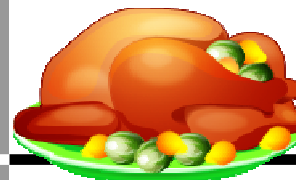




NEWSLETTER



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IT'S A CHRISTMAS TREE GOVERNOR

In keeping with the season and not to beat a dead horse, but in all due respect, Governor, it's a Christmas tree not a holiday tree. Farmers in RI do not grow holiday trees, and for that matter, no farmers in the USA grow holiday trees. So where can a person buy such a tree?

We have the RI Christmas Tree Growers Association, but we do not have the RI holiday tree growers association.

Last year the Governor had a "holiday tree" lighting ceremony, but he lit the Menorah to celebrate the Jewish holiday. Why didn't he light the holiday candelabra? This year he did nothing for Hanukkah.

This year the "holiday" tree lighting ceremony was held during the day for the first time anyone can remember and with only a 30 minute notice to the press and public. By the way Governor,



Statehouse "Christmas Tree"

what "holiday" does the tree represent?

You got one thing right on the O'Reilly show. You wished him a

"Merry Christmas"

Same to you, Governor!

LOGO CONTEST

In celebration of our 60th Anniversary next year, RI Farm Bureau would like to change our logo. Our current logo, which is the American Farm Bureau logo and used by many states, is in the upper left hand corner of this newsletter page. We are offering a

\$100 prize for the winner of the contest and we will feature them in an article in the newsletter. We hope to select a winner by March and start using the new logo by May.

These are the amended resolutions passed at the 2012 RIFB Annual Meeting on November 15

Words added are underlined and words eliminated are struck out.

Resolutions for 2013

Free Vet Service for 4-H: **Whereas** the farming community needs young people in order to survive into the future, and **Whereas** many young farmers participate in 4-H program and other youth program competitions that require a veterinarian to inspect all animals in a fair, and **Whereas** many youth cannot afford to pay a vet. **Be It Resolved** that the State should provide free veterinarian services for 4-H Youth Programs and other youth programs.

Office Building: We will continue with our efforts to construct or purchase an office building suitable for renting space, at a reasonable cost, to other organizations that aid agriculture. To that end, we will pursue raising funds through grants.

RI Division of Ag: **Whereas** the Division of Agriculture is imperative for a successful farm industry in Rhode Island, **Whereas** The Five Year Strategic Plan for Agriculture suggests a stronger Division of Agriculture **Be It Resolved** that RI Farm Bureau will do all it can to preserve the Division of Ag by requesting an increase in funding for the Division and will pursue the creation of a new Department of Agriculture.

Renewable Energy: **Whereas** the United States and the State of RI is looking for alternative energy to eliminate dependence on foreign oil, and **Whereas** wind power and solar power are renewable energies compatible to Rhode Island's environment, and **Whereas** farmers have land suitable to safely construct windmills renewable sources of energy, **Be It Resolved** RI Farm Bureau supports the voluntary construction of windmills renewable energy plants of all sizes and capacity on farms in RI. **Be it Further Resolved** that the State of RI be empowered to site these facilities within the State of RI with reasonable restrictions.

Taxation of Renewable Energy Land: **Whereas** land used for renewable energy is contributing to the well being of the environment, and **Whereas** using land for renewable energy is another ancillary activity on a farm, and **Whereas** the land used by the renewable energy is still farmed, and **Whereas** windmill equipment used to make renewable energy sources are farm equipment used to harvest the wind and solar energy on a farm. **Be It Resolved** farmland used by renewable energy should be taxed as farmland and windmills the equipment used to generate the power should be taxed as farm equipment.

Appraisal of Farmland for Inheritance Tax Purposes: **Whereas** the national inheritance tax has been re-instituted after being eliminated for one year, and **Whereas** the tax can make it almost impossible to turn farmland over to the next generation because the land is appraised at it's highest and best use. **Be It Resolved:** That Title 26 Subtitle B CHAPTER 11 Subchapter A Part III & 2032A (a) (2) shall be amended to allow require all farmland be appraised at its current use value rather than its highest and best use. Farmland should will be appraised at its use value for State inheritance taxes too.

FDA on Farms: **Whereas** the FDA has been visiting farms unannounced and requesting and testing products from those farms and, **Whereas** RI Farm Bureau is not familiar with any programs that require this kind of activity, **Be It Resolved** that RI Farm Bureau investigate this program and take necessary actions to protect RI farmers.

