

Agriculture
in
Rhode Island

“Agriculture in RI has changed a lot in the last 25 years. We have seen the conversion of potato fields to turf, the emergence of multi-crop farming as the mainstay vs. the exception. We have seen the transformation of the family farm to the family farm enterprise. We have seen our aquaculture industry make great strides toward increased size and production. We have seen our nursery and horticulture industry come to full bloom representing over 66% of the agriculture value in our state. We have seen the transformation of our farms from wholesalers to astute retailers, featuring Pick-Your-Own of all types of crops. We have seen our farmers utilize agri-tourism concepts along with dramatic increases in farmers markets, roadside stands and other forms of direct marketing. The last 25 years have probably produced more dramatic changes in our state’s agriculture industry than any other preceding period.”

(Rhode Island Department of Environmental
Management Division of Agriculture)

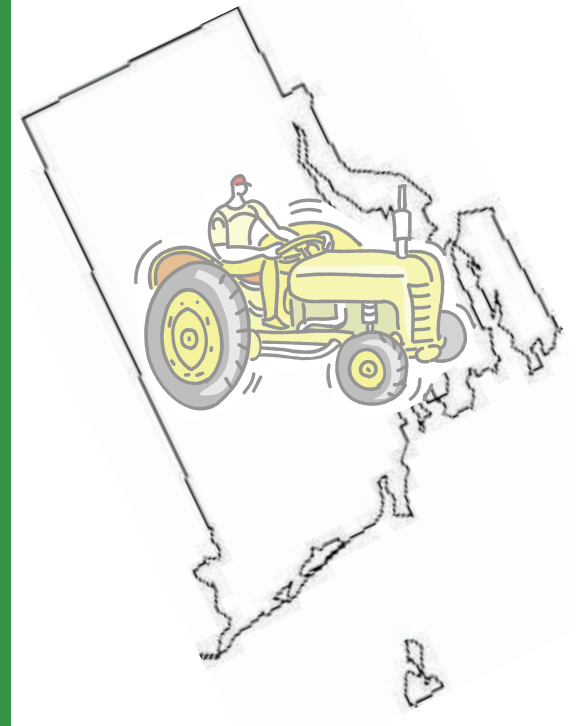


To develop farming, forestry and allied interests

To improve rural life and rural home; and

To coordinate agriculture, trade and industry.

Rhode Island Agriculture Council



*Promoting Rhode Island
Agriculture since 1924*

About RIAC

The Rhode Island Agricultural Council (RIAC) was formed in 1924, originally as the RI Agricultural Conference (the name was changed in 1958), to discuss the needs of agriculture in Rhode Island.

The mission/objective of the RIAC

- Stimulate development of an interest in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, and allied interests, and;
- Create an interest in rural life and the improvement of the rural community in Rhode Island;
- Effect a close relationship between representatives of agriculture with its allied interests and with commerce and industry;
- Develop and carry out a complete program for efficient production and economical distribution of farm products in Rhode Island, and;
- Coordinate all agencies interested in the welfare of agriculture in Rhode Island into one association from which unified efforts towards education, legislation and representation of agricultural interests of the state may emanate.



For over sixty years, the RI Agricultural Council has provided unswerving support for the agricultural community of Rhode Island.

With a recent election of new officers, the Rhode Island Agricultural Council has reaffirmed its commitment to the agricultural community as it moves forward with new farm viability initiatives in the twenty-first century.



More than ever, the Council sees a spirited momentum developing within the Rhode Island agricultural community and new growth within its membership.

The RIAC currently has approximately 35 members, ranging from “Rhode Island Nursery & Landscape Association”, to “Future Farmers of America”, to state and local granges. The membership meets three times per year at various locations around the state. An executive committee of RIAC meets several times per year and provides direction for the council.

RIAC also appoints members to an Agricultural Advisory committee, which meets periodically with the DEM in an advisory capacity. An annual effort of the RIAC is considering and awarding grant requests. In 2006, RIAC awarded 23 grants totaling \$5,750.

Executive Committee:

(Excluding Past Presidents)

- Al Bettencourt
- Bill Stamp, Jr.
- Jon Jaffe
- Loren Thurn
- Mike Merner
- Polly Hutchison
- Steve Logan

Appointments:

- D.E.M. Ag Advisory Committee
- Water Resources Board
- Farm, Forest, Open Space Subcommittee
- State Technical Team
- RIFFA Foundation

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