

# **Final Report**

## **Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Division of Agriculture (RIDAG)**

### **2006 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program**

**12-25-B-0632**

#### **CONTACT**

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#### **Consumers Awareness**

***Buy local and horticulture promotions:***

# GET FRESH. BUY LOCAL . 2009 CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

## **Summary**

In the spring of 2009, North Star Marketing was hired by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Division of Agriculture (RI DEM/DAG) utilizing a \$79,017 grant to develop and implement a statewide promotional campaign to increase consumer awareness of the availability of RI grown specialty crops. The impetus of the campaign was working to make farming a viable business. Highlighting the health aspects of local food and the need for consumer awareness of this was a win-win concept as it was getting consumers to embrace how local is a healthier and better business. It was the RI DEM/DAG's responsibility to communicate these messages on behalf of RI farmers. Drawing on varied supportive programs and activities already in place, the RI DEM/DAG opted to implement this unified, cost-effective integrated marketing campaign as an effective means of enhancing the current awareness programs and working to increase sales for RI farmers.

## **Approach**

To increase the sale of RI specialty crops, it was necessary to develop a strong brand around them. North Star began by creating the *Get Fresh. Buy Local* brand, including developing the logo.

The approach to year one was "laying the groundwork." We worked closely with the RI DEM/DAG to develop and manage all creative and technical aspects of the campaign. This included the development of creative concepts, copy, and design and layout for all materials, as well as any graphic design and printer coordination services of the following campaign materials:

- Website
- T-shirts
- Buttons
- Bumper Stickers
- Reusable Grocery Bags
- Produce Stickers
- Banners
- Farmers Market Handouts
- Signage for Markets/Stands
- Ads
- Emails

In terms of planning, North Star periodically met with the RI DEM/DAG team for status meetings to discuss the overall project. North Star also made recommendations for the best marketing media mix and prepared budgets accordingly.

As for the public relations aspect of the campaign, North Star assisted in orchestrating and publicizing the Agriculture Day campaign launch with Governor Carcieri, Director Sullivan, and Sen. Sosnowski - managing messaging, speaking points, logistics, and development of press materials.

North Star worked throughout the season to help raise awareness of the campaign among local media - generating, pitching, and facilitating stories on behalf of RI DEM/DAG - drafting copy, fielding media inquiries, maintaining editorial relationships, and fulfilling interview requests within the allotted hours and budget.

Media coverage during the campaign included news of the kick off and stories and photo placements about farms and events across the State - ranging from hits in local weeklies and a RI NPR story to an NBC 10 business segment and Coffee Cup Salute and development and placement of a Providence Journal op-ed at the close of the first season.

North Star also wrote letters, newsletters, and e-mail copy throughout the year alerting target audiences about the effort, and managed the campaign's Twitter and Facebook pages, securing a fan base of over 500 in just the first year.

## **Goals**

Raise statewide awareness of and interest in RI grown specialty crops, driving consumers to various farmers markets and farm stands located throughout the State.

## **Outcomes**

### **Email**

We developed, designed and launched six HTML emails this year as a strategic cost-effective way to help build relationships, maintain visibility and momentum with RI consumers, and keep the Get Fresh. Buy Local campaign and related activities top of mind with local consumers.

Emails were important to make the farmers aware of the program and how they could participate and the RI DEM/DAG has successfully communicated with farmers and farmers market managers via email in the past. We built on this success by using an email tool that sends HTML and images and links to supporting documents, and provides tracking capabilities so that the RI DEM/DAG would know who was interested in specific information. Thirty-eight to 69 percent of people receiving the emails opened them and 5 to 26 percent clicked through to learn more – phenomenal results! We were able to use this medium to accomplish the goals of keeping people aware of agricultural events and farmers market and farm stand news and drive consumers to follow us on Facebook and Twitter. Email also allowed us to get timely, critical information into the boxes of farmers – such as an email sent last July informing farmers about a large outbreak of late blight in potatoes and tomatoes and outlining steps to take in response. Traditional mail would have taken two to three days to reach farmers. Below is a summary.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date Sent</b>	<b>Emails Sent</b>	<b>Open Rate</b>	<b>Deliverability Rate</b>	<b>Unique Click-Through Rate</b>
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Campaign Launch	5/8/2009	418	43.35	75.60	14.56
Attendee Email	5/15/2009	43	69.23	90.70	5.13
Vendor Information					
Email	5/19/2009	436	47.01	76.61	23.65
Farm Viability Grant					
RFP/GAP Training	6/19/2009	436	46.83	75.92	26.59
Late Blight Alert:					
Tomato & Potato	7/3/2009	337	42.12	97.92	13.64
Social Media EMail	7/10/2009	337	38.97	98.22	9.97

