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The season of celebration is upon us. Holidays right and left. Tulips, daffodils and hyacinth seem to be heralding their arrival. I was inspired this year to try my hand at pickled watermelon radish, which turned out very nicely. If you have some root veggies hanging around from winter, pickling is still a great option. If you decide not to go the lacto-fermentation route, quick refrigerator pickles with some spices, garlic and vinegar is super easy and ready in 24 hours. I used Ana Sortun’s recipe from her cookbook *Spice*. Ana Sortun is a well-known chef in Boston who, along with her husband Chris Kurth, owns Siena Farms in Sudbury. Sortun has taken restaurant-sourcing of local products to the highest level by growing and supplying her own produce.

Along with the renewal of our earth comes a new flock of animals across our state who will eventually nourish us – either through their milk or their meat. If you are raising animals and have pictures of any of your newborns, please forward along for us to see! This month I have chosen to feature cheese. We have a number of NOFA-involved farmers who are producing excellent cheese for this region – both from raw and pasteurized milk. If you haven’t taken a NOFA cheese class, I encourage you to jump onboard this spring (if there is any room left – these classes sell out fast). But never fear – we will have a whole new series starting up in the fall.

It was with incredible pride at our spring staff meeting that we heard the results of a vote taken by the NOFA/Mass Board of Directors, who unanimously agreed that we should continue the fight against
Monsanto in our ongoing federal patent lawsuit. The results of the vote and the sentiment in the discussion reflected what I had experienced in person myself going down to the Motion-to-Discard hearing at the end of January; namely, a strong sense of solidarity and purpose. If there is anything I have learned about organic farmers, it is that they do not shy away from conflict, and they understand that anything worth having is worth working hard for. I am delighted to be able to continue to shine a bright light on the problem of GMO seeds, and I hope you will support us as we continue to advocate for a healthy planet and food system regionally and nationwide. Jack Kittredge has written more about the Board’s decision in this issue. You can also find a copy of the Appeal Notification that was filed in federal court on our website; link on our homepage.

Sometimes the challenges here in the U.S. in the organic farming and gardening community seem daunting indeed. Regulations, pests, disease, weather, market changes—all of these things make agriculture a highly volatile endeavor. It’s fairly amazing that any food ever ends up on our plates. In contrast to the perennial obstacles farmers here face, the folks in Japan are currently facing challenges beyond what we can possibly imagine, as a result of the nuclear disaster. The organic farming community (and the conventional farming community) has had an almost-insurmountable challenge of finding a way to use land again, and produce edible produce for the Japanese public that is not affected by radiation. In this issue we have printed an article by a man named Ed Koziarski, from Chicago. Ed and his wife Junko are producing a documentary called Uncanny Terrain, which captures poignantly the various agricultural issues farmers are tackling, particularly in the Fukushima area of Japan. I hope you’ll read the article and follow up by watching the trailer. Developments in Japan certainly will have things to teach us about the remediation of contaminated soils; a challenge which unfortunately is not going away any time soon neither here nor abroad.

Finally, stay tuned for various updates on the Summer Conference. We are making some changes in our keynote lineup. So please check our Summer Conference website in May www.nofasummerconference.org. We should have a final list of workshop offerings, keynotes, and a few different (and new!) pre-conference seminars that will be taking place this August.

Mindy
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A NOTE FROM
JULIE RAWSON
EDUCATION AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On April 1 as I write this the weather has become absolutely normal and has been that way for the past almost week. The warm and even hot weather was nice, and our cows went back to pasture in mid March, but I for one was quite anxious when the temperatures stayed so unseasonably high for so many days in March.

On March 24 the entire board and staff met for our early spring retreat. After a 2 hour board meeting we spent the day as a “revue” of all of our projects and initiatives. I think everyone walked away with a new understanding of the breadth of our programs and work in the world.

- One of the highlights of the day was an agreement to sign on to the PUBPAT appeal against Monsanto. I know from my member calls that there is broad support for this initiative. It is one important tactic in our campaign to rid the earth of genetically modified foods.

- At our January board meeting we decided to launch a program to enhance connections between SNAP participants and CSAs. Drew Love has taken this project on quite well and will soon have 5 farms and 5 community partners working together to bring healthy produce to low income eaters.

- Our winter greens workshops were all sell outs – a true sign that many of us are attempting to extend our reach in growing food more months of the year.

- The summer conference planning is heating up this year. The pre-conferences so far feature a four hour fruit workshop on Friday morning with Lee Reich, and Jeffrey Smith will run an 8 hour workshop on how to organize against GMOs in our food supply on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning.

- One of the goals of the November retreat was to come up with work plans for the entire board and staff. These were completed in time for the retreat. In future years we will be able to revise and update them easily. These roadmaps for our activities will serve to further move our organizational agenda in the right direction.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR A NOFA/Mass BOARD MEMBER

We seem to often be one board member shy of our stipulated 11 members. This volunteer job is one of serious commitment and our board is folks who work pretty tirelessly to govern this organization in a creative and vibrant way. Board members attend 6 meetings per year (3 of them on the phone), join one or two standing committees - personnel, finance, development, board development, strategic planning – serve as a board buddy to a staff member, and make a financial contribution to the organization.

Interested? Give me a call – (978) 355-2853; or email at julie@nofamass.org.
NOFA/Mass Launches Farmer Mentoring Program

Applications due April 27

By Michal Lumsden
Beginning Farmer Program Coordinator

NOFA/Mass is now accepting applications from new and experienced farmers alike to participate in our Farmer Mentoring Program, the latest phase of our chapter’s budding efforts to cultivate the next generation of Massachusetts organic farmers.

The NOFA/Mass Mentoring Program aims to help fill the education gap between apprentice and independent farmer. By pairing mentees with experienced growers who are not their employers, the program will enable aspiring farmers to gain farming experiences, skills and perspectives that they otherwise wouldn’t get in their day-to-day work. The program is a 12-month commitment of support from NOFA/Mass to both the mentor and the mentee.

Successful mentee applicants should have some farming experience, but won’t be farming independently yet. In the first year of this program, NOFA/Mass will accept 20 mentees, each of whom will receive $50 worth of vouchers to attend NOFA/Mass educational events during the 12-month program. For more information about the mentoring program, including application procedures and deadlines, visit the NOFA/Mass Farmer Mentoring Program page.

Without willing mentors, this program would be impossible. In addition to accepting applications from prospective mentees, therefore, NOFA/Mass would also like to hear from experienced farmers who are interested in offering their time and knowledge to help educate new farmers. In recognition of the important service that the mentor provides, NOFA/Mass will pay each mentor an honorarium of $200. To learn how to apply to become a mentor, please visit the NOFA/Mass Farmer Mentoring Program page. Applications for both mentors and mentees are due April 27. NOFA/Mass will notify successful applicants by early May.

