



NEWSLETTER

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WANT YOUR FARM ON FACEBOOK?

RI Farm Bureau has received a grant to introduce farms to the social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube.) If you would like to have your farm featured, give us a call and we'll put you on.

Additionally, Melody Reynolds is writing a book about the "Life in a Day of a Farmer" and is looking for people to interview. Email her at -
 thereynoldsbarn@cox.net or
 call her at 749-9520

TRAINING SCHOLASHIPS

AVAILABLE

Farm Family Insurance has provided RI Farm Bureau with funds to provide leadership training for young farmers and ranchers. RI does not have a formal YF&R program. However, we will consider using some of the funds to help defray the costs of any young farmers who wish to participate in national leadership training sessions. Each young farmer can receive up to \$250 to defray the costs of traveling to a national or regional leadership training session. An example would be the Young Farmer and Rancher leadership training session being held in Milwaukie November 3rd. We will consider assisting FFA and 4-H students.



YOUNG FARM FEATURED IN FB NEWS

Tyler Young, vice president of RI Farm Bureau, was featured in FB News, the American Farm Bureau bi-weekly newspaper. His story took up the entire back page of the paper. The article mentioned that Tyler and his wife Karla, started their farm in 1997 in Little Compton, RI. The farm has grown from 180 to 250 acres. The Youngs sell the traditional native vegetables at both the retail and wholesale level and have pick your own apples. The article mentioned that Tyler has been vice president of RI Farm Bureau for 18 years, which makes him the longest serving VP in the United States.

GMC DISCOUNTS

Don't forget that one of the great benefits you can get now as a result of your RI Farm Bureau membership is a \$500 discount on GM products including Chevy and Buick.



HARVEST *to* HAND

Find Local. Buy Local.



Now It's Easy to Find...

- Farmers Markets
- Local Festivals
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- Wineries, Breweries and Local Food Eateries
- Seasonal Agritourism Venues

The mission of Harvest to Hand is to help promote "Buy Local" and a sustainable way of life for local agriculture across the United States. Consumers have easy access to fresh farm products, events and home-spun goods right at their fingertips through this **FREE** mobile app.

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The app is open to everyone*: the main criteria are that your venue, event or farm must be accessible to the general public and feature locally grown or produced products.

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FFH2H1 (0612)

Greenhouse Growers Summer Meeting

The RI Farm Bureau Greenhouse Growers will be holding an informational, educational meeting on August 22 at 5:30 pm at the Pezza Farm on Plainfield Pike in Johnston. The meeting will feature: Reinhard Sidor, URI Master Composter, will speak about beneficial greenhouse composting. Nancy Warner of the Worm Ladies of Charlestown will discuss using worms in compost. Heather Faubert from URI will also offer a seminar that will offer at least two pesticide credits. Jim Peterson of Bio Safe Systems will also give a presentation.

A light meal will be offered. All Farm Bureau Members are invited to the meeting.

Please RSVP to the RI Farm Bureau by August 17. It's free!!

Volunteers Needed for Washington County Fair

RI Farm Bureau needs volunteers to help us with our booth at the Washington County Fair. Get to see the fair for free by helping us with the booth. We'll also give you a free hat and a Farm Bureau Bag. We will really need people at night more than any other shift and the weekend. The Fair is August 15-19 and runs from 9:00 am to about 10:00 pm. We would like for people to take a four and half hour block of time (9:00 – 1:30, 1:30 – 6 and 6-10:30)

If it's tough living within your means, try living without them.

No one expects to become disabled...but it happens every day.
How will you pay the bills when you can't work?

Don't add insult to injury.

Be prepared with adequate disability income coverage.

Call me today for more information:

John T. Howard Agency
401-397-1050

780 Victory Highway Suite 1
West Greenwich, RI 02817

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Farmers Offer Discounts

The following farmers offer a discount to
RI Farm Bureau Members

Young Family Farm
West Main Rd
Little Compton

Salisbury Farm
Plainfield Pike
Johnston

Pezza Farm
Plainfield Pike
Johnston

Bettencourt Farm
South Main St
Pascoag, RI

Call us if you would like your business in this list. Non-farm businesses are allowed too.

Other Discounts

Farm Family Insurance

Suburban Propane

Grainger

Hop Energy

Superior Plus Energy Services

T Mobile

Pet Partners

Lands End

Hertz Car Rental

AND

**Your Farm Bureau Card can get you discounts on
over 300,000 companies nationwide such as**

Disney World

Busch Gardens

Cruises

DAME FARM STILL IN BUSINESS

You may have heard recently that the Dame Farm and the State of RI could not come to terms for a new lease on the Dame Farm in Johnston. While this is true, not all of the Dame Farm is State owned and the Dames will continue to be in farming. Their operation has changed, but they are still in business.

That the State and the Dames could not come to an agreement is a tragic story and will be told in the future on the Dame's timeline. In the meantime, please continue to support the Dame Farm as you have in the past.

