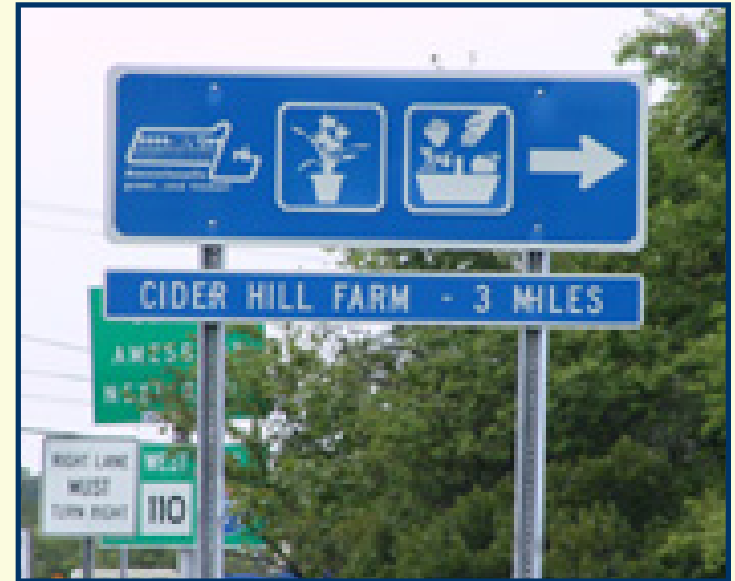


AGRITOURISM IN MASSACHUSETTS



Its Role as an Economic Development Strategy

**Southern New England APA
Conference**

September 4, 2008

**Chris Kluchman, Glenn Garber,
with Shemariah Blum-Evitts**

Purpose of Project/Research Questions

- Why do farmers use activities - (i.e. greater profit, more customers, higher sales)?
- What range of activities are being used in MA?
- Are there particular business concepts that are more or less successful than others?



- What lessons can we learn from the interviewed farmers?
- What regulatory barriers impede the activities of Agritourism?

Why Agritourism?

Benefits

- “Agritourism can make a farm more profitable. By selling through its own farm stand, a farm eliminates the need for a middleman and increases its profit margin by receiving retail price for its products. Some farms even set up a restaurant or snack bar on-site and utilize their meat, produce and other farm products on the menu. “

Public Relations

- “Agritourism can benefit a farm in other, less direct ways. Agri-tourism helps increase public awareness about farming activities in Massachusetts and consequently, helps build a better consumer understanding of agriculture in the state. Agritourism also generates good will for farms: tourists and visitors are more likely to look favorably upon farm issues when they've enjoyed themselves at a farm.”

http://www.mass.gov/agr/markets/agritourism/options_agritourism.htm

Massachusetts Agricultural “Primer”

Cash receipts	\$433 million
Farms	6,075
Farmland	518,570 acres
Average farm	85 acres
Farms w/ hired labor	1,770
Farmers' markets	141
Roadside stands	414
Food manufacturers	2,600
Revenue	\$6 billion

- 2002
 - 20.7% of farms have direct sales
 - Between 1997 and 2002 annual direct sales increased from \$22 to \$31.3 million (a 33% increase)

Definitions of Agritourism

“Agricultural tourism ... merges the world of travel with experiences of farming and our food system. Agri-tourism can be farm based accommodations, meals, activities, farm festivals - events, and retail activities where the traveling public interacts directly with the farm family/farm workers.”