For more information about the Farmer Mentoring Program, please contact Michal Lumsden, NOFA/Mass beginning farmer program coordinator, at michal@nofamass.org.

NOFA/Mass 2013 Winter Conference Seeks Workshop Coordinator

Workshop Coordinator Job Description

- Organize educational workshops for the one-day NOFA/Mass winter conference.
- Provide regular reports on this work to the NOFA/Mass Winter Conference Coordinator, and to the NOFA/Mass Extension Director prior to Board of Directors meetings.
- Maintain financial records related to workshops and presenters, and coordinate presenter pay after the conference.
- Attend/call in for Winter Conference meetings.
- Maintain current NOFA/Mass membership.

Timeline for workshop coordination is year-round, January–December. Pay in 2012 is for 225 hours at $13/hour. Interested parties please contact Cathleen O’Keeffe, Winter Conference Coordinator, (413) 387-2316, wc@nofamass.org.
A Book Review of Nutrition Rules By Graeme Sait

By Julie Rawson

In 2003 Graeme Sait interviewed a number of experts in the field of soil nutrition and human nutrition. Graeme is a soil consultant from Australia who used these interviews to not only enhance his own education and ability to work with Australian farmers – many of them conventional – but to share this knowledge with the rest of us. The format is that of an interview, and each chapter is with another expert. Broken up this way it is very readable and easy to put down and pick back up for the busy farmer. Some of the names are locals – like Klaas and Mary Howell-Maartens of Lakeview Organic Grains and NOFA-NY. Others are from all over the country and the world. Some are now deceased. The information is priceless. From Elaine Ingham, “Weeds are a symptom of poor mineral and microbial balance and the more balanced the soil, the less weed pressure. . . .they do better when there is low oxygen concentration in the soil or if you set up the right conditions for the weeds to prosper, like high nitrates.” On hardpans, she says, “It always is the microorganisms getting the life back into that hardpan that opens it up and prevents it from reforming as a compacted hardpan zone. . . .Work at Ohio State University shows that you can break up a hardpan at four inches in six weeks by just getting the right kinds of fungi into the soil. You can break up a hardpan at 4 feet in 6 months.”

This book is full of gems like this, and it is free. Here are all the folks who were interviewed – Enjoy!

Soil Health – Mineral Management – Charles Walters, Neal Kinsey, Klaas and Mary Howell-Martens
Soil Health – Microbe Management – Elaine Ingham, Malcolm Beck, Bob Shaffer, Steve Diver
Plant Health – Energy Management – Bruce Tainio, Hugh Lovell, Dan Skow, Phil Callahan, Phil Wheeler, Arden Andersen
Animal and Soil Health – Gary Zimmer, Jerry Brunetti, Joel Salatin
Human Health – Patrick Flanagan, Jerry Brunetti, Arden Adnersen, Kenny Ausubel, Phyllis Balch, Joel Wallach

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April 2012 Newsletter
Thank You!
This year over 330 people participated in our annual Spring Bulk Order. What a wonderful way to start the season! Many thanks to our suppliers and each & every site coordinator, who make this program possible during a very busy time of year...

Suppliers:
George Murphy at Crop Production Services
Jennifer Whitman & Jane Tucker at Vermont Compost Company
Mike Lombard at Ideal Compost
David Shipman at Organic Growers Supply & Moose Tubers
Rich Tredigo at Fertrell
Deb Zambon at North Country Organics

Site Coordinators:
Julie Rawson at Many Hands Organic Farm in Barre
Adam Dole & the New England Small Farm Institute in Belchertown
Weston Lant & the staff at Jonathan Sprout’s Organics in E. Freetown
Melissa Maxwell at Appleton Farms in Ipswich
Laurie Bragg at Codman Community Farm in Lincoln
Jen Mix at Nature’s Best Farm Stand in Berlin
Jesse Robertson-DuBois at Holiday Farm in Dalton
Wayne Young at High Hill Orchard in Meriden, CT
Katie Miller at Urban Edge Farm in Cranston, RI

We will no longer be organizing the Fall Bulk Order, so we look forward to working with you all again next spring.
Have a great growing season!

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BOSTON – Monday, April 02, 2012 – Governor Deval Patrick today swore in Gregory Watson as Commissioner for the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture Resources (DAR). Watson is succeeding current DAR Commissioner Scott J. Soares who is leaving to serve as executive director of the Cranberry Marketing Committee.

“I want to thank Scott Soares for his 16 years of dedicated service to the Commonwealth, where he has not only benefited our farmers, but has enriched the Commonwealth as a whole,” said Governor Patrick. “I know that Greg Watson will lead the department into the future with his knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment to our diverse agriculture economy.”

Watson previously held this position from 1990 to 1993, when he served as the Commissioner of what was then called the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture. Watson has a long connection to Massachusetts farming, first serving in the Department’s Bureau of Markets in 1978, later in the Secretariat of Economic Development on fostering agri-bio-technology and finally as Director of the New Alchemy Institute in Falmouth, an applied research farm with close links to the cranberry, vegetable and green industry.

Watson has served as Senior Advisor for Clean Energy Technology at the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs since 2007.

“As a member of my senior staff, Greg brought a level of passion, expertise and drive to our team. I have no doubt that he will bring the same qualities to his role as Agricultural Resources Commissioner, a position he served with distinction once before,” said Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Richard K. Sullivan Jr.

“I’ve always been driven to find examples of sustainable development – projects that demonstrate that economic prosperity and environmental quality can be compatible,” said Watson. “A healthy Massachusetts agricultural sector provides numerous benefits to all communities throughout the Commonwealth in terms of fresh, nutritious food, jobs and economic development and the preservation of some of our most beautiful and productive lands. I am thrilled and honored to be back at the department.”

“I am grateful to Governor Patrick and to the Massachusetts agriculture industry for the privilege to have served as commissioner,” said Commissioner Soares. “I couldn’t be more confident in the department’s continued success in passing the baton to Greg who is not only a good friend to me but more importantly to our Commonwealth’s farming community. I wish him the best of luck and look forward to working with him through this transition.”

Watson has also served as executive director of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), a resident-driven community planning organization in Roxbury. Prior to serving at DSNI, he had been director of educational programs for Second Nature and director of The Nature Conservancy’s Eastern Regional Office.

Watson was appointed vice president for Sustainable Development and Renewable Energy at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative in 1999. It was in that capacity where he served as the first executive director of the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust. He also directed the Trust’s Cape & Islands Offshore Wind Public Outreach Initiative and its efforts to launch the US Offshore Wind Collaborative (USOWC).