### **Social Media**

In May, we developed a Facebook and Twitter page for the campaign to capitalize on the ever-increasing relevance and impact of social media, and the opportunity it provides to quickly, effectively, and cost effectively reach consumers who we have been courting and working to build relationships with. We needed to get the consumers who bought into buying local to be in the know and, importantly, to help the RI DEM/DAG spread the word via the viral components of Facebook and Twitter. These mediums were cost effective because of their viral nature and allowed us to not have to allocate budgeted dollars to develop technology and build online communities. The consumers were also already aware of how to use this medium and the viral effects allowed others to join the groups. In under a year we were able to have:

- 322 fans on Facebook
- 481 followers on Twitter

These social media sites were critical in cost effectively building awareness of the campaign.

### **Media Placements**

The following are print and broadcast media placements secured during the campaign launch:

#### **May**

- *Get Fresh. Buy Local: Rhode Island Kicks Off Campaign to Boost Support for RI Grown Crops*  
*Chamber Chatter*  
South Kingstown Chamber of Commerce  
May 5, 2009
- *Rhode Island-grown produce stimulates market – and taste buds – for more*  
*The Providence Journal*  
May 7, 2009
- Frank Coletta/Director Sullivan Interview  
*NBC 10 Sunrise Business Segment*  
May 15, 2009
- *Governor encourages Rhode Islanders to 'Get Fresh'*  
*The Call*  
May 27, 2009

## June

- *Strawberry Picking How Tos and Facts*  
*My Backyard*  
June 13, 2009
- *Pick your own strawberries*  
*The Herald News*  
June 19, 2009

## July

- *GRIST FOR THE MILL*  
*edible RHODY*  
Summer, 2009
- *Get Fresh* news story  
*RI NPR*  
July
- *Get Fresh, Buy Local*  
*Cranston Herald*  
July 2, 2009
- *Get it fresh, and organic, in Rhode Island*  
*Cranston Herald*  
July 2, 2009
- *Get it fresh, and organic, in Rhode Island*  
*Warwick Beacon*  
July 9, 2009
- *Seniors with limited income can qualify for farmers' market coupons*  
*Kent County Daily Times*  
July 14, 2009
- *DEM on watch for late blight crops*  
*Cranston Herald*  
July 16, 2009
- *Grist Mill teams with groups to promote local flavor*  
*Wood River Press*  
July 16, 2009
- *Get Fresh, Buy Local*  
*Cranston Herald*  
July 16, 2009
- *Shopping tour of Jamestown nets plenty of fresh local fare*  
*The Jamestown Press*  
July 16, 2009
- *Late blight comes early to area gardens*  
*The Providence Sunday Journal*  
July 19, 2009
- *WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT FOOD CAN MAKE YOU SICK – OR EVEN KILL YOU*  
*Newport Mercury*  
July 22, 2009
- *Farm to host ladies night*  
*Kent County Daily Times*  
July 22, 2009
- *If life gives you blueberries...*  
*The Providence Journal*  
July 29, 2009
- *A farm-to-table revolution?*  
*East Bay RI*

July 30, 2009

### **August**

- *BQ Member Announcement*  
*North Kingstown Chamber of Commerce Business Quarterly*  
August, 2009
- *Farmer's Market*  
*Chamber Chatter*  
South Kingstown Chamber of Commerce  
August 2009
- *Seasonal joys from the farm*  
*The Standard Times*  
August 27, 2009

