

Rhode Island Farm Bureau Newsletter



2022 RIFB Annual Meeting Returns to Crystal Lake Golf Club

Volume 23, Issue 4

Fall 2022

Please join us on **Thursday, November 17** to celebrate 69 years of Farm Bureau in Rhode Island! This year our Annual Meeting returns to Crystal Lake Golf Club in Mapleville, RI. Registration opens at 10:00 am, and workshops begin at 10:30 am with events continuing throughout the day. Our Business Meeting begins at 4:00 pm, Social Hour at 5:30 pm and the Dinner Buffet at 6:30 pm. To register find the link on our website, RIFB.org, or stop by or call the RIFB office at **401-385-3339**. Space is limited, so register early!

AFBF Women's Leadership Committee Vice-Chair, Lorenda Overman, will be our evening's speaker. Lorenda and her husband grow 4,000 acres of corn, soybeans, and sweet potatoes in eastern North Carolina where they also raise hogs. Massachusetts YF&R Chair and National YF&R Committee member, Heather Bonnano-Baker is scheduled to speak at the Young Ag Professional's workshop at 10:30 am. In the afternoon, Blackbird Farms will be sponsoring another chef demo featuring Chef Andy Teixeira of Newport Vineyards. Chef Andy's demos have been a hit each year!

We always welcome raffle donations for the meeting. Each year we have a beautiful array of farm products, gift baskets from member & other local businesses, handmade crafts, gift cards and more for our raffle. All proceeds go to our Scholarship Fund. In addition, our RI Farm Products Raffle tickets are still available in the office and will be available for purchase at the meeting before we draw the three prize winners that evening! If you are not attending the meeting, please remember you can stop by the office or call to purchase tickets! **Prizes are \$500- \$300- \$200** in member farm's gift certificates! **\$5/ticket or 5 for \$20**. Don't miss out on this great raffle opportunity!

Finally: Please submit any 2023 policy recommendations in writing to the RI Farm Bureau. Please mail or hand deliver policy recommendations to: 16B Nooseneck Hill Road, West Greenwich, RI 02817 or email the scanned document to director@rifb.org. Submissions must be received in the office by 4:30 pm on Thursday, October 27. Policy submissions will be reviewed by the Resolutions Committee for inclusion in Policy Items to be voted on November 17, 2022.

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A Summer of Contrasts

As the Summer issue of the newsletter went to print, Rhode Island was tipping from Moderate to Severe Drought. By the first week of August, 100% of the state was in Severe Drought (D2). By the second week 33% of RI had moved into the Extreme Drought (D3) category, and by the third and fourth weeks of August, 99% of the state was in Extreme Drought. (Extreme Drought indicators are major crop/pasture losses and widespread water shortages or restrictions.) This was a real cause for concern as we saw fields continue to bake in the sun, corn browning in the fields with stunted ears on short stalks, and irrigation ponds going dry. First-cut hay appeared to be the only cut that would be coming off most fields for 2022. RI DEM, USDA FSA, and USDA NRCS were ready to help with permits and programs to help farmers with ponds and irrigation, and also working hard to develop programs for reseeded. During the last week of August, some spotty rain let conditions improve slightly with just 53% of the state assigned to the Extreme Drought category, and the rest of the state defined as “only” being in Severe Drought.

Early September finally brought rain to larger areas of the state, and not just rain, it brought flooding rains. As expected, some areas saw no precipitation, yet others turned to mud, and roads and properties flooded. Early rains helped row crops and some later harvest plantings of corn, but didn't improve the drought situation. It takes a lot of rain to bring the groundwater back up, and luckily it continued to rain. As I write, we are still experiencing heavy rains. Despite this, farms are still dealing with the effects of the severe drought, including crop and forage losses, while at the same time experiencing washing from the heavy rains. Perhaps it is an example of “be careful what you wish for”, but the reality is that this is farming. As the great Will Rogers said, “The farmer has to be an optimist or he wouldn't still be a farmer.” That's the truth. Farming is an occupation of hope combined with hard work. Thank you to all our farmers, big and small, that have worked hard through this difficult summer to supply our state and region with food, fuel, fiber, and more. Let's hope 2023 brings more consistent and beneficial growing conditions.