A volunteer member of President Obama’s 2008 Energy Transition Team, Watson currently serves on the boards of the U.S. Offshore Wind Collaborative, the Buckminster Fuller Institute and Ocean Arks International.

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Watson currently resides in Falmouth and has two children, Brooke and Travis.

Press release provided by the Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs.
UNANIMOUS: NOFA/Mass Board Joins Monsanto Appeal

BY JACK KITTREDGE
NOFA/Mass Policy Director

On Saturday, March 24, the NOFA/Mass board voted unanimously to join with 70 other groups, farmers, and farming businesses (including all the other 5 NOFA chapter plaintiffs) in appealing the February 24 dismissal by Federal Judge Naomi Buchwald of our lawsuit against Monsanto.

The vote came despite the very real possibility that, should the appeal fail, Monsanto could request of the court that the plaintiffs be required to pay the company’s attorney’s fees in defending against the appeal. The chances are slim that the court would support such a motion – a chance estimated to be in the 5% range according to lead attorney Dan Ravicher. If the court were to do so the sum could amount to as much as $200,000 or more.

Although that is a large amount for an organization of our size, board members expressed the feeling that this matter was too important to let drop and that someone had to stand up to Monsanto’s financial bullying tactics. As a part of joining the appeal, the NOFA/Mass board also unanimously voted to join 62 of the other plaintiffs in signing the Mutual Aid Agreement reprinted below.

“In the spirit of Community Mutual Aid, as traditionally practiced among the Amish for hundreds of years, we join together as people united in solidarity. Our participation in this struggle and in this agreement is by design, of free will and for the common good.

As the duly authorized representative of an Appellant in the Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association et al v. Monsanto Appellant group, I hereby do solemnly affirm on behalf of my organization, that our entity pledges the solid and unwavering support, financial and otherwise, including that of engaging the large citizen community supporting this legal action, of Mutual Aid and just treatment within our community of Appellants, based on ability to pay, in matters associated with this lawsuit.

We shall act as a single united community working in solidarity. Any targeted action of harm against one of us represents an attack upon all of us. We affirm our solidarity and common belief in Mutual Aid for all fellow Appellants.”

It will be some time (possibly up to one year) before the appeal is heard and decided. We will be assigned a three-judge panel from among the 12 sitting judges on the appeals court. Which judges we get (an important consideration in our chances of winning) we will not know until the day of the appeal.

Thanks to those of you who contacted board members before their decision. I was personally very happy to see such strong support and know it reflects the sentiment of the many members to whom I have spoken about this suit over the past few months. It was a very proud day for NOFA/Mass.

If you have questions or comments about NOFA/Mass Policy, please contact Jack Kittredge at jack@nofamass.org, 978-355-2853.
Eating Fukushima

By Ed Kozierski, Co-Director of documentary Uncanny Terrain

Article reprinted with permission by North Avenue Magazine

When does a victim become a perpetrator? That’s the question that kept coming up as we made our way across the irradiated landscape. Many foreigners fled Japan after the tsunami triggered a meltdown at the Fukushima Daichi Nuclear Power Plant last March. My wife Junko Kajino and I went the opposite way, spending five months inside the U.S.-declared 50-mile no-go radius for our in-progress documentary Uncanny Terrain.

We were there to capture the viewpoints of people toiling on the frontlines of the nuclear crisis: organic farmers whose fields had been dusted by the plume of radioactive cesium that swirled over eastern Japan in the days after the reactor exploded. Is it even possible to be an organic farmer when your land has been contaminated by fallout? Technically, yes. The official organic standard in Japan makes no mention of radiation. The real answer, of course, is more complicated.

Farm, 45 miles from the crippled power plant. The Yoshidas, who have farmed their land for nine generations, welcomed us with a plate of baby bamboo they’d gathered from the hillside—a dish we knew was likely to have absorbed radiation from the fallout.

Anxious about the health risk but grateful for the hospitality, we accepted the food, as we would each time this scene was replayed. The one exception was at a party a cattle rancher named Yoshizawa threw in July to celebrate receiving half the compensation he was owed for the despoilment of his pasture. That week international headlines were filled with reports of cesium in Fukushima beef and milk. We turned down a plate of grilled Wagyu beef. Many of the revelers, farmers and hospital workers, were eating it raw.

We drove past fields that were still littered with fishing boats from the tsunami. Safely past the checkpoint, it was quiet and green, nature already beginning to reclaim the earth from the humans that had fled their mess. We went in wearing our full protective gear, but it was 100 degrees that day, and after a few hours we peeled off the sweat-drenched rain suits, rationalizing that the heat was a more immediate threat than the radiation.

Before the disaster, Fukushima had two million people and two main industries: agriculture and nuclear power. Ten percent of the population evacuated, moving in with family elsewhere if they could, but most languishing for months on cots in gyms before making new homes in government-issued shipping containers. The contamination spread well beyond Fukushima’s borders, with radioactive hotspots turning up 200 miles south in Tokyo and beyond. But for Japan and the world, Fukushima, like Chernobyl, has become synonymous with a nuclear no-man’s land.
In April most of the farmers were given authorization to plow and plant their fields. Even weeks after the meltdown, few of them knew how polluted their land was or what that pollution would mean. Markets kept their crops in patriotic “support Fukushima” discount bins, most of it winding up unsold and discarded. Local officials claimed that fears of radiation amounted to unfair discrimination against Fukushima. The government raised the limits on maximum permissible exposure to levels that nuclear watchdogs declared deadly. Even after all these decades living with nuclear technology, the science behind the long-term health effects of low-level radiation remains in dispute, so that a typical Fukushima’s exposure would be called harmless by the government, or guaranteed cancer by a nuclear activist, and they both can show you hard evidence to prove their claim.

The farmers keep growing their crops. They all eat it themselves. Some of them feed it to their families. Others’ wives and children have moved to less contaminated places, leaving the husbands to work the land, to breathe cesium-tainted soil when the wind picks up. Most conventional farmers feed their harvest into the pipeline of the national agricultural co-op, and rely on the government’s lax regime for testing land and crops. By and large the organic farmers work outside this system, imposing a stricter standard on themselves, boning up on the science, rigorously testing their own fields and produce when they can access the sometimes scarce measurement devices.

Some rice—the staple the Japanese eat in the greatest quantity, and thus the food of greatest concern for contamination—has tested above the legal limits, leading to bans on sale from certain areas. But most of the farmers we’ve followed have seen their crops show little or no detectible radiation, a result that puzzles researchers compared to the projections based on levels in Chernobyl. If Fukushima is to survive, if its farming is to continue, the farmers must learn what causes this result and how to replicate it: how to reduce or eliminate radiation in their produce, or on their land.