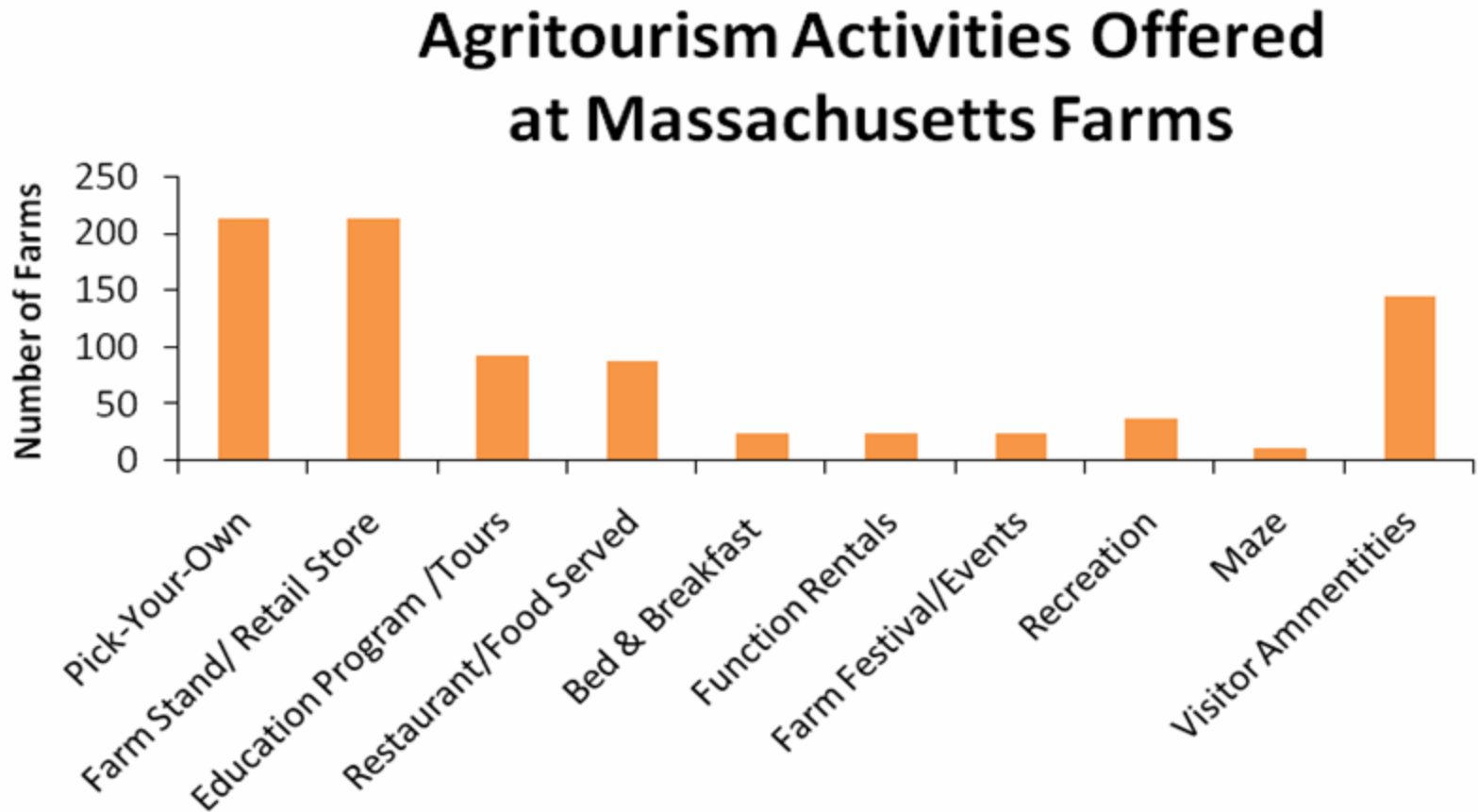
http://www.mass.gov/agr/markets/agritourism/options_agritourism.htm

Definitions of Agritourism

“Agritourism is anything you do to draw visitors to your farm for the purpose of selling them products or experiences. It can be as simple as a roadside stand to sell your produce or as elaborate as a corn maze.”

Source: Mark Lattanzi, Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture, Creating Successful Agritourism Activities for your Farm” March 2005, page a.