Management of State Agricultural Properties: **Whereas** the State of RI owns property that it leases to farmers and **Whereas** The Fish and Wildlife Division manages said properties and **Whereas** the RI Farm Bureau does not believe the Fish and Wildlife Division has the expertise to manage agricultural properties. **Be It Resolved** that the RI Division of Agriculture should manage State agricultural properties.

Open bidding process for Government owned land: **Whereas** the State of RI and Cities and Towns own land that is leased to farmers and **Whereas** the RI Farm Bureau does not support the concept of the government owning such properties. **Be It Resolved** that the RI Farm Bureau take actions and measures with government entities to insure that the bidding process for such properties is open and competitive.

Issuance of Wildlife Damage Permits: **Whereas** wildlife can be a nuisance to crops in a short amount of time and **Whereas** DEM is often not responsive in a reasonable amount of time. **Be It Resolved** that a law shall be passed that requires DEM to issue wildlife damage permits within 30 days and if such permit is not issued farmers may proceed to take action against such wildlife without a permit. **Be It Further Resolved** that when such permits are issued, they will be issued for a period of five years.

Resolutions for 2013

Crossbow Permits: **Whereas** firing a gun is prohibited in certain municipalities and **Whereas** older citizens can have a difficult time using a regular bow and arrow and **Whereas** there are many older farmers who have problems with deer on their property **Be It Resolved** that farmers who are issued Deer Damage permits may use a crossbow.

Impact Statements: **Whereas** government laws, rules and regulations can have a detrimental effect on agriculture. **Be It Resolved** that cities and towns shall do an informal impact statement on how a proposed ordinance, rule or regulation will effect agriculture and shall avoid passing ordinances, rules and regulations that will curtail agricultural operations in the community.

Fire Code: **Whereas** the State of RI has one of the most strict fire codes in the nation, more strict than the national fire code, and **Whereas** the implementation of fire code regulations can be very expensive, especially on older buildings, and **Whereas** the cost can be so prohibitive that it forces farmers out of business, **Be It Resolved:** That barns built before the year 2012 should be exempt from the fire code.

Animal Agriculture: **Whereas** the Five Year Strategic Plan for RI Agriculture calls for an expansion of agriculture in the State of RI and **Whereas** the amount of land for farming is very limited and **Whereas** there are zoning laws that prohibit Animal Agriculture, **Be It Resolved** that Animal Agriculture should be allowed in all zones where the farmer owns more than 10 contiguous acres of land.

Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's): ~~**Whereas** the Food and Drug Administration of the United States has deemed GMOs to be safe and **Whereas** food production must be increased in order to feed a growing world population, **Be It Resolved** that RI Farm Bureau supports the use of GMOs in the United States.~~

Support of All Agriculture: **Whereas** food production must be increased to feed a growing world population **Be It Resolved** that RI Farm Bureau supports all agriculture in the United States.

Outdoor Water Boilers: **Whereas** the EPA has not approved of any large outdoor water boilers and **Whereas** many greenhouse growers need large boilers and **Whereas** DEM requires anyone who wants to get an outdoor boiler must get an EPA approved boiler as stated in Rule 48. **Be It Resolved** farmers should be exempt from rule 48.

Maintaining the Viability of Agriculture

Whereas Farmers in Rhode Island for many years have been impaired in their ability to maintain the long term viability of their agricultural operations and have in some instances been caused harm and injury and even to the point of actual demise by actions of State and Local agencies.

Be It Resolved:

- (1) The RI Farm Bureau ~~supports establishing objective standards~~ will establish guidelines for assessing whether the ordinances, administrative programs, and policies of a city and town are "Agriculture Friendly" overall and issuing public commendations to those communities determined to be "Agriculture Friendly."
- (2) The RI Farm Bureau supports formal public expectations or policies that the treatment of agriculture will be consistent and constructive across state agencies and within state agencies; the absence of consistent and constructive treatment imperils the ability of farmers to maintain and improve the viability of their operations.
- (3) The RI Farm Bureau supports the establishment of a registry for Rhode Island farmers of actions proposed or taken at the state and local level that adversely impact on agriculture or farm operations. The registry shall include (a) a description of the nature of the action, (b) the name of the state or local agency taking the action or proposing to take to the action, (c) the date or period of time in which the action was taken or was proposed to be taken, and (d) the outcome or the effect of the action.