Many people say the effort is hopeless, or even willfully endangering children, who are most susceptible to radiation-induced disease. But these farmers are committed to continue cultivating their land for future generations, fully disclosing any radiation they find so consumers can make their own choices about their level of acceptable risk. Organic farming is a continuation of ancient practices passed down from their ancestors, and nuclear contamination is the latest of many threats they have faced to their traditional way of life. They are trying to learn how to live with the fallout that is the consequence of Japan’s appetite for energy. It’s a lesson we’ll all have to learn, one way or another.
NOFA/Mass Journeyperson Farmer Training Program Takes Root

By Michal Lumsden, Beginning Farmer Program Coordinator

The NOFA/Mass Journeyperson Farmer Training Program has taken root. We are pleased to announce that Elizabeth Green and Lily Walter are our inaugural journeyperson farmers, chosen from a pool of 10 enthusiastic growers who applied.

Our journeyperson program offers people who are serious about pursuing careers as organic farmers in Massachusetts the opportunity to have intensive, hands-on mentored training. It is a two-year commitment of support from NOFA/Mass to aspiring farmers who are ready to farm on their own.

The journeyperson program is part of NOFA/Mass’ expanding programming for beginning farmers. In partnership with NOFA chapters in Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York and Vermont, and with the Maine Organic Farmers and Growers Association, we are developing a comprehensive and regional Beginning Farmer Program that addresses distinct phases of farmers’ professional development.

Both Green and Walter are farming independently this season, after taking on jobs over the last few years at farms that gave them progressively more responsibility. Green is starting her second year as the manager of Apple Street Farm in Essex, Mass., and Walter is beginning her own small-scale vegetable farm on Martha’s Vineyard.

Green grew up in Beverly, Mass., and went to college in the Midwest, majoring in political science. She worked in advocacy in Washington, D.C., and Boston for five years after college, learning about the farm bill and the craziness of our food policy system. In 2008, she “took a year off” to intern at the Belmont CSA, had a challenging and satisfying experience and got hooked on farming. Before becoming the manager at Apple Street Farm in 2011, Green apprenticed for two seasons at Powisset Farm in Dover, Mass.

Originally Walter is from Atlanta, but moved to Martha’s Vineyard when her dad was hired as the editor of a local newspaper when she was a teenager. She studied anthropology and women’s studies at college, and then lived in northern California, western Massachusetts and Georgia. Walter quickly realized that she enjoys physical, outdoor jobs. In addition to farming, she has worked seasonally as a backcountry trail-maintenance member and as a wildland firefighter for a prescribed-fire crew. Eventually she found her way back to Martha’s Vineyard and was hired as the field crew manager at Morning Glory Farm, a 60-acre fruit, vegetable and meat farm, where she worked for two years.

Mentorship is a central part of the Journeyperson Farmer Training Program. Both Green and Walter have been paired with mentors who will be available to offer support, guidance and encouragement throughout the season. Many thanks to Amanda Cather, of Waltham Fields Community Farm; David Fisher, of Natural Roots Farm; and Chris Yoder, of Vanguarden CSA for agreeing to serve as mentors to Green and Walter. As mentors, these experienced farmers and dedicated NOFA/Mass members will play a key role in the education and professional development of Green and Walter.

More information about the NOFA/Mass Journeyperson Farmer Training Program is available here. This program is made possible by a grant from the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Elizabeth Green

Lily Walter

www.nofamass.org

April 2012 Newsletter
The NOFA/Mass Raw Milk Network has been working for more than a year to shepherd a bill through the Massachusetts legislature that would help raw milk dairies meet the growing demand for their products. If enacted, the bill would allow raw milk farmers to deliver milk to their customers. Currently consumers who want raw milk must travel to the farm to make their purchases. The bill would also allow dairies to sell their raw milk on land they own that is not necessarily contiguous with the land where they milk – currently farmers are forbidden from doing this.

The bill was introduced by Representative Ann Gobi in 2011, and passed favorably out of the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture in February. It is now being considered by the House Committee on Ways and Means, which is charged with determining the financial impact of pending legislation on the Commonwealth.

NOFA/Mass’ position is that passage of the bill will not incur any additional costs for the state. The proposed legislation would not change any practices or standards on the farms themselves, and so would not require any additional on-farm inspections or testing. The excellent safety record of Massachusetts’ 27 raw milk dairies demonstrates their ability to produce, handle and distribute their milk safely. This legislation will result in additional income for dairy farms and will help preserve these farms. That increased sustainability for these farms will have a ripple effect of positive fiscal impact for the state, including:

- Increased tax revenue
- Increase in the ability for more dairy farmers to sell directly to the public – key to the success of farms in Massachusetts where land and labor prices are among the highest in the country
- The establishment of rules that will help ensure raw milk is safely and properly handled when being delivered.

Massachusetts farms have survived and grown in recent years largely due to the success of direct-to-consumer sales. Because of the prohibition on delivery, raw milk dairies are significantly restricted in their access to the markets that could sustain them. Neighboring states have laws that allow consumers much greater access to raw milk, putting Massachusetts dairies at a competitive disadvantage. At a time when our state is losing dairies at an alarming rate, this bill would give them a proven tool for sustainability.

We are asking NOFA/Mass members and other raw milk supporters to contact their representatives to urge them to support passage of the bill. See our action alert at [http://www.nofamass.org/programs/organicdairy/actionalert_mar032212.php](http://www.nofamass.org/programs/organicdairy/actionalert_mar032212.php).

For more information about the NOFA/Mass Raw Milk Network or the current raw milk legislation, please contact Winton Pitcoff – winton@nofamass.org or call (413) 634-5728.

www.nofamass.org
The Business of Making Chevre

By Mindy Harris, PR Coordinator

I couldn’t help but feel a bit like a shepherd as I led a herd of Saanen and Alpine goats out to pasture on a chilly day in late February. Perhaps the only thing missing was a walking stick and flute. In fairy-tale fashion, the goats come along, without incident; playing a kind of animal form of ‘follow-the-leader.’ The ritual of taking roughly 60 goats out for a walk to pasture is something Ann Starbard manages every afternoon at Crystal Brook Farm in Sterling. The goats are very happy out in the pasture, and munch on everything they can get their mouths on, including tree bark and various bushes. Most of the girls were pregnant, so rather than take what would probably be more of a decidedly energetic pace out to the fields, these animals meandered, or rather, waddled carefully. Because goats generally deliver twins, most of these pre-natal creatures appeared almost as wide horizontally as vertically. Each baby seems to poke out the side of the animal’s midsection, as if their mommies were toting saddle bags.