### **September**

- *Number of Rhode Island farms is growing*  
*The Providence Journal*  
September 2, 2009
- *Confreda Greenhouses*  
*Kent County Daily Times*  
September 3, 2009
- *Fresh Farm Air*  
*Cranston Herald*  
September 17, 2009
- *WG farm named R.I.'s top dairy farm*  
*The East Greenwich Pendulum*  
September 17, 2009
- *WG's Breene Hollow Farm named R.I.'s top dairy farm*  
*The Standard Times*  
September 17, 2009
- *'Get Fresh' event promotes local foods*  
*Newport Daily News*  
September 27, 2009

### **October**

- *Get Fresh/Coffee Cup Salute*  
*NBC 10 Frank Coletta Coffee Cup Salute*  
October 1, 2009

### **December**

- *Rhode Islanders, let's get fresh and buy local*  
*The Providence Journal*  
December 22, 2009

### **Beneficiaries**

Beneficiaries include RI farmers markets and farm stands who have been highlighted and publicized over the course of year one of the *Get Fresh. Buy Local* campaign, helping to generate increased awareness and attendance at their sites.

Rhode Islanders as a whole have likewise become more educated and aware of the availability, benefits, and value of RI grown specialty crops as a result of the new campaign.

## **Lessons Learned**

Year one of the *Get Fresh. Buy Local* campaign was a start-up year in which identity, branding, collateral, and campaign materials were designed and developed and campaign education kicked off. Year two will have a direct focus on promoting items developed and further raising awareness by aligning with key industry groups.

Due to the tough time constraints facing farmers, the need to not lean on farmers to play a role in campaign implementation surfaced while working to get campaign elements out at farmers markets and farm stands across the State. As such, year two of the campaign features North Star taking a more proactive role in equipping farmers markets and farm stands with various tools to help promote the campaign – ie – campaign t-shirts, totes, and other collateral - and even costumed fruits and vegetables who will be out at statewide events promoting the campaign in 2010.

This season's campaign will feature a heavy emphasis on attending statewide events and partnering with targeted organizations throughout the State such as Farm Fresh RI, Kids First RI, RI Royal Potatoes etc. as a means of heightening awareness of and participation in the campaign this year. That event planning and community outreach is currently in process.

Additionally, on behalf of the Division of Ag, North Star has reached out to Dave's Marketplace in RI (who has always supported local farmers) about partnering – and arrangements are now underway for Dave's to carry campaign t-shirts and perhaps caps and bumper stickers at their gift basket shop, and to also selectively offer the campaign items outdoors at their various grocery stores located throughout the State. We could potentially promote this new partnership at Ag Day 2010.

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# **Final Report for Specialty Crop Grant 12-25-B-0632 Rhode Island Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Program**

Title: RI GAP Project

## **Summary:**

This project builds on previous Specialty Crop Projects to help create a safe supply of fresh fruit and vegetables for our residents. With the outbreaks of food caused illness throughout the country we have decided to put this program in place to ensure a safe food supply for the citizens of Rhode Island. This project builds on a previously funded project that trained 15 farmers. This project has allowed us to train a total of 30 farmers to date.

The need for the project was simple Rhode Island saw a need to give our farmers training in safe food handling to ensure that the fruit and vegetable farmers were doing all they could to ensure a safe food supply

The expansion and support of RIGAP is important to increase small farmers' capacity to market their produce to school foodservice providers, since RIGAP certification has been accepted as a requirement for sale. A large percentage of RI growers direct market their produce to consumers through roadside farm stands and at Farmer's Markets. RIGAP certification can be used as a marketing tool with consumers at these venues to provide assurance that growers are doing everything possible to reduce the risk of food borne illness resulting from consumption of locally grown produce. It is also important to expand and support RIGAP in an effort to assist growers in understanding food safety issues and their controls in anticipation of future federal food safety regulations. This proactive approach for the small farmers will help them prepare and be "ahead of the curve".