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* Surrender charges may apply. Contact your tax consultant for your particular situation.

Social Media

We are still looking for farmers to put on our Facebook page. If you would like your farm featured, contact the RI Farm Bureau or contact Melody Reynolds at 749-9520. We have put over 25 farmers on the Facebook page this past summer and have more than doubled our number of "friends."

Greenhouse Growers to meet on January 30. Two pesticide credits. A light meal will be served.

GRAINGER DONATES TO SILENT AUCTION

RI Farm Bureau held its 59th Annual Meeting on November 15 at the Meadow Brook Inn in Charlestown. A Silent Auction was held for its sister agency, the RI Farm Bureau Land Trust. The biggest donor to the Silent Auction was Grainger, who donated over \$250 worth of goods including a cordless drill, Phillips Driver set, First Aid Kit and Soil Test Kit. Wendy Knowlton of Scituate was the high bidder on the Driver Set, Tom Kockodan of Hope Valley won the bid on the First Aid Kit, Lyn Weaver from Farm Credit East won the Soil Test Kit and Bill Coulter had the winning bid for the cordless drill. Over \$500 was raised for the Land Trust.

As part of the agreement with

Grainger to receive these items, we agree to issue a press release on the winners.



NO FARMERS NO FOOD

GREENHOUSE GROWERS

The RI Farm Bureau Greenhouse Growers will host an informational and educational seminar on January 30 at Schartner Farms, Slocum Farm, 251 Exeter Rd, North Kingstown, Old Forest Hill Bldg. at 4:30 pm. A light meal will be offered. Virginia Bruebaker will be the featured speaker. She will discuss insect control using both traditional

and organic chemicals.

Two pesticide credits will be offered. Contact the RI Farm Bureau office by January 25th if you would like to attend the meeting.

STINK BUGS

The brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB), an insect not previously seen on our continent, was apparently accidentally introduced into eastern Pennsylvania. It was first collected in September of 1998 in Allentown, but probably arrived several years earlier.

The BMSB has become a serious pest of fruit, vegetables and farm crops in the Mid-Atlantic region and RI.

At the present time, growers are applying pesticides belonging to one or two chemical classes, namely the pyre-

throids and carbamates, in an attempt to save their crops. Chemical control is not considered desirable over the long-term, due to expected crop resistance to these chemicals and disruptions to integrated pest management (IPM) programs, but will play an immediate role in salvaging crop production and a limited, ongoing role in more sustainable management programs. Accordingly, researchers will seek to define an appropriate short-term chemical control strategy until a more sustainable approach is found.

NEW BENEFITS

RI Farm Bureau members can now participate in the GM Farm Bureau Vehicle Purchase Program through True Car Inc. This program, which will be launched by the first of the year, will allow members to go on line (fbverify.com) and get a quote for a GM Vehicle. You then take the quote to your local dealer and buy the car at the quoted price. This program can be coupled with the \$500 discount now offered through GM. The average consumer can save up to \$2,500 buying the car in this manner.



Another program we have is Retail Benefits. Go on line at:

Rifarmbureau.foryourpeople.com

You can buy products on line from a wide variety of companies at discount prices and RI Farm Bureau will get a commission on the sale and you will get cash back from making the purchase.

FARM CREDIT EAST AND COBANK DONATE \$20,000 TO SUPPORT UMASS

Enfield, Conn. — Farm Credit East, the largest lender to Northeast agriculture, and CoBank have each agreed to contribute \$10,000, totaling a \$20,000 donation to support a partnership between the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) and the University of Massachusetts-Amherst (UMass). This partnership will create a new undergraduate agricultural learning center on campus.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst plans to open the Agricultural Learning Center (ALC) as a hands-on living classroom or field laboratory for students to pursue active learning about all forms of agriculture in the Commonwealth, including the farming, horticultural and landscape industries. By having areas devoted to livestock, fruits, vegetables, turf, and landscape crops, the UMass Center for Agriculture and Stockbridge School will be able to offer a broad array of agricultural top-

ics to both UMass students and the general public, educating the region's next generation of farmers.

"Farm Credit East is committed to the long term success of agriculture in Massachusetts" said Bill Lipinski, Farm Credit East CEO. "Our donation to this project will help support the University of Massachusetts to continue educating future generations of Massachusetts' agricultural producers."