Crystal Brook Farm in Sterling, MA has been producing goat cheese for 15 years. Ann is a perennial instructor in the NOFA/Mass spring and fall cheesemaking courses, and is one of only a few goat cheese makers in Massachusetts. My trip out to Sterling was on a day that a few of the mommies were showing signs of labor, and so I had the great delight of watching 3 kids enter the world. The kids are the first in a long series of events that have to transpire in order for Crystal Brook Farm cheese to come to market. Together with her husband Eric, Ann operates every aspect of their production business. They own their own animals (most cheesemakers do not), they feed their animals hay that was cut from their own pastures (also something many animal caretakers do not do); they milk the animals, and make and package cheese on-site at the farm. Food safety is at the core of their operations. Milk and cheese have strict handling regulations and are considered highly perishable. Crystal Brook is meticulous in the maintenance of its cheese room and the equipment used to milk animals and make cheese. Safety is a critical part of staying in business for anyone who deals with dairy. All of the farm tasks reside right along with distribution, accounting, business planning, marketing and other business-related tasks which the owners spearhead as well. Their days, as you might imagine, are very jam-packed.

There has been a shift over the 15 years Starbard has been producing cheese. She sees consumers who are much more knowledgeable and familiar with the story behind their food. However, one common misperception Ann feels, among consumers, is the tendency to romanticize the work of agriculture – particularly the work of producers who have animals. Some non-farmers have the perception of a kind of tranquil, meditative existence like the kind I’ve captured in the beginning of this article. “They think that you have all day to be outside and pet your animals and have fun,” Ann offered. Although there are many moments of great joy and reflection during the day, raising animals is a very tall task – one that consumes many more hours a week than the standard 9-5 gig. However, consumers from the Northeast, Starbard proposes, tend to be more familiar with their food sources than elsewhere; and this is a good thing for producers. As a business, Crystal Brook is ‘vertically integrated,’ Ann explains. Because Crystal Brook is not sourcing most of its various inputs, the business requires a host of skill sets that many farmers might find daunting.

Growing up on a dairy farm was useful job training for Ann, so were the animal bio-science courses she took in college. Dealing with animals and milking was something she has always been comfortable with. Originally she and Eric were milking 40 cows and selling milk wholesale. They began to consider how to increase profitability and product margins by creating a value-added product. Around the mid 90’s, MDAR had just started their farm viability program. The Starbards participated in a program for technical assistance. They had dabbled in a small veggie CSA with a handful of local participants, but ultimately, Ann’s background and experience led her towards animals. “Milk production is a magical act,” she offered, “to take a blood supply and nutrients and turn it into milk, which is then secreted, is magic. And then to use chemistry to turn that milk into...
something else is also magic. It’s never boring. There is always a challenge.”

Crystal Brook is careful not to promote itself as Certified Organic. Like many producers in the agricultural industry, the Starbards have had to balance their commitment to sustainable values against the financial crunch involved with purchasing organic grain. Although most of their feed is hay or grass from the pasture, they do supplement their food sources with grain for the goats; particularly when the does are pregnant. While all their animal husbandry techniques are holistic in nature, and the hay they produce is not produced with pesticides, they have found that organic grain has been difficult for a variety of reasons. Every few years Ann re-assesses organic grain sources and tries to see if any new suppliers have made it viable for them to enter the organic grain market. Ann admits that she is due for her every-few-year assessment.

Of the various tasks Ann engages in on a daily basis to run the business, the animal husbandry and cheesemaking are her favorite parts. Making fresh chevre is a 3-day process. Day one involves pasteurization of milk. Crystal Brook uses a low-temperature, long-time method - heating to 140 degrees and holding the milk at that temperature for 30 minutes. Then the temperature is lowered to 90 degrees, at which time a bacterial culture and rennet is added. After the culture and rennet are added, the temperature is reduced, and the milk is allowed to ripen in the 80-gallon pasteurizer for 18-22 hours. With chevre making, there is no cutting of curds like there is with other hard-cheese making processes. This type of cheesemaking includes lactic-acid curd formation. The bacteria used in the milk consume lactose, which is then converted to lactic acid. The drop in pH from the acid production alters the protein molecules, and works in conjunction with the rennet to make a curd that’s a soft curd. Making chevre, like making any cheese, is part art, part science.

On Day Two, the cheesemakers open the lid to the pasteurizer. There’s a big pool of curds with a thin layer of whey on top. They line a bucket with cheesecloth, and scoop the ripened soft curds from the pasteurizer and fill up 20-25 cheesecloth bags, which are hung on a draining rail, where the whey will drain for 24 hours. The acid in the cheese makes it difficult for any external bacteria to find their way in during the hanging process. On Day Three, the Starbards take the curd which has drained (and which still contains some moisture) and salt is mixed in with the curd. From there the final product – logs, or patties for marinated cheeses - are formed, wrapped and sealed. It’s at this point that herbs or ginger are added to the chevre for product variations. The cheese is then refrigerated for 24 hours, which solidifies it so that the producers can label and handle it if it is destined for shipping. The initial refrigeration helps to protect the end-product and allows it to be made ready for distribution.

Crystal Brook Farm fresh chevre, Ann told me, is distributed mostly through Farmers Markets, through a few restaurants and retailers, and at the farm store. Of all those distribution methods, the Farmers Market venue is the one which connects the producer to the consumer directly; and the mechanism Ann prefers the most. She believes that Farmers Markets not only give farmers the fairest price for their goods (as opposed to wholesale), but the educational nature of the market helps to raise awareness among consumers of how the ag industry works. The market also gives useful information to the producer about what their consumers want; it provides a kind of anecdotal marketing research, which helps inform product development. When I asked why go wholesale at all, when the profit margins for a niche product are highest with direct-to-consumer distribution, Starbard explained that when restaurants and markets carry their product, it is a marketing mechanism which helps build brand recognition. Ann finds that chefs and restaurants enjoy promoting their use of local cheese, and so the Crystal Brook name is often featured directly on the menu of the locations where they distribute. Wholesale distribution also gives the Starbards some income during the months when they stop milking. For January and February, during the winter months, the goats are dried off; during which time cheese production comes to a temporary halt. Once the does give birth again in late February or early March, cheese production starts up again. And so too did this spring herald a new generation of Crystal Brook Farm goats, which are now hard at work, making their contribution to a local food system.
From Field to Fridge

Farms listed in the NOFA/Mass Organic Food Guide have the opportunity to highlight here what they currently have available for sale. Pick up some of their goods and help support your local organic and sustainable farmers today!