## **Approaches:**

1. Training sessions for growers and others interested in participating in the RIGAP program.
2. On-farm consultations with growers who are working towards RIGAP certification and those who needed to complete the required yearly recertification process.
3. Development of consumer resources to be utilized at local farmer's markets and by farmers to promote RIGAP and the proper care at home of fresh fruits and vegetables.
4. Review and updating of RIGAP audit form and comparison with USDA GAP audit form

Three, five hour grower training sessions (2009/2010) were conducted and attended by a total of 45 growers, school foodservice operators and wholesalers. Topics covered during the sessions included: Introduction to RI GAP Program, RI GAP Program Guidelines and RI Farm Audit, Foodborne Illness- the Facts, Water Sources for Irrigation and Drinkable Water, Manure/Biosolids Practices Sanitation Traceback, Worker Health and Hygiene, Temperature Control Food Defense. The first 2009 training session included a presentation by

Steve Volpe of Rhody Fresh on "Using RIGAP as a Marketing Tool". The 2010 training session included a presentation by Peggy Siligato, PAT Training Coordinator at the University of Rhode Island presented a session on "Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for the Farm Stand. Presenters for the topics were: Lori F Pivarnik and Martha S Patnoad from the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education Program and Mr Susi from RI Department of Environmental Management/Division of Agriculture. Each participant was given a notebook of RIGAP topical fact sheets and other current food safety research based information pertaining to the topics addressed in the training.

### **Approximately how many on-farm consultations took place? What normally happens during an on-farm consultation?**

Karen Menezes, who is employed on the project from May- September, conducted 32 on- farm consultations. Growers that were being recertified were visited once. Growers who were new to the program were visited 1-3 times depending on the issues that needed to be addressed. The first visit to a new grower included a review of the audit requirements and "walking the farm" to determine what farm/food safety practices need to be modified/changed to achieve a positive audit. Ms Menezes also reviewed and discussed GAP information that was presented during the I training session. These on-farm consultations allow the grower to think through and discuss possible solutions to the issues of concern. In many instances, the changes required were simple and easily accomplished at little or no cost. Follow-up visits to new growers reviewed their progress towards meeting the goals established during the first visit. Ms Menezes, and the grower, in consultation with Mr. Susi, determine when the grower is ready for the audit. Mr. Susi conducts the audit and the RIDEM/Div of Agriculture issues the certification. A similar process is followed for those growers who need to be recertified.

### **How many consumer resources were developed for local farmers markets? What were they? How were they helpful?**

Two consumer resources were developed and replicated during the project for distribution at Farmer's Markets for the 2010 season: a 4x7 inch magnet describing how to care for fresh vegetables at home and an exhibit (copies attached). The exhibit will be displayed at Farmer's Markets during the 2010 growing season. These resources were ) were developed using a graphic artist. Since these resources will not be used at the Farmer's Markets until the 2010 growing season, there is no information available regarding how helpful they were to consumers.

### **Goals:**

The goals of this project were the continued expansion and implementation of the RIGAP program for growers and to increase consumer awareness of the RIGAP Program.

### **Outcomes:**

- 1. Training sessions for growers and others interested in participating in the RIGAP program.**
- 2. On-farm consultations with growers who are working towards RIGAP certification and those who needed to complete the required yearly recertification process**
  - A. Two grower training sessions were conducted and attended by 30 growers, school foodservice operators and wholesalers.

- B. On-farm consultations/visits were made to new participants in the program as well as those needing to be recertified
- C. Twenty-five farms were recertified and 5 were certified for the first time making the total of RIGAP certified farms to 30.

### **What exactly took place during the training session?**

Topics covered during both sessions included: Introduction to RI GAP Program; RI GAP Program Guidelines and RI Farm Audit; Foodborne Illness- the Facts; Water Sources for Irrigation and Drinkable Water; Manure/Biosolids Practices Sanitation Traceback; Worker Health and Hygiene; Temperature Control ; Food Defense. The first training session included a presentation by Steve Volpe of Rhody Fresh on "Using RIGAP as a Marketing Tool". Presenters for the topics were: Lori F Pivarnik and Martha S Patnod from the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education Program and Peter Susi from RI Department of Environmental Management/Division of Agriculture. Each participant was given a notebook of GRIGAP topical fact sheets ( copies may be found on the URI Food Safety Education website: <http://www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.shtm> , Click on " Commercial Growers of Fruits and Vegetables") and other current food safety research based information pertaining to the topics addressed in the training Ken Ayars, Chief of the Div of Agriculture, RIDEM was present at both training sessions. Mr. Ayars gave a brief introduction as to the nature of the RIGAP program and it's importance to RI growers at being "ahead of the curve" in light of the potential for federal legislation concerning food safety practices on the farm. As previously mentioned, there were guest speakers on related topics at two of the training sessions.