Definitions of Agritourism

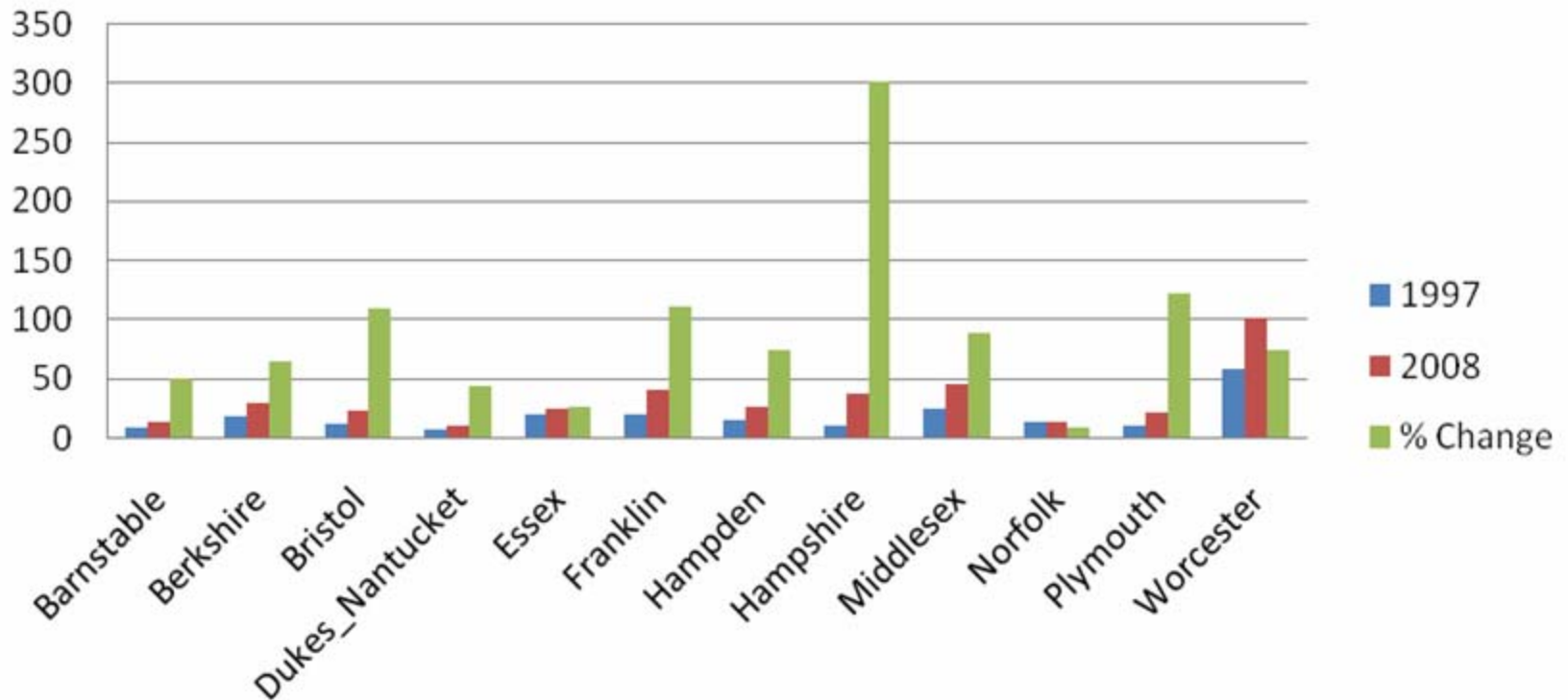


Source: MA Dept of Ag Resources

Agritourism in Massachusetts: A Growing Economic Trend

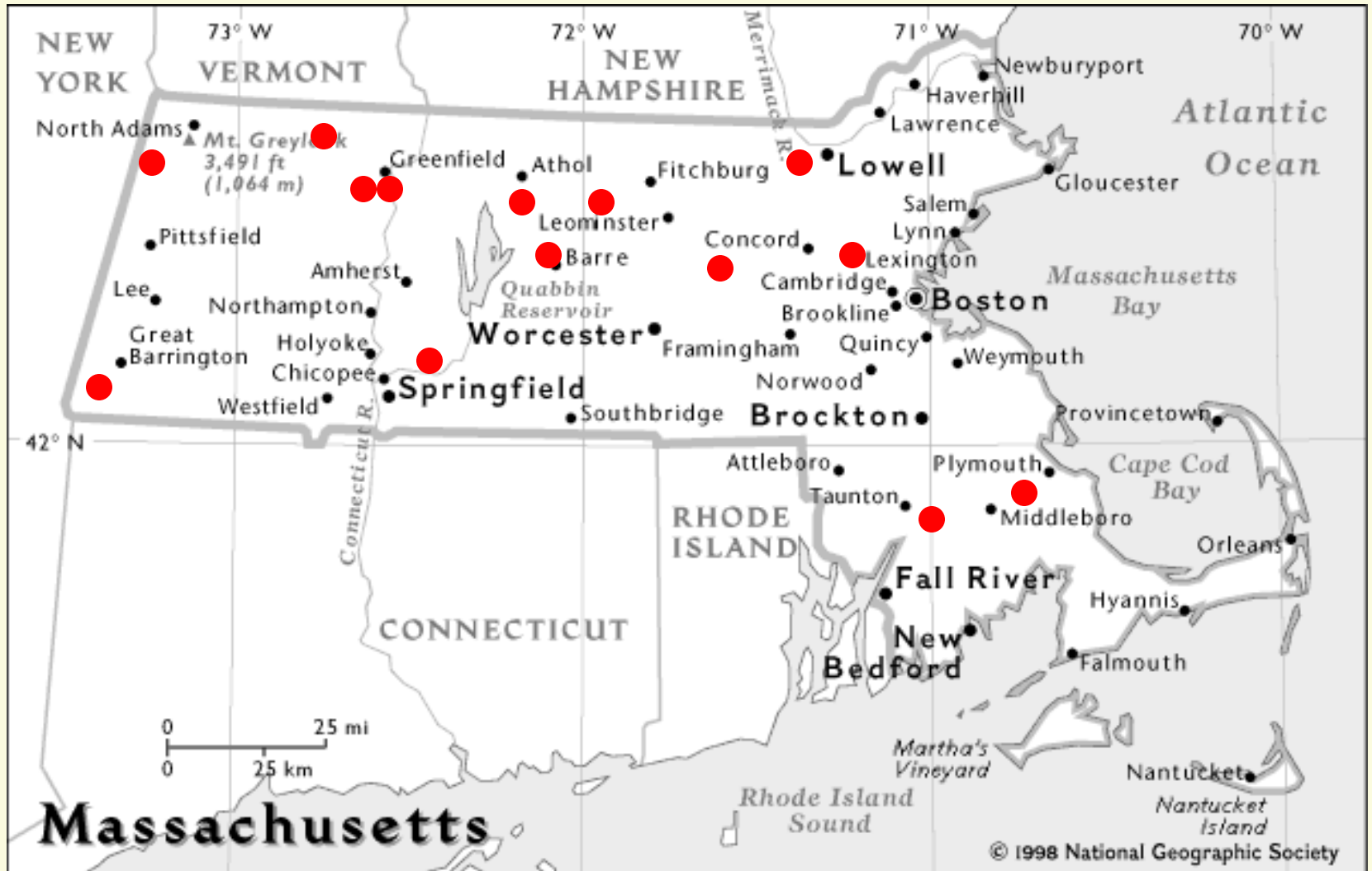


Growth of Agritourism Farms in Massachusetts



Source: MA Dept of Ag Resources

Map of Farmers Interviewed



List of Farmers Interviewed

1. Howden Farm Bed & Breakfast, Sheffield, MA
2. Flax Pond Farm, Carver, MA
3. Ioka Farm, Lanesboro, MA
4. Deerfield Farm, South Deerfield, MA
5. Warner Farm, Sunderland, MA
6. Lavender Lazy Days Farm, Lakeville, MA
7. Colonial Hill Alpaca Farm, Petersham, MA
8. Red Apple Farm, Hubbardston, MA
9. Carter and Stevens Dairy Farm, Barre, MA
10. The Benson Place, Heath, MA
11. Wilson Farm, Lexington, MA
12. Parlee's Farm, Chelmsford, MA
13. Randall's Farm and Greenhouse, Ludlow, MA
14. Nashoba Valley Winery, Bolton, MA