*"All our dreams
can come true, if
we have the
courage to pursue
them."*

- Walt Disney

ANIMAL WELFARE



Farrowing Crates Protect Little Pigs

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) put on a full court press in RI this year and were somewhat successful. They brought in a full time employee from Boston and hired one of the top lobbyists in RI, Bob Goldberg, to guide their bill through the General Assembly. Chairwoman (Small Business) Pat Serpa introduced the bill in the House and the Majority Leader, Dominick Ruggerio, introduced the bill in the Senate. Unlike previous years, it appeared this bill had legs and would pass. Therefore, Senator Sosnowski, with the support of RI Farm Bureau, introduced what we hoped would be compromise legislation and recommended that an Animal Welfare Commission be set up. The Commission would consist of the local ASPCA and two national animal rights groups, the Farm Bureau, a

farmer, and URI person from animal husbandry and the State Vet.

However, the HSUS had the momentum and wanted nothing to do with the commission idea. Senator Sosnowski and Al Bettencourt tried to work something out with the HSUS and things got a little heated at times. Ultimately the HSUS agree to allow the bill to be amended to not include farrowing crates and to remove the prison penalties. However, now in RI, gestation crates and veal crates must be re-configured to allow the animal to be able to turn around in the crate. This amended bill passed both houses. But, farmers who use farrowing crates may continue to use them the way they do now. To our knowledge, no one in RI uses gestation or veal crates.

We still pursued the idea of establishing the commission. Rep Chippendale introduced the bill in House. The bill passed both the House and Senate. Now Rep Chippendale is getting some heat from local farmers for introducing the bill. This is unfortunate. Farm Bureau in other states has established these commissions as a last resort. In RI, our back was against the wall and we reluctantly agreed to establish this commission. We are hoping it will deflect future animal rights legislation.

A LITTLE FARM HUMOR

It's those two cows again...

"Daisy, have you heard?"

"Moo. Heard what Buttercup?"

"There's going to be a Farmers Market at the town hall next week."

"That's good, let's sell our farmer and see if we can get a better one."

The two brothers were seated in the Solicitor's waiting room waiting for their Father's will to be read. An argument started as to which of them was the favorite son and it was getting into full blow when they were invited into the office.

After a few preliminaries including the disposal of a few small items to the cousins and old friends the important bit came - who would inherit the farm.

The solicitor took a deep breath, looked at the eldest brother and said "Well John, the farm is yours". John turned to his brother, "see" he said "I told you you were the favorite"

ESTATE TAX RELIEF FAILS AGAIN

With the State looking for every dime they can find, once again the Estate Tax bill Farm Bureau introduced failed. The bill sought to appraise farmland as farmland when it is inherited, instead of being valued as its "fair market" value, which is usually house lots.

What is ironic about this bill is that no one really has a problem with it but yet it doesn't get anywhere.

A few weeks ago, Bill Stamp, Al Bettencourt and Rep. Walsh met with the Speaker and discussed the bill. We told him if we keep appraising farmland as house lots, they will become house lots. We also pointed out that while the State would initially get an infusion of cash, cities and towns would be saddled for-

ever with supporting the houses that "crop" up after the farm is sold. He seemed to agree.

A few days ago Al was discussing the bill with Finance Chairman Melo and Rep Naughton who is on the Finance Committee. Melo seemed sympathetic. The next day Al discussed the bill with the Majority Leader. He said he really did not have a problem with the bill and that it was a Finance Committee decision. Al saw Melo again and he said he did not really have a problem with the bill. Yet it did not get out of committee. Apparently it won't go anywhere until the State gets a surplus. That will be years.

*If we keep appraising
farmland as house lots,
they will become house
lots.*

STILL LOOKING FOR FARMERS TO OFFER DISCOUNTS

As you know, RI Farm Bureau offers discounts at over 300,000 companies nationwide. But the discount we would most like to offer is discounts at farm stands and farmer's

markets. If you would like to offer a discount to Farm Bureau Members, please call, email or write to the office and we'll advertise for you in our newsletter.

NRCS SAVING FARMLAND

Issue: High land values pressure farmers to sell farm properties for residential, commercial, and industrial development in Rhode Island.

What NRCS RI is doing:

From 1980 to 2004, Rhode Island lost 30,000 acres of prime farmland due to development where high land values played a integral role in the conversion to residential and industrial uses. Since 1996, NRCS RI provided approximately \$17 million combined with \$24 million from private entities for a

total of \$41 million to work with conservation partners to preserve 40 parcels of almost 2,300 acres of rich farmland. In 2011, NRCS RI funded over \$4.1 million to help purchase development rights on six parcels (290 acres) to keep productive farms in agricultural use to provide food, clean air, clean water, healthy soils, and wildlife habitat.

NRCS collaborates with numerous conservation partners to preserve valuable farmland through conservation easements such



Joseph Robicheau, Portsmouth Town Council; William Corcoran Esq., Aquidneck Land Trust; R. Phou Vongkhamdy, NRCS; Richard Wicks, Wicks Nursery; Ken Ayars, RI DEM; Ted Clements, Jr. Esq., Aquidneck Land Trust

as Wicks Nursery which was the last major property within the Sisson Pond Watershed to be protected from development.