If you would like your farm or business listed on the Organic Food Guide website, contact Rebecca Buell at foodguide@nofamass.org or 978-724-3561.

To access a farm’s full Organic Food Guide listing, click on that farm’s name.

Astarte Farm
123 West St.
Hadley, MA
413-584-5552
dorganic@aol.com
www.astartefarm.com
Amherst Farmers’ Market, Saturdays 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the Amherst Town Common, Spring Street
Fresh green garlic, lettuce, overwintered kale and spinach, napini

Atlas Farm
635 River Road
Deerfield, MA
413-695-2728
gideon@atlasfarm.com, www.atlasfarm.com
Amherst Farmers’ Market, Saturdays 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Boston Copley Sq. Market, Tuesday and Friday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; plant sales at the farm in Deerfield M-Sat 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Vegetable plants, salad greens, lettuce, kale, collards, radishes, greenhouse cucumbers, greenhouse tomatoes, herbs

Billingsgate Farm
6 County Road
781-293-6144
farmgirl@billingsgatefarm.com, billingsgatefarm.com
Farm Stand open Monday-Friday 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Saturday & Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Pembroke Farmers’ Market 9:00 a.m. to noon
Certified Organic produce available in June

Birch Moon Farm & Herbs
42 Cooleyville Road
Shutesbury, MA
413-259-1183
diereina@aol.com, birchmoonherbals.wordpress.com
call to schedule a time for pickup
Right now we have delicious Organic Olva Extra Virgin Olive Oil from my extended family in Greece, in 3 L tins for $36 (wholesale price!). They grow and harvest their own Kalamata olives and press them without blending in anyone else’s olives or oils. They just received USDA certification but have been chemical-free for as long as it’s been in the family (over 150 yrs)

Bird of the Hand Farm
PO Box 264, 33 School St.
Sterling, MA
978-422-6217
birdofthehandfarm@gmail.com
www.birdofthehandfarm.com
8 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday-Saturday
perennials: daylillies (various colors), bee balm, lemon balm, lovage, irises (bearded and siberian), pyrethrum and seedlings: salad burnett, parsley

Blue Heron Organic Farm
PO Box 67
Lincoln, MA
781-254-3727
farmer@blueheronfarmlincoln.com, www.blueheronfarmlincoln.com
Certified Organic Farm stand located on Rt. 117 just east of the railroad tracks, Lincoln, Open: Wed-Thurs 10-5 (June-October). We will be having an organic plant sale on the farm every Fri-Sun starting in Mid-may
Organic seedlings sale: almost every weekend in May;
Lexington Farmers’ Markets: Tuesdays 2 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and on Davis Square, Wednesdays noon to 6 p.m. We also sell to many Boston area restaurants; please see website (click on ‘Restaurants’) for seasonal availability. Please email the farmer if interested in volunteering!!!

Farmer Dave’s
437 Parker Road
Dracut, MA
978-349-1952
farm@farmerdaves.net
www.farmerdaves.net
No farmers market hours yet - we have a spring CSA share that runs from March to early June. Pick-ups in Dracut on Tuesdays, Somerville on Wednesdays, or Tewskbury on Thursdays.
Items available include greenhouse greens, root vegetables, greenhouse-grown tomatoes and cucumber, herbs, and other early spring / greenhouse crops.
Members can sign up via our website, www.farmerdaves.net
Starting April 21st, our farm is open for plant sales: Thursday through Sunday 9-5, or call for appointment other hours
Certified Organic plants-pansies, early season annuals, perennial plants, herb plants, vegetable starts and hanging baskets

Dragonfly Farms
40 Prescott St.
Pepperell, MA
978-433-3906
farmer@dragonfly-farms, www.dragonfly-farms.com
Farm Stand open every day from 9 a.m. until dusk
Pasture raised-organically fed-chicken eggs, organic layer pellets sold at bulk pricing, and in early May vegetable transplants

John Crow Farm
PO Box 252
Groton, MA
978-842-1JCF (1523)
johncrowfarm@gmail.com, johncrowfarm.com
Farm Stand opens May 14th, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Beef, Pork, Lamb, Chicken, Duck, Goose, Turkey, Quail, Pheasant, Rabbit, Vegetables, and other locally made gourmet food products

Groundworks Farm
PO Box 437
Pittsford, VT
802-310-4951
info@groundworksfarm.com, www.GroundworksFarm.com
CSA shares available: Vegetable, Chicken, Meat, Egg and Cheese; pick-ups in Cambridge, MA, Middlebury, VT, Hebron, NH and on farm. More information at our website: www.GroundworksFarm.com

Hettie Belle Farm
Warwick, MA
978-344-6241
jennifer@hettiebellefarm.com, www.hettiebellefarm.com
100% grass-fed beef, 100% grass-fed lamb, organic pork, organic chicken, organic turkey, organic goose, organic duck! Pre-order - just call or email jennifer@hettiebellefarm.com

Golden Oak Farm
44 Plain Road
Hatfield, MA
dandp2002@yahoo.com, http://www.goldenoakfarm.us/
Farm Stand is open daily from 8 a.m. to dusk from April 15th through November 15th
Vegetable, herb, and flower seedlings, greens, rhubarb, eggs, cut your own thyme. We use sustainable, nutrient density practices to produce the best quality vegetables we can.

Robinson Farm
42 Jackson Road
Hardwick, MA
413-477-6988
info@robinsonfarm.org, www.robinsonfarm.org
Open daily 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Winter markets this year will be at Amherst Middle School, Saturdays and Somerville at the Armory. We sell at Mass Local Foods Coop and check our website for a listing of cheese locations.
Farmstead aged cheeses (cow), grass-fed beef, eggs, local yogurt, goat cheese, maple syrup, jams, fermented, pickles and seasonal vegetables.

High Meadow Farm
28 High St.
Hubbardston, MA
978-928-5646
jassyhighmeadow@yahoo.com, www.highmeadowfarms.com
Farm hours: 9 a.m. to dusk
100% Grass fed beef and Woodland raised pork

Many Hands Organic Farm
411 Sheldon Road
Barre, MA
978-353-2833
farm@mhof.net, www.mhof.net
Right now we have lard at $20/quart and $10/pint. You can sign up for our 2012 offerings for the CSA – spring, summer, juicing, fall, fruit, apple, and flower shares. We are now able to work with SNAP recipients. You can also order pork, chicken, turkey, beef, and baby layer chicks. All is certified organic except the beef.

