considered minimum risk by the EPA (and prohibit the use of glyphosate and 2,4-D, which is currently permitted).

An Act relative to an agricultural healthy incentives program

The Healthy Incentives Program doubles SNAP recipients' purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables directly from farmers, improving health outcomes for vulnerable communities and increasing sales for local farms. This bill will establish the framework for the program's long-term sustainability.

Northeast Organic Farming Association/Massachusetts Chapter, Inc.

Through education and advocacy NOFA/Mass promotes organic agriculture to expand the production and availability of nutritious food from living soil for the health of individuals, communities and the planet.
**NOFA/Mass also supports these important bills:**

**An Act relative to the use of glyphosate on public lands**  
**S.499:** Sen. Jason Lewis

This bill would end the application of any glyphosate-based herbicide on any public lands owned or maintained by the Commonwealth without a special permit.

**The Safe Communities Act**  
**S.1401/ H.3573:** Sen. Jamie Eldridge, Reps. Ruth Balser and Liz Miranda

This bill would limit state and local participation in federal immigration matters in order to provide farm owners with greater confidence in the stability of their workforce, protect basic due process rights and diminish the fear felt by many farmworkers and their families.

**The Work and Family Mobility Act**  
**S.2061/H.3012:** Sen. Brendan Crighton, Reps. Tricia Farley-Bouvier and Christine Barber

Also of importance to many of our state’s farmworkers, this bill would make standard driver’s licenses available to all qualified state residents, regardless of immigration status. Twelve REAL ID-compliant states, including Connecticut and Vermont, already issue licenses to all qualified residents.

**An Act relative to the growth of hemp**  
**S.1129:** Senator Adam Hinds

This bill would update Chapter 61A to include hemp in the definition of horticulture, giving hemp farmers the benefits afforded by Chapter 61A.

**An Act clarifying the definition of agriculture**  
**H.3519:** Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier

Farmers have been excluded from cannabis production under the false pretense that it is not considered agriculture. This would clarify the definition of agriculture to include "hemp and marihuana."

**An Act Relative to Organic Farming Tools**  
**H.3532:** Rep. Paul Mark

This organic pest control provision would mirror practices adopted in earlier legalization states that have allowed a short list of biological and botanical control strategies to be used on cannabis.

**An Act Establishing a Cannabis and Hemp Cultivation Research Center at UMASS**  
**H.3545:** Rep. Susannah M. Whipps

The Center proposed in this bill would facilitate public dialogue regarding emerging issues for cultivators of cannabis and hemp, including cross-pollination conflicts.

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**NOFA/Mass endorses the 2019-20 policy priorities of the MA Food System Collaborative.**