



## PRESIDENT SIGNS FOOD SAFETY ACT INTO LAW

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*(Cont. P. 2 RIFB Directors)*

President Obama has signed into law the Food Safety Modernization Act which gives the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority to order recalls of food products, increase inspections, and boost record keeping for produce and food processing and packaging companies. Prior to this bill, major food-manufacturing facilities had been inspected about once every ten years. Under the new legislation, inspections will be accelerated to once every five years for low risk foods and once every three years for "high-risk" foods.

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Good Handling Practices (GHP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) are sets of guidelines that have been developed by many large food processors and large produce farms, either voluntarily or mandated by their buyers, to minimize risk of food contamination during production, handling, processing, packaging, and transportation. Under the old system, the government had no jurisdiction to set or enforce compliance with the company's guidelines.

The bill requires farms and food processing facilities to develop, implement, and keep records of GAP to help the FDA trace food items that have been or need to be recalled. But farms and processing plants with net revenues of less than \$500,000 per year that sell directly to consumers at the farm, at local markets, and community supported Agricultural Programs (CSAs) will be exempt from this bill. The law also

covers produce grown and processed outside the U.S.

### What it includes:

- Development of science-based standards that minimize the risk.
- Preventive measures.
- Issuance of mandatory recalls.
- A product labeling system will be required to allow trace-back of produce to a farm and even to the harvest date and lot on that farm.
- Conducting surprise inspections.



### What should you do if you are exempt?

The simplest answer is to do nothing, but that is not the smartest response. The law does not protect you from being liable, in case of contamination of your product, just because you are exempt. Food safety should be everyone's concern.

Source: Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News: Vol. 16: Issue 17.

***No Farmers, No Food!***

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- \$500 Dodge rebate

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*(Cont. from P. 1 RIFB Board of Directors)*

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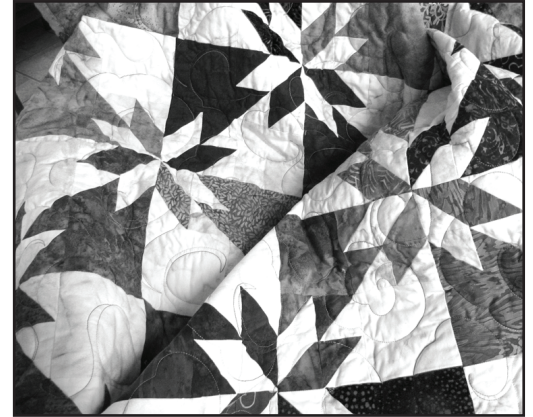
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## QUILT RAFFLE

The RI Farm Bureau Land Trust is sponsoring a raffle on a hand made quilt made by Shirley Tucker. The value of the quilt is \$2,000. Tickets are \$1.00 each and 6 for \$5.00. We will have the drawing for the quilt on Agriculture Day at the State House. Unlike the Big Boy raffle, this one will not be cancelled since we have the quilt in our possession. Call the RI Farm Bureau Office for tickets. Stay warm this winter by taking a chance to win this beautiful cozy quilt!



*Beautiful handmade quilt by Shirley Tucker—being raffled to benefit the Rhode Island Farm Bureau Land Trust*

## YOUNG FARMERS AND RANCHERS SCHOLARSHIPS

To further strengthen and support the future of Northeast agriculture, the Farm Family group of insurance companies is pleased to continue presenting Farm Family Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF & R) Scholarships. Throughout 2011, Farm Family will offer ten \$250 scholarships to individual members of six of our endorsing Farm Bureau states' Young Farmers & Ranchers Program to encourage their attendance at a leadership development conference.

Farm Family recognizes the important role these young leaders play not only in the future success of Farm Bureau, but also in the future success of Northeast agriculture. Farm Family wants to support the next generation of farming and present them opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

The scholarship monies can be applied toward conference registration fees, hotel accommodations, and/or travel-related expenses directly related to an individual YF & R member participating in an approved leadership development conference or activity.

YF & R members must be nominated by a member of their state's Young Farmer Committee. The scholarships will be administered on a reimbursement basis. After receiving verification that the YF & R member attended the event, a check will be sent to the state Farm Bureau for disbursement to the individual.

Please contact Kane Pigliavento, YF & R Program Coordinator at (518) 431-5584 for additional information or to discuss other events that may qualify.



## GOALS OF YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS PROGRAM

*by Casey Ryan, Coordinator*

Salutations, Farm Bureau Members! I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you and tell you about the Young Farmers and Ranchers program I am helping to revitalize. As stated in the above caption, my name is Casey. I am twenty-two, a life-long Rhode Islander and lover of agriculture and farming in every form, particularly pertaining to fuzzy creatures.