Spotted Lantern Fly Found in RI

Native to Asia, SLF is most frequently associated with Tree of Heaven plants (*Ailanthus altissima*) and feeds on a wide range of agricultural crops such as grape, apple, and hops, and several native species of plants and trees including maple, walnut, and willow.

If you suspect you've found a spotted lanternfly, take a photo and then kill it. Save the bug and report it to DEM. Visit [RIFB.org](https://www.rifb.org) for a link to DEM's reporting site. **“Spot Squash Send Sightings”** is the slogan!

"Rhode Island must move aggressively in the small area where the spotted lanternfly has been found to control the occurrence before it spreads widely and causes considerable economic harm, as it has done in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and other states," said DEM Director Terry Gray. "Serious SLF infestations around the state could jeopardize thousands of acres of orchards, berry crops, vineyards, and nursery stock that are the source of people's livelihoods and contribute to our food supply. We are using a federally registered pesticide that the EPA has deemed safe when used in accordance with label directions. Our state-licensed and insured applicators are trained to apply such products effectively while protecting the environment and non-target species."

Spraying began along Douglas Pike (Route 7) in Smithfield on Wednesday, September 21. Applicators using backpack sprayers with wands will “contact spray” Bifenthrin, a United States Environmental Protection Agency-approved pesticide, directly on trees and bushes with substantial numbers of adult lanternflies.

Young Ag Professionals

At this year's Washington County Fair, all registered youth exhibitors received a customized RIFB "Ocean State" T-shirt. We were so excited to see them all over! Ri Farm Bureau was also pleased to donate duffle bags for each of the seven Grand Champion Showmen awards. Kylie Jordan won Premier Animal with her Red & White Holstein heifer, Teeter, and was presented the Premier Animal Director's Chair by RI Farm Bureau Executive Director, Heidi Quinn. Congratulations to all the youth exhibitors at the fair, both new and experienced, and all those in-between. You are the future of agriculture in Rhode Island. A huge thanks to the families, mentors, club leaders and others who support the youth exhibitors.





LET'S TALK ABOUT THE STATE OF YOUR HORSE FARM INSURANCE

When you dedicate your life and well-being to the well-being of horses, you need more than just a policy—you need an ally. A one-size-fits-all insurance policy isn't for you. You deserve a customized coverage plan and American National gets it. An American National equine professionals insurance policy can provide you with a flexible package that allows you to tailor a policy to match your individual needs, with coverage options that include liability coverage, property coverage, and optional enhancements that cover things like valuable paper records, golf carts and vehicles, show judge liability and more. For more information, and to connect with a local American National agent near you visit an.insure/rifb or call 800-899-6519.

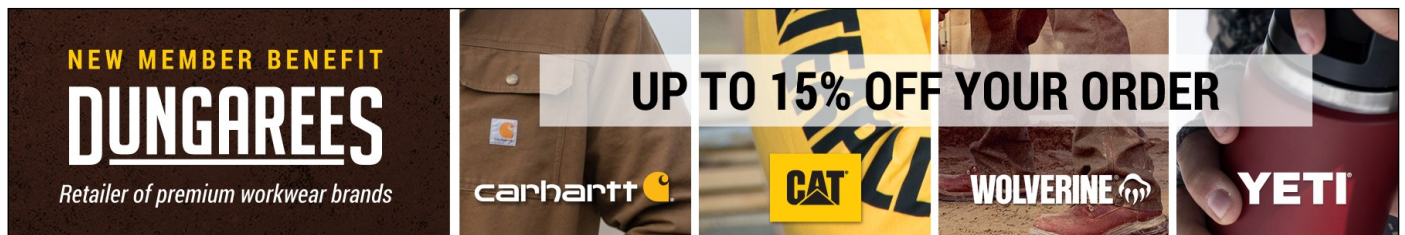


American National is a group of companies writing a broad array of insurance products and services. Products and services may not be available in all states. Terms, conditions and eligibility requirements will apply. Life insurance and annuity products may be underwritten by American National Insurance Company, Galveston, Texas. Property and casualty products and services may be underwritten by Farm Family Casualty Insurance Company, Glenmont, New York.

