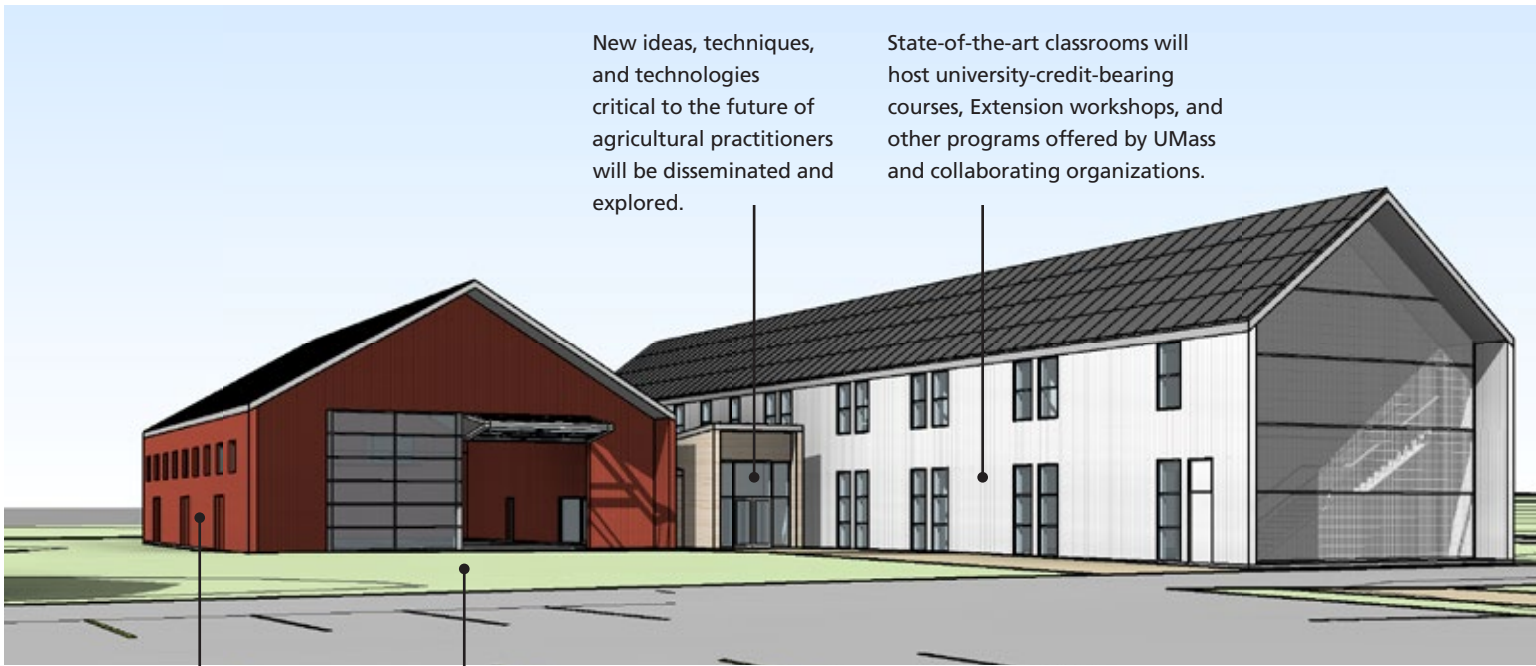


Introducing the **UMass Center for Urban Sustainability** in Waltham

A center focused on the development and growth of food and green industries in Massachusetts, ensuring that the impact of the Commonwealth's flagship Land-Grant University is extended across the state.



UMass Amherst's Catalyst for Sustainability in Greater Boston, Serving Businesses, Residents, Researchers, and Students



New ideas, techniques, and technologies critical to the future of agricultural practitioners will be disseminated and explored.

State-of-the-art classrooms will host university-credit-bearing courses, Extension workshops, and other programs offered by UMass and collaborating organizations.

Classrooms for groups of up to 300 will help extend the educational capacity of UMass Amherst and collaborating groups in eastern Massachusetts.

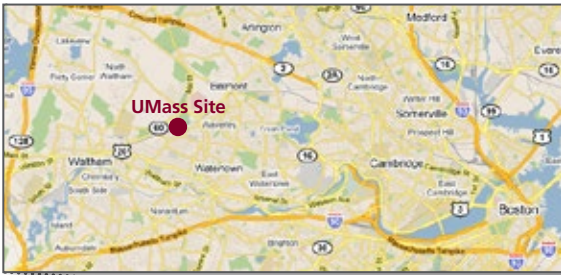
The facility will lend itself to educational work combining indoor learning with outdoor in-the-field, hands-on learning activities.



Demonstration areas on the grounds will promote best practices for home gardening, urban and suburban agriculture, and landscaping.