Name of Farm: *RED APPLE FARM*
Location: *Hubbardstown, MA*
Owner(s) *Al Rose*



- 4th generation farm
 - 267 acres (40 fruit, 200 logging, 27 other farm uses)
 - 40 Part time employees
 - September/October >50% of customers from Boston region
- Ag-tivities
 - Berry, Apple, Pumpkin PYO
 - Function Barn
 - Farm store (own produce, some reselling, some value added like applesauce)
 - Hayrides
 - Barnyard animals/Petting zoo
 - Firewood/logging

Name of Farm: *RED APPLE FARM*



- Most revenue [*confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary*]
- Owner has strong business background
- Focus:
 - “farm experience”
 - customer satisfaction



- Function Barn
 - new and increasing revenue producer
- No plans for major changes
- Advice:
 - Ask yourself, “What business am I now? What business should I be in? and What business do I need to be in?”

Name of Farm: *CARTER/STEVENS DAIRY FARM*

Location: *Barre, MA*

Owner(s): *Molly Stevens DuBois & Spouse*

- 5th generation farmer with degree in Agriculture, family run
- Farm began 10 years ago
- 1,000 acres
- 4 to 5 PT, seasonal employees
- Market: North central MA and Worcester Co.



- Ag-tivities
 - Wholesale milk sales to Garelick Farms
 - Hay Bales
 - Vegetable crops
 - Farm store with milk, their produce, regional food, ice cream
 - Petting zoo

Name of Farm: **CARTER/STEVENS DAIRY FARM**

- Most revenue [*confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary*]
- Hay bale sales is largest profit, milk sales very low profit due to regulated market
- Festivals and weekly BBQ are promotional activities



- Farm Store
 - Started as outlet for retail milk sales, later diversified
- Considering yogurt making, restaurant
- Advice:
 - Build large enough retail facilities and kitchens
 - Consider restaurant

Name of Farm: **COLONIAL HILL ALPACA FARM**

Location: *Petersham, MA*

Owner(s): Terry Emerich & Spouse

- New farmers with no prior experience
- 4.6 acres
- No employees
- Opened in 2002
- One owner has full time job off the farm
- Location: rural area draws people for B&B, few alpaca farms
- Ag-tivities
 - Alpaca herd of 20
 - Alpaca breeding and sales
 - Retail store (with fiber and knit products)
 - On-line sales
 - Bed and Breakfast (3 rooms)



Name of Farm: **COLONIAL HILL ALPACA FARM**

- Revenue mix:
[confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary]
- Strong link to Alpaca Owners and Breeders Assoc.
- Focus: Alpacas
- Internet sales
 - Increasing revenue producer
- Would like to acquire more land and add a small fiber mill
- Promotion through local festivals and one on-site “meet the alpacas”
- Town prohibition on off-site signs is a problem
- Advice:
 - Stay small and be persistent



Name of Farm: *DEERFIELD FARM*

Location: *South Deerfield, MA*

Owner(s) *Skip & Betty Sobieski*

- Family farm run by experienced farmer with business degree
- Farm began 5 years ago
- 45 acres
- 6 to 7 farm stand employees plus teenagers in fall
- Market:
 - summer 90% local, summer weekends= Urban “tourists”, fall 50% local, 50% “tourists”.



- **Ag-tivities**
 - Vegetables, fruits herbs
 - 3 Greenhouses for tomatoes
 - Rustic farm stand with some resale of regional products and produce
 - PYO Pumpkins
 - Cut flowers
 - Christmas tree/wreath sales (own and imported)

Name of Farm: **DEERFIELD FARM**

- Revenue:

[confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary]

- Location:

- Routes 5/10 good for local and tourist traffic
- Other local tourist attractions bring

- Promotions:

- Fall pumpkin harvest festival
- School tours



- Improvements:

- Replace 30 year old farm stand
- Increase wages

- Diversify:

- their fruit crops
- Cut your own Xmas trees

- Advice:

- Stay small and simple

Name of Farm: **FLAX POND FARMS**

Location: **Carver, MA**

Owner(s) **Dot & Jack Angly**



- 2nd generation farmers
- Current family purchased 40 years ago
- Employees:
 - 1 FT
 - 6 at harvest
 - 3 seasonal in store
 - Family help
- Market:
 - Direct sales market is based on farm tours and cape tourism, “cranberry cluster”
 - Location is critical

- **Ag-tivities**

- Wholesale cranberries for Ocean Spray
- Small gift/food specialties retail store
- Christmas trees (small)
- Bus tours of bogs (3000 people annually)