20-050-334585.V1.6.2020

The 2022 Rhode Island Farm Scavenger Hunt is Available!

Our apologies for the wait, but the RI Farm Scavenger Hunt flyers are available at participating farms, the RIFB Farm Bureau office and other community locations where they have been available in the past. Visit us at RIFB.org for more information.



Call the Farm Bureau Office to get the Dungarees Discount Code!

Membership Renewal Time?

Remember to renew your RI Farm Bureau membership on time to maintain your member benefits and your American National/Farm Family Insurance discount (if that applies to you). Dues notices are no longer only sent in November, but are sent just ahead of the “anniversary” month you joined. Feel free to call the office at 401-385-3339 if you believe you have not received your renewal notice.

Your dues help RIFB promote farming in Rhode Island through our support to members just starting a farm and those with decades of experience; through outreach at events; by collaborating at the national level with American Farm Bureau; and by lobbying at both the state and national level for the right to farm, water rights and property rights.

Not a farmer? We still need your support. Our **Friend of Farmer** members are *very important* to us. As consumers, and often true friends of the farmers you support, your memberships help us continue our work to keep agriculture in Rhode Island.



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3 Chances to Win!

2022 RIFB Farm Products Raffle

Just \$5 a ticket or 5 tickets for \$20!

Proceeds to benefit our RIFB Scholarship program

Three prizes: \$500, \$300 and \$200 in RIFB Member Farm gift certificates.

With fuel prices higher than ever, your \$5 ticket for this year's **2022 RIFB Farm Product Raffle** gives you not one, but **two** chances to win a prize package **including** one-half cord of Verrier's EZLight Kiln Dried Firewood! That's right, the top **two** prize packages **each** include one half-cord kiln dried firewood. Other prizes include gift certificates for Blackbird Farm, EMMA Acres, The Farmer's Daughter, Hopkins Southdowns, Pippin Orchard, Stamp Farm, Windmist Farm, and Young Family Farm. For more details, visit our [2022 RIFB Farm Products Raffle page](#) on our website.

You can stop by the Farm Bureau office in West Greenwich to purchase your tickets or mail a check to us and we will return your ticket stubs and enter you in the drawing. They are \$5/ticket or 5 tickets for \$20.

In addition to raising money for our scholarships, given out each fall at our RIFB Annual Meeting, our RIFB Raffle **helps publicize our member farms** and gets people out to shop at farms they may not be aware of. After the product availability issues of the past two years brought about an increased focus on local products, we think the time is right for lots of interest in the local farm products raffle! Would you like to be featured in our **2023 Farm Products Raffle**? Reach out to us to get your farm on our prize list for next year!

Let's Get To Work.



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West Greenwich, RI 02817

401.397.1050

Ashley.Johnson@american-national.com

Your ad could be here for just \$75/issue!



Contact Heidi or Rebecca at the RIFB Office to learn more about advertising opportunities in the quarterly newsletter. **401-385-3339**

The #1 Reason People Don't Join Farm Bureau?

No one asked.

Not a member of RIFB?

Know someone who should be a member?

Full-time farmers, part-time and hobby farmers, landowners, gardeners, foodies and anyone who enjoys local food and farms in Rhode Island– you can join RI Farm Bureau and help us to support the future of agriculture in RI and beyond. We have a number of membership levels– find one that suits YOU!

You can stop by the office to join or renew, or join or renew online at RIFB.org.

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU NEED A CONSERVATION PLAN?



WHAT IS A CONSERVATION PLAN?

A conservation plan is a tool designed to help you better manage the natural resources on your farm and in turn may help you save money.

If you are in the farm program or are thinking about applying, this is a great opportunity!

Funding has been secured for a limited number of plans. Contact us today to assure you are approved for this special offer before all slots are filled.