### **Was there any positive feedback from the participants?**

Yes, there is positive feedback from the attendees as well as lively discussion of the topics presented during training session. The feedback, which is primarily anecdotal, continued during Ms Menezes farm visits Both the grower training session and the on-farm visits provide the project team with feedback on issues of concern that need to be addressed in future training sessions.

### **What is different now as a result of the use of SCBGP funds? How has the program grown?**

In 2009, the use of SCBGP funds has allowed us to increase the number of growers who participate in the program by 8 in 2009, bringing to 31 (a 30% increase). Also, it has allowed for funds to develop promotional materials, exhibit and magnets, which will aid in the promotion of the program with growers and consumers.

### **What information does the exhibit disseminate to its visitors? Could you please elaborate on the exhibit that was developed? Are there any pictures or could we have a description of the exhibit? Has there been any preliminary review of the exhibit?**

As previously mentioned, the exhibit will be utilized at selected RI Farmer's Markets during the summer of 2010. The outreach, funded by a separate grant from RIDEM/Div Agriculture, will support a URI student intern will man the exhibit, share information and resources about the RIGAP program with consumers at the markets. A Spanish version of the exhibit is nearing completion for use at selected markets with a large Spanish speaking population A three-panel exhibit, "Food Safety is Everybody's Business" , includes information on: What is the RIGAP program, How does a grower become RIGAP certified, produce safety concerns that the program addresses and information on keeping produce safe at home (this information is also on the magnet). A copy of the exhibit is attached. The exhibit has been reviewed, and revised by the project directors and project team. The development of the exhibit (and magnet) was supported by these funds, while the outreach will be supported by another funded project.

**3. Development of consumer resources that could be utilized at local farmer's markets and by farmers to promote RIGAP and the proper care at home of fresh fruits and vegetables.**

A. An exhibit which will be utilized during the summer of 2010 at local farmer's markets was designed and replicated.

B. RIGAP promotional materials including magnets describing the care of fresh produce at home and RIGAP signs were designed and replicated.

**4. Review and updating of RIGAP audit form and comparison with USDA GAP audit form**

A. A comparison of the current RIGAP audit form with the USDA audit form was conducted. The RIGAP audit form compared favorability and on some items exceeded the requirements of the USDA audit. The RI program/audit places greater emphasis on farm stand operations as the majority of RI growers engage in direct marketing at farm stands and/or farmers markets

B. The RIGAP audit form was revised in consultation with the program based on the results of the 2009 growing season trainings and farm consultations and current research findings.

**This section states that the RIGAP audit form was revised. What sort of revisions took place? Why were these revisions implemented? Is there a web-link to the form?**

As previously stated, the RIGAP audit form compared favorably with the USDA audit. Specifically, each year, in the fall, the project team conducts a review of the RIGAP audit form. This review includes the discussion of the issues of concern that arose during that year's on-farm consultations and audits. Areas in the audit that were either strengthened and/or designated critical focused on the farmstand/retail operation, transportation and traceback sections of the audit. In particular this year, issues with the refrigeration and display of cut melons, considered potentially hazardous foods by the RI Food Code, were addressed. The audit form may be found at <http://www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.shtm> , Click on "Commercial Growers of Fruits and Vegetables"

**Beneficiaries:**

The beneficiaries of the RIGAP program are first the growers who choose to participate. Currently in order to sell product to the RI school foodservice providers, growers must be GAP certified. At least 5 of the RIGAP growers are now selling to school foodservice providers. Also, the growers benefit from the marketing efforts that are provided by the RIGAP program. The grower training includes the most current information on pending federal legislation affecting growers. Finally, the marketing efforts associated with the RIGAP program assist them in maintaining their business and ultimately the viability of Rhode Island agriculture.

Consumers are also a beneficiary of this program, as it provides them with access to locally grown produce grown under conditions designed to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

**Lessons Learned:**

Change in food safety attitudes and behaviors don't happen overnight. It takes time and effort on the part of all the partners in the project.