Siena Farms
113 Haynes Road
Sudbury, MA
978-261-5365
chris@sienafarms.com, www.sienafarms.com
Siena Farms South End farm store is open Tuesday – Sunday noon to 8 p.m.
2012 CSA Farm Shares available – while they last! Full Season, Summer, or Autumn Vegetable Shares, Sweet Corn & Orchard Fruit Share, and Tomato Share; see our website for details. Our own storage veggies and other locally sourced produce available at the Boston farmstore all spring.

Steady Lane Farm
144 Steady Lane
Ashfield, MA
413-628-4689
farmer3234@gmail.com
Grass-fed beef, pick your own raspberries and lavender

Sweet Autumn Farm
180 Prospect St
Carlisle, MA
978-287-0025
Farm stand open Tuesdays 3 to 6 p.m., Fridays 1 to 6 p.m., and Saturdays 2 to 6 p.m.
Duck and chicken eggs, heirloom tomato, pepper, herb and flower seedlings
Sweetwater Farm
95 Maple Lane
Petersham, MA
413-813-5746
burtonik@yahoo.com, www.sweetwaterfarmma.org
Maple syrup, Hay, Beef, and Lamb

Turner Farms Maple Syrup
PO Box 65
South Egremont, MA
413-528-5710
tfmsyrup@gmail.com, www.turnerfarmsmaplesyrup.com
Hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week
We have available 100% Pure Maple syrup and this year our
son will be adding some value added products to our shelves. He will also be hiring himself' out for parties with a maple
cotton candy machine. He’s a 13 year old boy with much drive
and enthusiasm.

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2 South Mill River Road
South Deerfield, MA
413-665-4513
warmcolors@verizon.net, www.warmcolorsapiary.com
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equipment and supplies

When Pigs Fly Farm
222 Sandisfield Road
Sandisfield, MA
413-258-3397
whenpigsflyfarm1@verizon.net
This year we will not be doing any farmers’ markets. We
are concentrating on our CSA and supplying our farmstand
instead.
Early greens, honey, maple syrup, fresh baked breads, chicken,
duck, eggs, bedding plants, vegetable plants, herbs and more.

The Importance of the Plant’s Root Ball
Frequently a bedding plant is transplanted into field soil conditions that are less than
perfect. Within the root block or ball, the plant, and the plant’s partner microbes should
have established a system and structures capable of extending their organization out into
the field soil. The green leaves provide the
energy to power the outreach and the potting
soil serves as the cultural base. Investing in
sufficient media for ample root balls pays back
in improved crop yields.

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Michael Alterman
Katherine Anderson
Lindsey Apple
Alice and Ted Armen
Jeremy Barker-Plotkin
Claire Bateman
Dee Blake
Alden Booth
Elisabeth Greenough
Lisa Brown
Suzanne Brown
Kathleen Burek
David Carlson
Donna Chandler
Claire Chang
John Ward
Rick Charnes
Jonathan Chisholm
Lorrie Dahlen
Deborah Daucher
Michael DeRosa
Tim and Linda Diering
Barbara Dombrowski
Will and Donna Elwell
David Falk
Carl Fawcett
Marcia Feinberg
Brooke Finn
Rita Wollmering
Alden Fish
Bob and Sally Fitz
Michael Galasso
Steve Goodwin
Judy Hall
Anthony Hall
Todd Hay
Rebeka Hoffman
Jane Huber
David Kennard
George Kent
David Fontaine
Cherie, Becky, Joey Kerxhalli
David Kleinschmidt
John Knowles
Frank Koll
George C. Krusen II
Rick Kunz and Laura Plath
Jeff Langevin
Henry Lappen
Wm. Levine
Brian Link
Johanna R Lynch
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Bob Minnoci
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Anthony Penny
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Hui Eddie Qi
Andrew Mark Quillen
Julie Raymond
Annie Rockwell
Susan Rubel
Attila Sala
Kenneth Santos
Philip and Laura Shafovaloff
Lesley Shore & Bill Tragakis
Robin Silva
Nicholas Skinas
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Tucker Smith
Jessica Sopko
Maureen Sperry
Jack Stacy
Russell Stafford
Fiammetta Straneo
Steve Stycos
Jaye Tauscher
Paul & Alice Vigliani
Martha Gilpatrick Wolf
Richard Zukowski
COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

EVENTS

BEANTOWN JEWISH GARDENS AND HEBREW COLLEGE FIRST ANNUAL BOSTON JEWISH FOOD CONFERENCE: SOWING THE SEEDS OF SUSTAINABILITY
Sunday, April 22
12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Hebrew College, 160 Herrick Road, Newton Center

NOFA-NH HOLISTIC ORCHARD INTENSIVE
Sunday, May 19th
9:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Maple Frost Farm, Langdon, NH
NOFA-NH is delighted to have Michael Phillips, author of The Apple Grower and The Holistic Orchard, discuss the role fungal duff management and optimal nutrition plays for fruit trees and woody berries. We will meet in a homestead orchard in southwestern New Hampshire and identify the insects and diseases faced by New England growers. The cost for this workshop is $65 for NOFA members and $75 for non-NOFA members. For more information or to register, send an email to jamastrianni@yahoo.com or call Jack Mastrianni at 603-835-6488.

JEWISH FARM SCHOOL: TO TILL AND TO TEND: JEWISH FOOD AND FARMING SUMMER INTENSIVE
June 3-10, 2012
Farms in the Greater Boston Area and Hebrew College, Newton, MA
Do you want to spend a week working on organic farms in the Boston Area while earning college credit? The Jewish Farm School and Hebrew College are partnering to offer you a weeklong, intensive course exploring the intersection of Judaism, agriculture and food justice. For students and professionals, ages 18-25; others will be considered. Tuition is $1000 + transportation; generous fellowships are available. *College credit available* To learn more contact Jacob@jewishfarmschool.org. Application Due: May 1st

STROLLING OF THE HEIFERS PARADE
Saturday, June 2
10 a.m.
Downtown Brattleboro’s historic Main Street, Vermont
A weekend (June 1-3) of fun and education for the whole family, built around the world-famous agriculturally-themed Strolling of the Heifers Parade. Watch scores of lovable heifer calves led by future farmers, followed by many other farm animals, bands, tractors, floats, clowns and much more.
http://www.strollingoftheheifers.com/
ANNOUNCEMENTS

FARMERS NEEDED IN CAMEROON

Teach and/or mentor regarding: the basics of organic farming & sustainability; composting: how to test & enrich the soil and improve yields; rainwater harvesting and irrigation; easier ways to clear the land; animal husbandry (pigs, goats, rabbits, chickens, cattle) and fish farming. INTERESTED? Please READ the NGOabroad website. http://www.ngoabroad.com/. Then answer Questionnaire & embed with resume in email to info@NGOabroad.com.