You can get a \$950 valued plan for only \$100 under special project funds!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR DISTRICT:

Eastern Conservation District (Bristol & Newport Counties):
Sara Churgin, schurgin.ericd@gmail.com | 401-934-0840

Southern Conservation District (Kent & Washington Counties):
Gina Fuller, gfuller@srccd.org | 401-500-0422

Northern Conservation District (Providence County):
Gina DeMarco, gdemarco.nricd@gmail.com | 401-934-0840



The RI Conservation Districts are working with NRCS to write Farm Conservation Plans for the Farm Forest and Open Space (FFOS) Program of Rhode Island. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Update your Farm's Commodities

We get calls and emails at the office asking about hay, Christmas trees, CSA offerings, etc. Please take a moment to send us an email at rifarm@rifb.org or call the office at 401-385-3339 to update your commodity listing with us. If you'd like to review what commodities we currently have listed in our database for your farm, Rebecca will be happy to look that up for you and update if needed. This will help us to identify specific farms and growers when the need arises. If you happen to have a seasonal or "at-the-moment" offering such as hay, silage or seasonal items, give us a call and we will put you on our list of farms to call if a request comes in.

Volunteer Opportunities on the Farm?

We also get the occasional request for a farm where someone can volunteer. Perhaps it is a young adult or a retiree, and many farms just aren't set up for that. Unskilled labor can take time from some operations, but if you would like to be on our list of farms an interested volunteer can reach out to, please let us know.

Wrentham, MA Carver, MA
Burrillville, RI

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BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Don't forget your membership benefits! You can easily save the cost of your dues by taking advantage of these discounts. Go to rifb.org for more info on:

American National Insurance

Avis

Budget

Case IH

Caterpillar

Choice Hotels

Dungarees.com

Ford

Grainger

John Deere

Propane Plus

Wyndham Hotels

Your [Access Card](#) offers discounts at over **300,000** companies throughout the United States, including:

Disney World Tickets

Cruise Lines

Need to apply for or renew your pesticide license?

While pesticide license training is normally done cooperatively with URI, DEM will be doing **testing on-ly** until on-campus classes resume. Testing is available for **all** pesticide applicator licenses and categories. There is currently no list of dates as of yet, but exams will be scheduled based on demand. Study material can be made available for pickup at DEM's Agriculture office. For more information on how to take your pesticide license test or to get study materials, please contact Harold.Puckett@dem.ri.gov or Kimberly.Lavoie@dem.ri.gov.

If you do not have Internet access, you may contact:

Harold Puckett at DEM Ag 401- 222-2781, Ext 7261
or Kim LaVoie at DEM Ag 401-222-2781, Ext 4513.

President's Corner



Heading Into Difficult Times

Now is the time to protect your business. Get involved with the powers to be. Take some of your time this fall and winter to go to the local office of your senator or representative. Go to your local town meetings. Become involved before the legislative session begins in January. There will be many new faces and many new committee chairs in the state legislature next year. This is a good time to make your elected officials aware of the importance of natural gas for both electricity and fertilizer. Fertilizer is highly dependent on natural gas for its production.

The right to vote is just that, your right to participate in the election process. The freedom to have the ability to continue farming will greatly depend on who is in office. The right to farm depends greatly on your property rights. Don't squander your right to vote.

It is so important to remain a member of Rhode Island Farm Bureau. Your membership helps RIFB to protect the right to farm, property rights and water rights. Make it your goal to ask a few people to join this year; encourage family and friends to join as Friend of Farmer members. This will allow us to broaden our base as we advocate for and empower our state's farmers to provide local food, fuel, and fiber to our state and region, and in doing so continue to maintain open space in our beautiful state.

Customers are still seeing high prices at the pump, but what we are only just beginning to see are the costs that will rise for heating, electricity production, and the production of fertilizer. As I suggested last year, purchase your inputs as soon as possible again. As costs trend upward, it behooves you to look at the possibility of growing more crops that require less inputs. You need to think now about the crop you're going to grow next year. "Is it a crop my customers/the market will buy?" This is a good time to do a serious cost analysis of your go-to crops using your current inputs, and consider the fact that another crop with less costly inputs may be a better choice for you.

Be prepared for changing markets and the unknown. Be prepared for how and where you market. As people change jobs and work locations, you may see a change in your sales. Carefully consider if the cost of doing business at the farmers market could be better spent at the stand, both the time and money. Don't set up at the farmers market simply because you enjoy being there if it isn't a good business decision.