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**MULTI STATE PROJECT**

**HARVEST NEW ENGLAND – SPECIALITY CROP PROMOTION**

**An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need.**

Producers in New England have frequent access to conferences and information on growing methods and production whereas conferences on marketing local products are often infrequent and less developed. With the demand for local products expanding throughout New England, producers expressed the need for a conference on how to market their products to consumers.

A similar marketing conference was held in 2007. The response to it was

excellent and as a result of the 2007 conference, it was expressed that a similar conference be done in the future.

### **How the issue or problem was approached via the project.**

The 2009 conference was developed through cooperative efforts between the six New England state departments of agriculture (Harvest New England Assoc.) and agricultural nonprofits, commodity associations, and universities throughout New England. Conference calls were held monthly for conference planners to connect, report on accomplishments, express ideas and concerns, and respond to any issues as they arose.

On each planning conference call, anywhere from five to twelve people participated from around New England. This was a wonderful way of organizing the event as it allowed views from around the region to be brought to the table. It enable multiple aspects of marketing and marketing experiences to develop various workshops and training sessions for conference attendees. Conference planners freely expressed their suggestions or concerns and as a result a comprehensive schedule of workshops was developed for the three day conference.

While Connecticut was the lead organizer of the conference, each member of Harvest New England played a significant role in planning the event.

### **How the goals of each project were achieved.**

As a result of extensive planning and participation from all of the New England state departments of agriculture, nearly 28,000 farms were contacted about the conference. Promotional materials were developed to increase awareness of Harvest New England and the conference. In addition to extensive online promotion provided by a website dedicated to the conference, promotional materials were provided to the six New England states and were requested by commodity associations, agricultural nonprofits, and universities throughout New England. The Harvest New England website directed folks to the Harvest New England Conference website.

In 2007, 700 producers attended the two-day conference. A goal of at least that many, up to a 10% increase in attendance was established for the 2009 three-day conference. Over 800 producers attended, allowing us to meet and exceed the established goals as a result of the extensive marketing and distribution of promotional materials. Of the 800 attendees, 220 were from Connecticut.

### **Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project**

The feedback received on the evaluation forms provided information on how beneficial the conference was to attendees.

*It was nice to meet so many great people, the conference was very helpful and well laid out! Nice work folks!*

*Networking and connecting with the folks working on similar projects in other states was extremely beneficial.*

*Being surrounded by other farmers and hearing them discuss the variations in their businesses was a great learning experience.*

*The website session was the best. Meeting new farmers and networking with others was invaluable!*

As a result of the evaluations and through a general consensus of the planning group, a conference in 2011 has been scheduled.

**How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures for each project.**

Planning has already begun for a conference in 2011. The hotel has been reserved and the planning committee will have their kick-off conference call in early April.

In the evaluations from 2009, attendees identified other areas of marketing they wanted to learn more about to increase the competitiveness of their specialty crops. This information will be referenced when planning the 2011 conference to respond to the need and interest that has been expressed by New England producers.

**Additional information available**

A link to the 2009 conference website can be viewed here:

<http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=652438>

Copies of promotional materials, conference program and trade show information, and final conference evaluation form is attached.

**Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.**

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# Promotional Materials: Excerpt from the brochure mailer followed by reminder postcard



## Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference & Trade Show

February 24<sup>TH</sup> - February 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2009  
Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, Massachusetts



**Here's what an attendee said about the 2007 conference:**  
*"The best farming conference we've ever attended - great speakers, great trade show, great lunch. Can't wait for the next one!"*  
 So, don't you want to come?!

- Keynote speaker Mel Allen, Editor of Yankee Magazine
- Two pre-conference workshops - Market Managers Session or Regional Agritourism
- A full trade show featuring the latest agricultural products and services, including specialty food producers showcasing unique local products perfect for roadside stands.
- Optional half day farm tours
- Over 20 breakout sessions with topics such as food safety, energy conservation, agritourism, understanding retail, working with the media, and more!

**Improve your marketing skills! Learn from hearing the experiences of others!**  
**Network with producers from around New England!**  
**Don't miss out on the largest ag marketing conference in New England!**

To register online and for the latest conference updates visit [www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org).



