

Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation

MAA 2026 Annual Meeting Agenda

Friday February 27, 2026

Rosebrook Place



Consolidated Voice of Agriculture

Mission Statement

Strengthen a diverse agricultural community by supporting and advocating for Massachusetts farm families

Vision

We envision a world with plentiful high-quality agricultural products, productive open land, and a robust and prosperous farming community.



How Farm Bureau Works

- Farm Bureau is a grassroots, member-driven agricultural organization that gives farmers a unified voice on policy and regulation.
- County Farm Bureaus are the foundation. Members identify local issues, set priorities, and elect delegates.
- The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation brings county priorities together and advocates with state agencies and the Legislature.
- National issues move through the American Farm Bureau Federation.
- Policy flows up from farmers. Advocacy and support flow back down to farms.



What Massachusetts Farm Bureau Does

- Advocates for farmers in state policy, legislation, and regulation, before decisions are made.
- Translates complex laws, rules, and agency guidance into practical information farmers can use.
- Connects farmers with legislators, regulators, and partner organizations to resolve problems.
- Carries member-driven priorities from counties to the State House and, when needed, to the national level.



What That Looks Like in Practice

- Zoning, land use, and local permitting issues.
- Labor, workplace, and employment requirements.
- Environmental regulations, compliance, and enforcement concerns.
- Municipal and Board of Health conflicts affecting farm operations.
- State and federal legislation with direct impacts on farming.



The Scope of Issues Facing Massachusetts Farms

- **Labor and workforce rules**
Hiring, scheduling, housing, and compliance.
- **Environmental and natural resource compliance**
Permitting, reporting, and enforcement across agencies.
- **Land access and land security**
Cost, availability, taxation, and long-term viability.
- **Infrastructure and operating constraints**
Energy, transportation, processing, and on-farm needs.
- **Regulatory fragmentation**
Overlapping local, state, and federal requirements.

Farm Bureau's role is to address how these pressures interact on real farms.



How the Work Is Shared

Members:

- Identify issues
- Set priorities at the county level
- Vote on policy
- Serve as leaders

Staff:

- Advance priorities with legislators and agencies
- Track policy
- Coordinate advocacy
- Provide technical support

Members set MFBF policy. Staff work to advance it.



Why Grassroots Matters in Massachusetts

- Agricultural decisions are often made at the municipal level.
- Home rule gives cities and towns broad authority over zoning and regulation.
- Boards of Health frequently affect agricultural operations directly.
- County Farm Bureaus surface issues early and carry them into statewide advocacy.
- This grassroots structure is essential to protecting agriculture in Massachusetts.



When to Get Involved

- **February–March | County Legislative Breakfasts**
Direct conversations between farmers and legislators.
- **March 11 | Ag Day at the State House**
Coordinated, visible advocacy for Massachusetts agriculture.
- **September–October | County Annual Meetings**
Where policy resolutions are introduced and debated.
- **November 13–14 | TriState Annual Meeting (CT–MA–NH)**
Leadership development and member engagement in a regional format this year.
- **January | AFBF Annual Meeting (Charlotte, NC)**
National policy discussion and voting by state delegates.



Mass Farm Bureau and Aquaculture

- Help with tax questions on gear, equipment, and farm classification
- Provide one-on-one support with regulatory and compliance issues
- Track legislation and funding that affects aquaculture businesses



Regional and International Advocacy for Shellfish Growers

- Upcoming meeting with the Canadian Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to raise concerns about cross-border trade, subsidized imports, and market impacts on Massachusetts shellfish growers.
- Formation of a Northeast Farm Bureau aquaculture committee to coordinate regional policy positions and strengthen multi-state advocacy on shared regulatory and market issues.



Upcoming Initiatives

- **Workshops & Webinars**
 - **Coffee & Conversations**
Small-group discussions to surface issues early and inform Farm Bureau priorities.
 - **OSHA Regulations**
What's changing, what applies to farms, and how to prepare before enforcement.
 - **Campaign Training**
How to engage effectively with legislators and local officials.
- **County Membership Development**
Expanding participation and leadership at the county level.
- **Young Agricultural Professionals Development**
Leadership pipeline for emerging farmers.



MFBF supports and advocates for
Massachusetts farm families through
member-driven,
county-based leadership.



Thank You

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