*(Cont. P. 6 Goals of YF & R)*



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For more information contact your local Farm Family office:

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**(401) 397-1050**

**Karen Worcester-Wood**  
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**(401) 949-5551**

**James Thompson**  
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**(401) 295-5000**

**Rebecca Vickers**  
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**Craig Marsh**  
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**(860) 376-2393**

\*SOURCE: 2008 Highline Data Farmowner Industry Comparison



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- Grainger
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- Over 100,000 companies nationwide
  - Subway
  - Jiffy Lube
  - Hotels
  - Spas
  - Entertainment

### WOMEN FARMERS GROW STRONG

Sunday 01/23/2011

By Liane Hansen |

January 16, 2011

| NPR.org.

More than 300,000 women operate farms across the U.S.

They are the largest minority group in the agriculture industry.

## WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

There will be a seminar on “Women in Agriculture” on March 31 at the URI Bay Campus from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm. Registration deadline is March 21 and the registration fee is \$20.00. The primary sponsor of the event is USDA.

Topics on the tentative agenda include:

- Creating and Sustaining Farmer Networks
- Choosing the right media for promoting your farm.
- Human Resource Management on Small Farms.
- Savvy Farm management in the Era of Facebook and Twitter.
- On Farm Retail and Value Added Operations.
- Farm Plans – Planning the future of your farm (and transfer decisions).
- Perennial crops for pick-your-own Operations – Managing risk and growing.
- Balancing Farm and Family.
- Lessons from Successful Farmers.
- Farmland Access – Promises and Challenges of Alternative Land Tenure.
- Following the Value Chain – Insights from Chefs and Buyers of Locally Grown Food.
- Women Farmers Training Future Farmers – Mentoring the next generation through farm apprenticeships.
- Ag Education and Service Learning – Incorporating educational opportunities into your farm plan.
- The Farm as a system – CSA model and direct to market.

For more information call the FSA County Office at 828-3120.



## FARMERS USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO BE AG ADVOCATES

*By Mike Sachoff - Web Pro News*

A group of agriculture advocates who launched AgChat on Twitter last year have now launched their own website the AgChat Foundation.

Farmers are leading a grassroots effort to develop the AgChat Foundation. The organization is designed to connect agriculture communities outside of Twitter.

The foundation's goal is to involve all areas of agriculture, including a variety of viewpoints such as conventional, organic, small and large operations. The AgChat Foundation is focused on four areas of social media:

- **Advocacy 2.0 Training:** Educate farmers through basic, mid-level & expert training to move mindsets up the technology ladder.
- **Strategic Advocacy Coordination:** Empower agriculture's voice through coordinated industry-wide efforts.
- **Data Analysis:** Provides tools to assist advocates with targeted community efforts.
- **Technology Scholarships:** Equip farmers with infrastructure to enable full use of social media (i.e. iPads, etc.)

“The talent and dedication the farmers and ranchers who helped bring the AgChat Foundation to fruition is absolutely inspiring,” said Michele Payn-Knoper, AgChat Founder.

“All of them have applied their technology skills and commitment to the betterment of agriculture in ways that set them apart, but we are all confident this is a common thread among farmers who raise our food, fuel, feed and fiber.” More than 2,000 people from seven countries have participated in AgChat since it started in April 2009.

## LIFE INSURANCE: YOU DO IT FOR LOVE

*From the Farm Family Life Insurance Company*

Valentine's Day will be here before you know it, and you may be thinking about what you can do to say "I love you" to the special people in your life.

Here's an idea. If you're still feeling the pinch of the economic crisis, and who isn't, why not dispense with the traditional Valentine's Day rituals and try something totally different? Consider updating your life insurance needs this Valentine's Day.

Don't see the connection between Valentine's Day and life insurance? Think about it. The main reason you buy life insurance is because you love people and want to protect them financially. And during these uncertain times, we're all seeking ways to maintain basic financial security for our loved ones. Having adequate life insurance coverage is a vital part of a sound financial security program.

Life insurance offers your loved one the security of knowing that even if the worst were to happen, there would not have to be a drastic change in their home life. Bills would get paid. Your home would stay in the family. And long-range financial plans, like education and retirement, would remain on track.

To begin, check out the LIFE Foundation's Web site ([www.lifehappens.org](http://www.lifehappens.org)). It offers a wealth of information and tools about life insurance. You should know the right questions to ask. The very first question to ask is "how much do I need?" If you die prematurely, you want to know that your loved ones will have enough money to continue living the kind of life you hoped they'd have. Once you know how much life insurance you need, then you're ready to ask "what kind?" Look at the various types of policies available to you (e.g., term insurance, permanent insurance or perhaps a combination of the two).