Henry B. Wright III, President RIFB

The Zipline: A Changing Family Farm

By Zippy Duvall, President, American Farm Bureau Federation

As the sun came up over my farm the other day, it reflected off the wet grass and I heard the familiar chirping of the birds. My entire life, I've experienced mornings like this. For a long time, it was with my father as we were wrapping up the morning milking. After that, it was with my children as we added chickens to our farm. And now, I'm lucky enough to share that sunrise with my grandkids as our cow-calf operation benefits from a disciplined genetics program and we've accomplished green cover across virtually all our pasture land.



Like many others across America, my farm is a family farm. Generations have made a living on the land and I hope and pray our land continues to provide for many more generations to come. But my farm is not the same today as it was generations ago, and I'm sure it won't be the same generations from now.

There is no standard definition for what every family farm looks like other than that it is owned and run by, you guessed it, a family. Some farms have been in a family for well over 100 years. And some are in their first generation. But, no matter how long the land and business have been in the family, I'll bet my bank account they've all changed over time. One thing remains the same, though. These farms are critical to providing the food, fiber and fuel we all rely on.

In my travels, I've been fortunate to be able to learn about changes in many family operations firsthand. When I visited Oregon earlier this year, I was able to tour the Iverson family's farm. Their farm started in 1950 when Ross and Dorothy Iverson were married and purchased the farm together. They expanded and brought tulips to the farm as their six children grew older. Starting in the mid-80s, the family opened their tulip fields to the public, giving rise to their now annual tulip festival, attracting hundreds of thousands of people each year. But, the festival itself wasn't enough to sustain the growing family that wanted to be part of the farm. So over time, they've added other crops, pursued new technology, and adapted to meet consumer demands. After their family's experience with CBD in the final days of Ross's life in 2016, the family added hemp to their farm. Today, their farm supplies the nation's most reputable CBD companies.

In the middle of Connecticut, about halfway between New York City and Boston, I met Liz MacAllister and her son, Mark Gillman, who milk 45 cows twice a day. With that milk, they make artisan cheeses right there at Cato Corner Farm, which they sell direct to consumers in New York City, Boston and the surrounding communities. In the 1970s, Liz started raising goats, sheep, cows and chickens, but the money she was getting simply wasn't enough to support the farm. So, in 1997, she started making cheese so she could keep farming and make a living. Just two years later, Mark left his teaching job in Baltimore and returned to help his mom make cheese. Today, Mark is the master cheesemaker and Liz manages the herd. Together, they've grown the farm and been honored as one of the best cheesemakers in the U.S. by Food and Wine Magazine.

We see this evolution in other family businesses in ag other than farms. In the southwest corner of Indiana, I recently met the Dewig family. They own and operate a small meat processing facility and grocery that's become an important part of the local community. Over 100 years ago, in 1916 the Dewig family started Dewig Meats. Since the second generation took over in 1962, they've continued to grow their facility and add more local products to their shelves alongside the meat they process from nearby farmers and their own farm. When I visited, the third and fourth generations were helping out and excited to be part of the business. They also shared their plans to pursue grant money as part of the USDA's efforts to expand our country's small and regional processing capacity. They hope the project can help them expand their business to serve even more neighbors and communities.

As our families grow and change, so do our farms and ag operations. The changes require adaptability, ingenuity and resilience, all of which are part of the DNA of farmers. Even as farms and farming change, one common thread binds us together: family farms are planting seeds for a sustainable and bright future as we stock America's pantries.

RI Farm Bureau

16 B Nooseneck Hill Rd
West Greenwich, RI 02817

Phone: 401-385-3339
Fax: 401-385-3394
E-mail: rifarm@rifb.org
Web: www.rifb.org



Thank a farmer 3 times a day!

CALLING ALL FFA AND 4-H MEMBERS!



JOIN RI FARM BUREAU FOR FREE

Just a reminder that all 4-H and FFA Members can join RI Farm Bureau for free, and receive all the benefits our other members receive including discounts at thousands of businesses nationwide.

Our 4-H and FFA Members are the future of agriculture and we encourage you to join, either online at RIFB.org, or by calling the office at 401-385-3339.