Name of Farm: *FLAX POND FARMS*



- Revenue:

[confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary]

- Promotions:

- Selected regional events
- Brochure at tourist destinations on Cape
- Internet – important for increasing direct sales

- Improvements:

- New equipment

- Affiliations:

- MA Cranberry Growers Association
- Visitor Bureau

- Problem:

- Cannot expand due to land speculation and development

- Advice:

- Have a good business plan
- Make strategic land acquisitions
- Diversify

Name of Farm: *HOWDEN FARM and B&B*
Location: *Sheffield, MA*
Owner(s) *Bruce Howden*



- Family farm run by 2nd generation farmer
- Farm began 70 years ago
- 258 acres
- Farmer plus 2 full time, seasonal part time
- History:
 - Established farm known for breed of pumpkins and fresh sweet corn
 - picked daily
 - B & B added 10 years ago

- **Ag-tivities**

- Sweet Corn (wholesale and retail)
- Pumpkins (wholesale and retail)
- Bed & Breakfast (4 rooms)
- Farm stand
- PYO Blueberries, raspberries, pumpkins
- Hayrides/hay maze
- Farmer's markets (not every year)

Name of Farm: **HOWDEN FARM and B&B**

- Revenue:
[confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary]
- Location:
 - Convenient to Great Barrington and NYC, CT, Boston summer tourists
- Promotions:
 - Fall pumpkin harvest festival (7 weekends)
 - Participates in Ag in Classroom
 - Blue MA Highway/DAR signs
- Improvements:
 - Mechanical corn harvester
 - Ways to improve pumpkin seed harvest (now by hand)
 - Obtain patent for new variety of pumpkins
- Advice:
 - Chose your specialty and stick with it



Name of Farm: *IOKA VALLEY FARM*

Location: *Hancock, MA*

Owner(s) *Melissa Leib and family*

- 3rd generation farmer
- 500 acres and 4,000 maple sugar taps
- 3 FT, 11 PT in sugar season (part time work off farm)
- Farm has moved into diversified crops after being a dairy herd for 60 years
- Market draws from 40 mile radius, Albany, Bennington and Pittsfield with some spillover from ski resorts for maple sugar



• Ag-tivities

- Maple Sugar processing and pancake restaurant
- PYO strawberries
- Farm Stand
- PYO Pumpkins
- Hay and wagon rides
- Maze
- Petting Zoo
- X-mas trees

Name of Farm: ***IOKA VALLEY FARM***

- Revenue:
[confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary]
- Location:
 - Rural remote location means they have to have attractions
- Promotions:
 - Postcards to 2500 homes
 - Web site is increasing sales of Maple syrup and tee-shirts
- Diversify:
 - Maple sugar works well with Buy local program
 - Sell products to restaurants
- Advice:
 - Pay attention to competition and do something unique
 - Maximize crop production



Name of Farm: *LAVENDER LAZY DAZE FARM*

Location: *Lakeville, MA*

Owner(s) *Darlene Anastas*

- New farm location and facilities (moved from Middleborough, MA)
- 50 acres
- 3-4 PT helpers, farmer has a FT job off the farm
- Market:
 - Southeastern MA, Cape tourists, some farmers markets in past central MA location



- **Ag-tivities**
 - Tomatoes sold to local sauce maker
 - Lavender products (soap, lip balm, sachets, etc.)

Name of Farm: *LAVENDER LAZY DAZE FARM*

- Events

- Lakeville Arts Festival
- Future Lavender Festival
- Link to local Schools

- Promotions:

- Brochures at rest areas
- Magazine ads
- Road Sign
- AAA



- Future Improvements:

- Farm stand that evolves into store for sale of products
- Corn Maze
- Online sales
- Function facility

- Advice:

- Slow growth is important
- Research new and existing crops to improve
- Persevere over time
- Have a good business plan

Name of Farm: *NASHOBA VALLEY WINERY*

Location: *Bolton, MA*

Owner(s) *Rich Pelletier*



- New farmer whose second career is the Winery
- Establishment began 13 years ago
- 50 acres
- 60 employees PR and FT
- Mostly direct sales
- Market:
 - Boston area with local following as well
 - Online sales
- **Ag-tivities**
 - Fruit wines with fruit from farm
 - Distilled products since 2003
 - Wine shop
 - Upscale restaurant
 - Microbrewary
 - PYO fruit
 - Functions (Weddings, etc.)

Name of Farm: **NASHOBA VALLEY WINERY**

- Revenue:
[confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary]
- Special provisions:
 - Town of Bolton passed special Ag district to accommodate unique uses and traffic
- Promotions:
 - Music and Harvest festivals in fall
 - Educational events such as cooking classes
- Improvements:
 - Wine store expanded several times
- Succession
 - Unclear about farm transition
- Advice:
 - Don't expand too rapidly



Name of Farm: *PARLEE FARM*
Location: *Chelmsford, MA*
Owner(s) *Henry & Donna Parlee*



- 4th generation farm
- Farm began in 1930s, PYO added in 1970s (one of the first)
- 40 acres
- 3-4 mostly family
- Henry is also a full time electrician
- Market:
 - Local western suburbs who know the name due to longstanding presence in community
 - Close to I-495
- Ag-tivities
 - PYO Strawberries, blueberries
 - Honey/Bees
 - Small road side stand
 - PYO Pumpkins and corn maze
 - Easter Egg Hunt in spring
 - Vegetables (row crops)