A recent report by Farm Credit East noted that there are 7,700 farms throughout the state of Massachusetts maintaining more than 500,000 acres of farmland. The state's agriculture and related processing activities are important contributors to the local economy as exemplified by the \$13 billion in output and 68,110 jobs the state's agricultural industries contributed to the local economy in 2010.

*We are offering
two new
benefits:
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*See article on this
page.*



We're thankful for you.

At this time of year, we reflect upon and give thanks for clients like you who make our business a true pleasure.

We're grateful you trust us to protect what means so much to you: your home, farm, business, vehicles, lives and financial future. We take this responsibility seriously. We want to do our level best to make sure your needs are being met, and we're providing you with sound help and our best service and attention.

We hope this season brings you peace, joy and some relief from your normal course of work. May you find a moment to reflect with gratitude upon the year that has passed, and to prepare with glad anticipation for the one ahead.

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Humane Society of United States is a Fraud

Big-hearted people tend to have warm and truly fuzzy thoughts about the Humane Society of the United States. This is, after all, the organization that operates shelters nationwide and saves hundreds of thousands of animals. This is the selfless organization that stands up for the voiceless and abused. Although there are countless alternatives, this is the charity you should be sending your money to if you care about pets. Right?

Wrong. This is a complete crock. The Humane Society of the United States doesn't run any shelters. It has no veterinary clinics. That abused puppy whose photo they've published widely in an urgent bid for donations? That puppy was almost certainly rescued by someone else. It's certainly being cared for by someone else. And it won't see a penny of your donation. Okay, perhaps one penny out of every dollar. (Literally.) HSUS gives only 1 percent of its budget to pet shelters. That's according to its own tax returns.

But that doesn't stop the HSUS from working the cute puppy angle. Even though less than one percent of their budget goes to shelter animals, a full 85 percent of their fundraising propaganda features shelter animals. Cute ones.

The HSUS has a whole program aimed at kids. It also targets the people who influence kids: clever. I urge you to visit their web page, entitled "Resources for Parents & Educators." The first word at the top of the page is "DONATE," but that's perhaps a coincidence. Let your eyes wander down. Check out the not-very-random iconography. Let's see: a kid hugs a cute kitten in the banner. Another feeds a cute puppy next to the headline. A cartoony thumbnail advertises Kind News magazine: "Teach kids to be kind to animals with Kind News, our magazine for K-6 students."

Kind" is an acronym for "Kids in Nature's Defense." That's sweet: They're hoping to seed a whole new generation of lobbyists. I assume this, because they're not much good at anything else. "Defense" – for the HSUS – is overwhelmingly a legal process.

CharityWatch has given the HSUS a grade of 'D'. This means what a D generally means: unsatisfactory.

All of the information in the above article was taken from an article by Douglas Anthony in the Huffington Post

There was recently an article in the Lancaster Farming Northern Addition about HSUS. They refer people to the the web site "humanewatch.org" The article states that the Humane Society spends \$50million on fund raising related expenses which is 100 times more than it spent on grants to support shelter aid.

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Christmas Trees

According to the National Christmas Tree-Growers Association, approximately 25-30 million real Christmas trees will be sold in the United States this year, almost all of them from Christmas tree plantations. There is a total of 41 Christmas tree farms in RI and nearby MA and CT. It has been a good growing season in RI. As a result, local farms are well stocked with Balsam, Fraser and Concolor fir as well as Scotch Pine, White Pine and Norway spruce. For more information about Christmas trees go to the RI Christmas Tree Growers web site at richristmas-trees.com

RI Ag Statistics

RI is number one in the nation on direct sales as a percent of farm income.

Number of Farms: 1,219 up from 858
(Source: Census of Ag 2002 2007)

Land in Farms: 67,000 acres up from 60,000
(Source: Census of Ag 2002 2007)

Income: Greater than \$100 million according to USDA Ag Stats

Nursery Industry: The largest ag industry with over \$42 million according to USDA

Much of the growth in farms has been in farms with less than \$5K in sales < 1% of sales

167 Farms have sales of more than \$50K
419 Farms have sales between \$5K and \$50K

RI Farmers produce 1% of food consumed in the State. The Five Year Strategic Plan for Ag wants to see that increase

Benefits

Don't forget that RI Farm Bureau offers discounts at over 3000 companies nationwide. Our most popular discounts are:

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