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RHODE ISLAND FARM TO SCHOOL PROJECT TO BE PART OF FARM FRESH RHODE ISLAND

Pawtucket, RI - Farm Fresh Rhode Island, the nonprofit organization that promotes local agriculture and helps to build healthier communities through increased access to locally grown foods, will become the new stewards of the highly successful Rhode Island Farm to School Project when the original coordinating organization Kids First closes on June 30. The RI Farm to School Project encourages all RI school districts to promote a culture of fresh food, both by buying locally grown foods in the cafeterias and by bringing hands-on learning experiences around food and agriculture into the class rooms. Since the RI Farm to School Project's inception in 2005, the variety of local farm products in RI school cafeterias has increased from 5 to 40 different types of food, including RI-grown asparagus, RI-grown berries, RI eggs and RI-raised beef. All thirty-six RI school districts have participated in the RI Farm to School Project as part of their meal program and in 2011, over 360,000 pounds of local farm products were purchased for RI school districts.

"The RI Farm to School Project has offered an incredible opportunity to get fresh foods to thousands of children," says Noah Fulmer, Executive Director of Farm Fresh Rhode Island. "Rates of diet-related disease are extraordinarily high among Rhode Island children at the same time that RI farmers are looking for new markets for their fruits and vegetables. Farm Fresh is excited to foster a love for fresh, local foods in a new generation of Rhode Islanders through the Farm to School Project."

"Farm Fresh RI is the right organization to take on this Kids First beloved project," says Dorothy Brayley, Executive Director of Kids First. "The passion, commitment and incredible expertise of the Farm Fresh RI staff coupled with the experience of our Farm to School Coordinator, Kimberly Clark will be a combination that continues to successfully grow and further develop the RI Farm to School Project in a way that continues to benefit all RI children and communities."

Kimberly Clark, the Farm to School Coordinator from the Kids First staff will travel across the hall to the neighboring offices of Farm Fresh RI as part of the upcoming transition. Future goals of the project will be to expand RI Farm to School work into preschools, colleges, universities and other educational food service providers.

\$EARN MONEY\$

A reminder that we are paying commissions to members who get us new members. We will pay you \$20 for each Associate Member you get us and 50% of the Farmer Member dues. Just write your membership number on the back of the application. Call the office to get applications if you wish to participate.

FACEBOOK

We have been uploading a lot of videos to our facebook page. Check them out!
<http://www.facebook.com/rifarmbureau>

NO FARMERS NO FOOD



Rhode Island Farm Bureau

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E-mail: rifarm@aol.com

We're on TV
Cox Channel 13
Wednesdays 3:30

Thank a farmer 3 times per day.



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**Dame Farm is still very much in business.
See the inside story**

FINAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE ANIMAL FEED BILL FINALLY MAKES IT

It took three years but we finally got the Animal Feed bill passed. We already had a regulation on the books that allowed a tax exemption for animal feed used for animals raised for food, but it did not extend to animals used for fiber. There was no law on the books that exempted either. After a meeting between Senator Sosnowski, Bill Stamp, Al Bettencourt and personnel from the Sales Tax Division, it was suggested we change the law rather than using just regulations. That meeting was four years ago and the bill was introduced three years ago. It has passed the Senate three years in a row and finally passed the House.

We had a mixed bag on the Animal Rights Bill, but the bottom line is RI farmers can continue to farm as they always have. The bill that finally passed both houses makes farmers reconfigure gestation crates and veal crates so that the animal can turn around. But it says nothing about farrowing crates. RI farmers do not use gestation crates or veal crates but we do use farrowing crates which protect baby piglets from being crushed by their mother.

Additionally, a commission was established to make recommendations on Animal Care to the DEM and the General Assembly. See the article inside about this issue.

Senator Sosnowski's bill to streamline the promotion of agriculture and seafood through the Division of Ag also passed and was signed into law by Governor Chafee on Ag Day. The bill sets up a restricted receipt account to be used to promote agriculture.

Another bill by Sosnowski that passed allows plant agriculture in coastal zones.

A bill to ban older outdoor water heaters passed the House but it was too late for the Senate to consider it.

A bill to allow the sale of wine by local wineries at farmer's markets passed the House but there was no sister bill in the Senate and the bill went nowhere in the Senate.

Our inheritance tax bill failed again. See the inside story for more information.

Other bills that had no traction were our cistern bill, and check-off bill.

In the House, 1,276 bills were introduced. In the Senate, 1,074 bills were introduced. The RI Farm Bureau sifted through the 2,250 bills and tracked 39 of them. No bills were passed that prevent farmers from carrying out their business as they have been doing. At least three bills that passed will make life better for farmers (Animal Feed Bill, Ag Promotion Bill and Plant Ag in Coastal Zones).