Name of Farm: *PARLEE FARM*

- Sales:
 - Mostly direct sales at farm and one farmers market
 - PYO Strawberries is the largest revenue generator
 - Wholesale 5% when product available
 - Trades with local restaurants
- Location:
 - Crucial
- Promotions:
 - Website
 - Print ads in local papers
 - Easter Egg hunt
 - On-site signs

- Improvements:
 - Just planted 1000 blueberry bushes
- Diversify:
 - their fruit crops because the strawberry market is not so strong anymore
 - PYO is more competitive now
- Advice:
 - Good reputation is important
 - Work to satisfy customers



Name of Farm: *RANDALL'S FARM&GREENHOUSE*

Location: *Ludlow, MA*

Owner(s) *Karen Randall*



- Farm and greenhouse with large retail produce/grocery store with a garden center
- 40 acres in tillage, 28 acres hay and field corn
- 80-100 employees, 25 FT
- Market:
 - 10 mile radius
 - They are close to interstate and have frontage on a highly traveled local road

- **Ag-tivities**

- Vegetables, fruits herbs
- Retail grocery store with bakery, ice cream, plants
- Hayrides
- Corn maze
- Scarecrow making
- Strawberry festival

Name of Farm: ***RANDALL'S FARM & GREENHOUSE***

- Revenue:

[confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary]

- Promotions:

- Events are very popular and bring in large crowds but perceived to keep away regular customers due to crowds
- “Best Fresh” logo
- Radio ads



- Diversify:

- Workshops are being dropped

- Advice:

- Market is getting more competitive
- Stay ahead of the competition

Name of Farm: *WARNER FARM & MAZE*

Location: *Sunderland, MA*

Owner(s) *Mike Wisserman*



- 2nd generation farm family
- Current owner started 20 years ago
- 175 acres
- Up to 6 seasonally, 1 FT
- Primarily a wholesale business with some direct sales at farmer's markets
- Market:
 - Springfield area
 - Some Boston area too
- Ag-tivities
 - PYO
 - Farmer's markets in Boston area
 - Unique corn maze (8 acres)

Name of Farm: **WARNER FARM & MAZE**

- Revenue:
[confidential: revenue mix data is proprietary]
- Location:
 - Routes 5/10 good for local and tourist traffic
 - Other local tourist attractions bring
- Promotions:
 - Maze attracts large amount of people
 - Website (use to guesstimate # of weekend visitors)
 - Discount coupons in regional publications
- Improvements:
 - Wants to build building for food service (currently have a tent)
 - Improve corn maze
- Wholesale:
 - Sells to regional wholesale buyers (not directly to supermarkets)
- Advice:
 - Restaurant is a good way to make money



Name of Farm: *WILSON FARMS*

Location: *Lexington, MA*

Owner(s) *Jim Wilson & Siblings*

- 2nd generation farming family
- Retail store added in 1954, expanded in '67 and 1996.
- 600 acres on 2 farms, Lexington and most in Litchfield, NH
- 100 employees on benefit plan, 125 additional seasonal and PT workers
- Market:
 - They compete with Whole Foods and other supermarkets for suburban grocery shoppers

- **Ag-tivities**

- Vegetables, fruits, herbs, annual flowers
- 5 Greenhouses
- Large retail store with resale of regional products and produce
- Bakery, Cut flowers, prepared foods (new), Garden center
- Festivals and hayrides



Name of Farm: *WILSON FARMS*

- Type of sales:
 - 66% retail
 - 33% wholesale
- Fastest growing trend:
 - Prepared foods
 - Specialty foods/Ethnic
- Location:
 - Crucial to retail success
 - Surrounded by affluent households
- Promotions:
 - Seasonal festivals (strawberry, tomato, pumpkin/Halloween)
 - Emphasis depends on success of crop
 - Farm tours, hayrides,



- Focus:
 - Provide the farm experience that competitors cannot
- Improvements:
 - Enlarge retail operation at New Hampshire farm stand
 - Just finished build out of last 5 year capital plan (5 greenhouses)
- Advice:
 - Be responsive to customer needs
 - Anticipate new markets

Name of Farm: *BENSON PLACE*

Location: *Heath, MA*

Owner(s) *Mark Benjamin, David Gott*

- Wild blueberry farm
- Current owners – 10 years on farm
- 40 acres
- 21 seasonal workers, 2 administrative, 1 FT (owner)
- Market:
 - Local community
 - Franklin County



- **Ag-tivities**
 - PYO Blueberries
 - Annual blueberry festival
 - Weddings (occasional)

Name of Farm: *BENSON PLACE*

- Sales:
 - Wholesale to bakeries, wineries and juicers (Pre-ordered berries)
 - Direct sales to PYO
 - Value added – blueberry spread sold at local stores
 - Sell to local CSAs
- Promotions:
 - Web site
 - Word of mouth
 - Blueberry festival
- Focus
 - Blueberries!