Most important, seek professional advice from a qualified insurance professional. Your Farm Family agent can help you accurately assess your insurance needs and help you determine what type of life insurance best meets your needs. You can find one in your area at [www.farmfamily.com](http://www.farmfamily.com) or calling (800) THE-FARM.

With life insurance, you can continue to show your love, even after you're gone.

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LOVE**



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Q: When is a farmer like a magician?  
 A: When he turns his cow to pasture.

Q: Why did the farmer call his pig "Ink"?  
 A: Because it was always running out of the pen.

Q: What do you call cattle with a sense of humor?  
 A: Laughing stock.

Q: Why can't the bankrupt cowboy complain?  
 A: He's got no beef.

**FOOD DRIVE**

Each year during Food Check Out Week, RI Farm Bureau sponsors a Food Drive for the Ronald MacDonald House. Food Check Out Week is a series of national events and educational programs that demonstrate the affordability, abundance and safety of food in the United States. In 2011 Food Check Out Week will be the week of Feb 20-26. In previous years it was held on the day that it was estimated a family had to work up to in order to earn enough money to pay for their food for the entire year (unlike Tax Freedom Day where you have to work up to the middle of May to pay for your taxes.) But in recent years the emphasis has been on nutrition and food safety rather than affordability.

In the past few years, RI Farm Bureau has gathered food from local farmers that still have food in storage such as apples, potatoes, winter squash, preserves etc. So we encourage farmers to save a little bit for the food drive the last week of February. However, we will take any kind of non-perishable food from anyone for the food drive. We will be in touch in the beginning of the year.

**GOALS OF YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS PROGRAM**

*(Cont. from P. 2 Goals of YF & R)*

Currently, the average age of a farmer in the State of Rhode Island is 56.5. On the bright side, at least it's not one hundred and two. I am hoping to counteract this shortage of new blood by kindling an interest in farming. This is Goal #1 of the Rhode Island YF&R.

In order to begin to achieve Goal #1, we need to get word out to the young people who are unaware that this program

exists. Given my experience with very exuberant college graduates who take life as it comes and are willing to dabble in everything, I would think colleges are a pretty good starting point to find these individuals.

There are also events that are swarming with more and more people every year - Farmers' Markets! Now that we know where we can find many young people who may be interested, I come to Section 1.A of Goal #1.

Goal #1 1.A - For those enthusiastic college graduates and every other young person interested in interning at a farm, I would like to have a system set up so that farmers who need interns can more easily find them, and that young people who would like to intern can be set up with the work that they want. Who knows who will be the next intern?

This is only the first goal of the Rhode Island YF&R (there are lots more!). The program is currently open for people between the ages of 18-35. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer or intern on a farm, or if you are a farm and you're looking for interns, please contact me at [youngfarmersandranchersri@gmail.com](mailto:youngfarmersandranchersri@gmail.com).

"The only difference between a pigeon and the American farmer today is that a pigeon can still make a deposit on a John Deere."

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## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Bill	Sponsor	Explanation	Committee	Status	RIFB
7	Tassoni	Require landscapers to register and carry liability insurance	Corporations	Introduced	No position
48	Walaska	Application to alter wetland must be filed electronically and town has 45 days to respond	Environment & Ag	Introduced	Con
58 5117	Felag Ruggerio	Increase exemption from \$850,000 to \$1.5 million	Finance	Introduced	Pro
??	Ruggerio	Prohibit the docking of tails on animals	??	Drafted	Con
5060	Walsh	Eliminate corporate tax on businesses that earn less than \$250,000	Finance	Introduced	Pro
5237	Walsh Sosnowski	Appraise Small Business Property at use value rather than highest use	Small Business	Introduced	Pro Our Bill
5210	Walsh Pichardo	Exempt Animal Feed from Tax	Finance	Introduced	Pro Our Bill
5207	Walsh Sosnowski	Check-off on Tax Return to preserve farmland	Finance	Introduced	Pro Our Bill
5209	Walsh Felag	Limit the inheritance tax on farms	Finance	Introduced	Pro Our Bill
5208	Walsh Sosnowski	Cistern tax credit	Finance	Introduced	Pro Our Bill
??	Naughton Sosnowski	Allow plant ag in all zones	Environment?	Drafted	Pro Our Bill
??	Sheehan	Citizens can sue other citizens who pollute.	Environment?	Drafted	Con