UMass Amherst programs and complementary agricultural, green-industry, food-system, and 4-H youth-development groups will be based in office suites with shared support facilities.

Satellite locations for the UMass Amherst Soil and Plant Tissue Testing Laboratory and the Plant Diagnostics Laboratory will make services more accessible to the metropolitan area.



The Location

The Center will be located 10 miles from downtown Boston, just off the MBTA and within minutes of Routes 128 and 2. The proposed Western Greenway passes through and the soon-to-be-redeveloped Fernald School property abuts the northern boundary of this facility.

The Site

The 58-acre site contains excellent areas for hands-on demonstrations of best practices for farming, green industries, and wetlands and upland-woods management. Neighbors include the Fernald School to the north and, to the west, the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts and Bentley University.

The Building

A new 20,000-square-foot building will reach or approach zero-net-energy usage. It will contain two large classrooms, a 300-person sub-dividable auditorium with kitchen and lobby areas, a diagnostic area, and 18 offices with shared functional spaces.

How Will the Center for Urban Sustainability Impact the Region?

- **Stronger green-industry, agriculture, and food-system businesses.** They will be able to supply the rapidly growing demand for locally produced foods and act as stewards of natural resources and the environment while increasing business activity in the sectors.
- **More visible impacts of agriculture and the local food system in Massachusetts.** Greater access to agricultural, horticultural, food-science, and nutrition expertise within easy reach of the Boston region will provide a central hub for the development of a more robust food system and food-business and green-industry sectors.
- **Improved regulatory environment.** Through an enhanced scientific presence within the regulatory “neighborhood,” UMass Amherst can provide support and assistance to agencies developing regulations and provide the training needed by businesses.
- **Enhanced food-safety and food-production practices.** As requirements for food safety increase along with the demand for locally produced and processed food, enhancing university capacities to collaborate with MDAR and other agencies through the creation of an eastern Massachusetts site will create greater synergies and stronger positive impacts.
- **Lower levels of food insecurity.** The availability of fresh foods is important to increased food security for underserved communities. As public and private food support systems (such as Boston Bounty Bucks and the soon-to-be-launched statewide Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive) increase their ability to make fresh, healthy local food available, the Center will support farmers in ramping up production.
- **More robust urban agriculture.** Urban agriculture is a tool for education, community building, job training, and food production, and offers long-term potential for increased fresh-foods supply. It will benefit from the proximity and accessibility of the educational and diagnostic resources at the Center for Urban Sustainability.
- **Stronger agricultural education and job training.** Linkages with agricultural high schools, community colleges, UMass Amherst, and 4-H will make available a more robust coordinated system of agricultural and horticultural education to youth in the state. Green-industry personnel will benefit from improved job training and credentialing.

History of the Site

The first Market Garden Field Station was established in Lexington in 1917, founded by the Massachusetts Agricultural College (M.A.C.) in Amherst with the support of the Boston Market Gardeners' Association. In 1923, the estate of philanthropist Cornelia Warren gave 65 acres of land on Beaver Street in Waltham to M.A.C. for "educational purposes," and the Field Station was moved there from Lexington. By 1925 the first buildings had been erected. In 1929 the legislature funded an expansion in facilities and staffing at what was then known as the Waltham Field Station. In 1946 a bill in the legislature provided \$125,000, with an additional \$275,000 granted in 1947 for new buildings on the site. Later renamed the Suburban Experiment Station, the facility was an active department of M.A.C. and its succeeding state college and university until the mid 1980s, when academic agricultural work was consolidated on the Amherst campus. The facility been little used for Extension work and use by aligned organizations since then, and much of it has fallen into disrepair.



Why this Center?

- The Massachusetts food system employs 426,000 people (1 of every 10 jobs in the state). The green industries employed at least another 68,000 people in the state in 2007.
- Farms occupy 301,000 acres in Massachusetts, or 8 percent of our total land area, with another 145,000 acres that are potentially farmable. Urban agriculture on open city land and within urban structures promises future productivity as well.
- Massachusetts residents spend about \$32 billion on food each year. The commonwealth's 5000-plus green-industry firms had an income of \$2.6 billion in 2007.
- Seventy-five percent of the commonwealth's population lives within 25 miles of the Center's location.
- Food, farming, and the green industries are highly competitive with major out-of-state players. Strong educational and technical assistance resources are needed for Massachusetts businesses to remain competitive and thrive.
- The demand for locally grown food is expanding in Massachusetts.
- With 11.9 percent of the state's population (including 16.6 percent of the state's children) suffering from food insecurity, it is essential to address nutrition education and increased availability of fresh local foods.
- The green industry's retail, wholesale, and service sectors are on the front lines of maintaining open landscapes in an environmentally responsible manner while creating economic growth. These services are densest in the commonwealth's most populated regions, near Waltham.