- Changes:
 - One owner would like to transition out
 - Looking for APR and Land trust options
 - Considering “cooperative” business model
- Advice:
 - Diversification and on-site functions may not work for all farms

Analysis & Findings: Characteristics of Farm Operators



Feature	Number of times cited
Off-farm Jobs, PT or FT	3
Long history in the property (>1 generation)	10
Some farm experience	2
No farm experience	2
Time for farmers without long history 6 to 10 years	2
Age Range	
	Late 20s
	70
Most common age cohort	45 to 63
Approximate median age	58
Business or Agriculture-related degree	3

Analysis & Findings: Characteristics of Farm Operations

Feature	
Acreages – lowest and highest	4.6 to 1,000
Range of other farms	40 to 500
Median Acreage	130
Employees	Employees
	PT and seasonal ONLY
	PT and more than 1 FT
	13
	8
	14
Range of PT employees	0 to 125 Median 29
Range of FT employees	1 to 100 Median 25
<u>Ag-tivities</u>	
B & B	2
Christmas Trees	6
PYO Apple/Fruit/Berry	7
PYO Pumpkin	3
Maple Sugar	1

Analysis & Findings: Characteristics of Farm Operations

Feature	
Acreages – lowest and highest	4.6 to 1,000
Range of other farms	40 to 500
Median Acreage	130
Employees	Employees
	PT and seasonal ONLY
	PT and more than 1 FT
	13
	8
	14
Range of PT employees	0 to 125 Median 29
Range of FT employees	1 to 100 Median 25
Farms with Chapter 61A Assessment Status	11
Farms with some APR	7
Farms with land trust deals (one established, one pending)	2

Analysis & Findings: Characteristics of Farm Promotion



Feature	Number of Citations								
PROMOTION: On-farm Events	11								
No on-farm events	3								
Regional Events	10								
Websites	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>High quality</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Minimal site</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>On-line sales</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No web site</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </table>	High quality	8	Minimal site	3	On-line sales	2	No web site	1
High quality	8								
Minimal site	3								
On-line sales	2								
No web site	1								
Print Ads	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Limited to local paper</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Minimal local paper</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>None</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </table>	Limited to local paper	10	Minimal local paper	2	None	2		
Limited to local paper	10								
Minimal local paper	2								
None	2								

Analysis & Findings: Characteristics of Farm Promotion



Feature	Number of Farms
Unpaid Media	
<p style="text-align: right;">Feature Stories</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Word of Mouth</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">10</p>
Other Promotions	
<p style="text-align: right;">Distributed flyers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Mailings or email lists</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Radio</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Off-site signs</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Workshops</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Farmer's Markets (regularly)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">6</p>

Analysis & Findings: Perceived Value of Promotion

Websites:

Growing rapidly in number & quality as a broad advertising medium. Use of on-line sales is very limited, w/some exceptions.

Print Ads:

Declining across-the-board as an advertising medium.



Unpaid Media:

- Feature Stories: *Can be very important if you can attract local, regional or statewide press.*
- Word-of-mouth, over time ***Aspiration of every farm.***

Other:

- Distributed flyers: *helpful on a limited or local basis*
- Mailings or e-mail lists: *E-mail lists in particular are growing.*
- Radio/Cable TV/Cinema ads: *very limited*
- Off-site signs: *local value.*
- Workshops: *limited, specialized value.*

Analysis & Findings: Perceived Value of Promotion [continued]

On-farm promotion:

Still widely used; they seldom make money & their success in drawing crowds is also weather-dependent, but they have value for building name recognition & word-of-mouth.

- Seasonal Festivals
 - Easter egg hunt
 - Tomato, Apple, Pumpkin festivals
- School and Bus Tours
- Hayrides
- Group events (e.g. antique car club gatherings)

- Seen as traffic builders in the short term – real value is the “word of mouth” advertizing
- Small amount of revenue gained
- A lot of work for small staff
- Range of number of participants from 200/day to 3,000/day



Analysis & Findings: Chief Constraints to Growth & Prosperity



- **Local regulatory barriers**
--Health, ConCom, off-site signs, zoning (# of responses) 4
- **Increased local competition via similar activities, crops, or products** 3
- **Need for more land** 3
- **Loss of business partner, family member from farm operation** 2
- **Development encroachment** 2
- **Labor, affordable labor** 2
- **High demands of job** 2
- **Flat PYO Trend in Market** 2
- **Financing limitations for capital investment** 2
- **Inadequate retail sales facility** 2
- **Uncertainty of whether to add more ag-tivities “vs.” the true farm experience** 1
- **Conflict with neighbors** 1
- **Physical site constraints, such as parking** 1

Lessons Learned: Business Concepts & Planning



Business Concepts	Number of times cited
Have a good business plan, change it regularly as you evaluate your business mix & adjust and correct products and “ag-tivities”	4
Stay relatively small, grow incrementally as you generate revenue	4
Find niches that aren’t overcrowded and be nimble (willing to diversify)	4
Be ready and willing to deal with crowds both the physical demands and the need to always be “people friendly”	4
Even as you add “ag-tivities,” make sure you remain a farm; the “farm experience” is the asset	3