ORGANIC FARM FOR SALE IN ACTON, MA

This 14.12 acre farm includes a beautiful farm stand ready for selling your produce! Address: 982 Main St, Acton, MA 01720. MSL # 71330844. Asking price: $875,800. Contact Marianne Blackstone Tabner, Keller Williams Realty at (978) 621-8028.

NATIONAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

NRCS set aside $50 million in financial assistance under the EQIP Organic Initiative. Organic growers, growers transitioning to organic, and growers exempt from organic certification may use the funds install conservation practices on their land. Nutrient management, conservation crop rotation, residue management, cover crops, and conservation buffers are practices that help meet requirements of an Organic System Plan (OSP).

The last opportunity to submit an application for 2012 funding is June 1st. If you are interested in the opportunities offered through the Organic Initiative, contact your local NRCS Service Center to complete an application. Service Centers can be found at: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/contact

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$2 off Admission with a copy of this ad.
NOFA/Mass Workshops
March-June

Spring Cheese-making
Workshop Series

**Semi-Firm Farmstead Cheese**
Saturday, April 21, 9:00am-3:00pm
Cost: $70
Instructors: Suzy Konecky and Anne Borgendale
Cricket Creek Farm
Williamstown, MA

**Semi-Hard, Washed-Rind Cheese**
Saturday, April 28, 9:00am-4:00pm
Cost: $110
Instructors: Pam and Ray Robinson
Robinson Farm
Hardwick, MA

**Dipped Curds and Italian Cheeses**
Saturday, May 12, 8:00am-5:00pm
Cost: $80
Instructor: Cliff Hatch
Upinigil Farm
Gill, MA

For more information, visit www.nofamass.org,
call Ben Grosscup, 413-658-5374, or email, ben.
grosscup@nofamass.org; put “Cheese-making” in subject.

***pot-luck lunch at 12 noon grass-fed burgers and buns will be served.
Please bring a small salad or desert to share.
(This workshop is co-sponsored by East Quabbin Land Trust)

**Twilight Wild Edibles Walk**
Thursday, May 31
Cost: $25 NOFA members / $30 non-members
Instructor: Russ Cohen
Location in Eastern MA - TBD
For more information, visit www.nofamass.org,
call Ben Grosscup, 413-658-5374, or email, ben.
grosscup@nofamass.org; put “Twilight Edible Walk” in subject.

**Backyard Poultry Workshops**

**Raising Chickens in the Backyard**
Saturday, April 21, 9:00am-12:00pm ***followed by optional pot-luck lunch
Cost: $30
Instructors: Tom and Jassy Bratko
High Meadow Farm
Hubbardston, MA
For more information, visit www.nofamass.org,
call Ben Grosscup, 413-658-5374, or email, ben.
grosscup@nofamass.org; put “Backyard Poultry” in subject.

**Organic, Pastured Beef Workshop**
Save the World, Grow and Eat more 100% Grass Fed Beef
Saturday, May 12, 10:00am-3:00pm
Cost: $35
Instructor: Ridge Shinn
East Quabbin Land Trust
Hardwick, MA
For more information, visit www.nofamass.org,
call Ben Grosscup, 413-658-5374, or email, ben.
grosscup@nofamass.org; put “Backyard Poultry” in subject.
Organic Gardening Workshops

**THE ART OF GARDENING**
Saturday, May 5, 9:00am-12:00pm ***followed by optional pot-luck lunch
Cost: $30
Instructor: Beth Ingham
Noonday Farm
Home of Beth Ingham
Winchendon Springs, MA

**LOW-TECH ORGANIC GARDENING WITH CHICKENS**
Saturday, June 2, 9:00am-12:00pm ***followed by optional pot-luck lunch
Cost: $30
Instructors: Clio Fisher and Eric Fisher
Home of Clio Fisher
Groton, MA

For more information, visit [www.nofamass.org](http://www.nofamass.org), call Ben Grosscup, 413-658-5374, or email, ben.grosscup@nofamass.org; put “Organic Gardening” in subject.

Beekeeping Workshops

**BEGINNING BEEKEEPING**
Saturday, May 12, 9:00am-11am
Cost: $25 NOFA members / $30 non-members
Instructor: Jean-Claude Bourrut
Boston Nature Center
Mattapan, MA

If you are thinking about taking up beekeeping, this is a great introductory workshop. Jean-Claude Bourrut, will cover all the basics of organic bee management - type of hive, materials needed, set-up, costs, honeybee life cycle, beekeepers’ seasonal duties, pests & diseases, and natural management.

**SWARM CONTROL AND SPLITTING HIVES**
Saturday, May 12, 12:00pm-2:00pm
Cost: $25 NOFA members / $30 non-members
Boston Nature Center
Mattapan, MA

Splitting hives can be very useful for a number of reasons - swarm control, apiary increase, honey production. Jean-Claude will go over various splitting techniques and will demonstrate one of those techniques in the apiary. This is a hands-on workshop. Please bring protective clothing (pants, long sleeves, veil) if you want to be in direct contact with the action.

For more information, visit [www.nofamass.org](http://www.nofamass.org)

Urban Gardening Workshops (Series)

**PART IV: COMPOSTING: EASY, CHEAP, NUTRIENT RICH**
Saturday, April 28, 2:00pm-3:30pm
Cost for individual workshops in Urban Gardening Series: $15 BHS Students and Faculty, $25 Brookline Community and NOFA/Mass members, $30 Non-members.

Brookline High School
Brookline, MA

This workshop explores a variety of compost methods, including: efficient Microbes, vermiculture, tumblers, barrels, and plain old piles. Presenter Allison Fastman will talk about what methods are best for different situations, what can and cannot be composted with each system, rat and pest control, Nitrogen and Carbon balance, and how to collect and use compost tea. Allison will also go over how to make a composter for each method, how to find excellent free materials, and how to use compost to enrich soils.

For more information for the Urban Gardening Series, visit [www.nofamass.org](http://www.nofamass.org), contact Drew Love at drew@nofamass.org or (330) 801-0389.
38th Annual Summer Conference
NOFA

Northeast Organic Farming Association
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University of Massachusetts, Amherst

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Hundreds of Vendors and Exhibitors, Live Entertainment, Children’s and Teen Conference, Country Fair

Keynote Speaker
Chellie Pingree, organic farmer and Member of Congress from Maine, promoting local food

To register: www.nofasummerconference.org
Email: info@nofasummerconference.org
Call: 413-549-1568
Know Your Food

Stonyfield began as an organic farming school. So we have a long history of helping people know their food.

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