Lessons Learned: Business Concepts & Planning

Business Concepts	Number of times cited
Understand that the remoteness of <u>location</u> from population centers stands in inverse ratio to the need for the farm to be an agritourism “magnet.”	3
Solicit customer wants/needs	3
Understand what business you are in now, what business you want and need to be in	1



Lessons Learned: Future Capital Investment



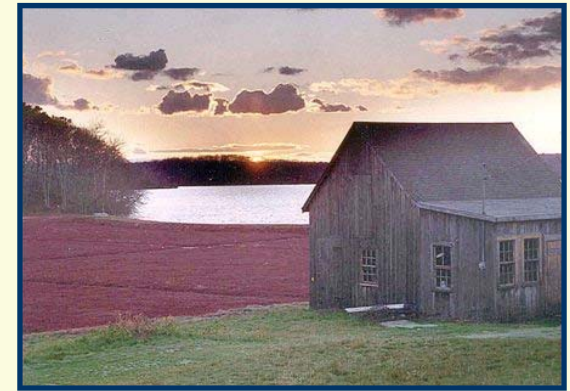
Future Plans	# times cited
No plans; maintain what we have	4
New or expanded direct sales facility	3
More/diversified fruit planting	3
New planting/harvesting/maintenance equipment	2
Add more land	2
Build function facility	2
Create comprehensive capital plan	2
New or better kitchen for value-added food items	1
Christmas Tree PYO	1
Bakery	1
New restaurant (permanent)	1
Corn maze (new)	1
Fiber mill	1

Lessons Learned: New Strategies for Future



Strategy	Number of times cited
No particular plans; present operation satisfactory	4
Take steps to make farm succession more likely (by assuring smooth, profitable operation)	3
Diversify Crops	3
Institute methods of soliciting customer demand on a regular, organized basis	3
Add employees	2
Expand/add functions & corporate business	2

Lessons Learned: New Strategies for Future [continued]



Strategy	Number of times cited
Attain an economy of scale where food sales can be competitive with some chains	1
Add more value-added food products	1
Consider becoming a CSA farm	1
Become or expand organic farming & sustainable practices	1
Expand on-line sales	1
Obtain research grant(s) to help establish or diversify operations	1

Lessons Learned: Future exploration

- **Role of Farmer's Markets –**
 - Are farms with ag-tivities less or more likely to sell at farmer's markets?
 - What are the constraints/opportunities?
- **Recreational activities – is there more opportunity (such as timber property owners)?**
 - Cross country skiing
 - Snow shoeing
 - Mountain biking
 - Hunting (in rural areas)



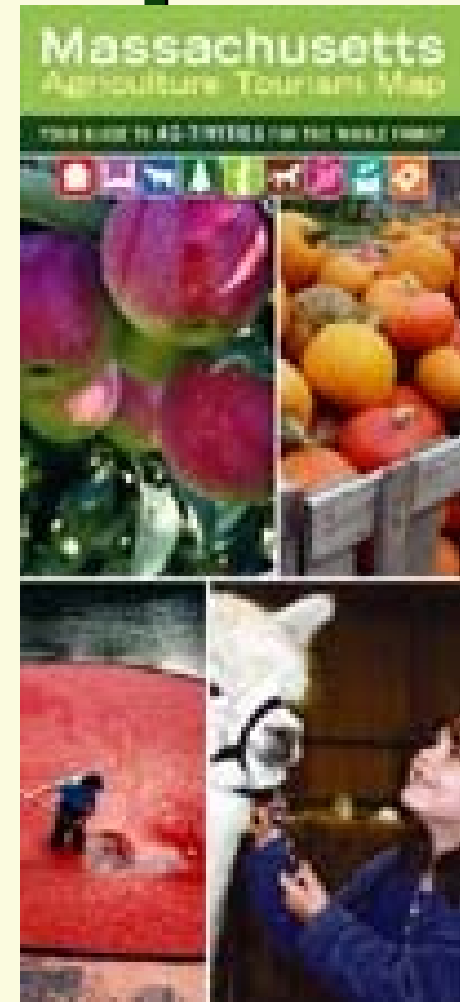
Lessons Learned: Eight Strategies for Planners, Officials, Others



- Play a key role in getting Boards of Health, Conservation Commissions, as well as Planning Boards and ZBA's, to limit regulatory barriers, such as:
 - Livestock, spraying, food prep license assistance
 - Mediation with ConCom about wetlands and farming
 - Signs (seasonal and off site)
- Assist farmers with grant applications & other paperwork for farm viability grants, The Trustees of Reservations & land trust deals, etc.
- Be familiar with farm assistance programs such as the MA Farm Viability Enhancement Program and the Entrepreneurial Business Training Program
- Publicize economic, fiscal & environmental benefits of agritourism business.

Lessons Learned: Eight Strategies for Planners, Officials [continued]

- Consider a Right-to-Farm by-law where there are several agritourism operations and/or farms in the community.
- Consider forming an Agricultural Commission where farming is extensive in the community.
- Comprehensive plans and updates should recognize and support agritourism operations.
- Consider agricultural zoning innovations, and even aggressive strategies such as
 - TDR and natural resources-based zoning (e.g. Shutesbury),
 - special districts or overlays that allow more intense ag-tivities than allowed by 40A



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