**Keynote Speaker:**  
**Mel Allen**  
 Editor of Yankee Magazine

This event is your best opportunity in 2009 to learn how to  
**Promote Your Business • Advance Your Business**  
**Expand Your Business • Sustain Your Business**

Who should attend? You should! If you're a grower, value-added producer, new farmer, manager, farmers' market manager/manager or just interested in agriculture, this is the ag conference for you.

**Conference highlights include:**

- **Keynote Speaker Mel Allen**, editor of Yankee Magazine, will give a commentary on New England through the voices of its people. He will share these "Voices of New England" with conference attendees.
- A lively and informative "Best of New England" panel will feature some of the top farm managers from all six New England states.
- A session on Food Safety-A "Must Have" Component of your Farm's Marketing Program will show you how to make your food safety plan a marketing tool for your business.
- What's better than hearing about successful farm marketing? How about seeing successful marketing on a farm tour! Half day tours will be available each day to two area farms.
- Want more? Join us for the pre-conference workshops: the **New England Farmers' Market Workshop** where farmers' market managers from across New England will convene to discuss ideas and pressing issues or **Expanding Regional Agritourism, One Farm at a Time** where attendees discover what works, what's needed, and how to get where you want to go with your business.

**NEW!** To register, and pay with a credit card, go to [www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org), or, complete the registration form on the inside back page.

**Trade Show Exhibitors (as of September 2008)**

Biss Bros. Dairy, Inc.	Land4Good
BPVS - Berkshire Photovoltaic Services	Litchfield Center of State Auto
Br/Cms, Inc.	MA Office of Dispute Resolution & Public O
Coburn Mountain Candleworks	MA Department of Agricultural Resources
Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture	NESEED, DP Seeds
Connecticut Current, LLC	Northeast SARE
CT Department of Agriculture	Premier Marketing Group
CT Farm Risk Management Program - University of Connecticut	Resource Management, Inc.
Dillman Farm, Inc.	RJW Butternut Squash Peeler
Empire Packaging Company	SARE
FieldWorks	Stanley Paper Co
First Pioneer Farm Credit	Sustainable Memories
Goodman P&C Company	Target Sales Associates
Global Gourmet	Taylor Feeder of New England
Harris Seeds	USDA-New England Agricultural Statistics
Hillside Orchard Farms	USDA - NRCS
King's AgSeeds, LLC	Wadler Nursery
Kruger's Family Farm, Inc.	Wheeler Sugarworks, Inc.

For more information on how to exhibit at the Trade Show go online to [www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org) on conference information, or contact David Webber at [david.webber@state.ma.us](mailto:david.webber@state.ma.us).



## Things You Should Know!

Dates: Tuesday, February 24<sup>TH</sup> - Thursday, February 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2009  
 Place: Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center, Sturbridge, MA

**Registering for the Conference:**  
 To register online (and pay with a credit card)

1. Go to [www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org)
2. Click on 'Harvest New England Ag Marketing Conference & Trade Show' on the right side of the page.

**To register via US Postal Mail: (check only)**  
 Fill out the registration form on the back page.

**Location:**  
 The newly renovated Sturbridge Host Hotel and Conference Center is situated in central Massachusetts and is easily accessible from all major cities in the Northeast. Located on picturesque Cedar Lake, the hotel is minutes away from Old Sturbridge Village and other major attractions. Amenities at the hotel include an indoor heated pool and jacuzzi, fitness center, four restaurants, and lounge.  
 For more information visit [www.sturbridgehothotel.com](http://www.sturbridgehothotel.com).

**Getting There:**  
**Driving:** The Sturbridge Host Hotel is located on Route 20 West in Sturbridge, MA

**From the North, East, & West:**  
 Take the Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) to Exit 9, Route 20 West. Then see below.

**From the South:**  
 Take either Interstate 84 or Route 131 to Route 20 West. Then see below.

The hotel is located less than one-quarter mile from the first set of traffic lights, on the shore of Cedar Lake.

**Flying:** Fly direct into Boston's Logan Airport, Hartford's Bradley Airport, or Providence's T.F. Green Airport. The hotel is one hour's drive from Logan, Bradley, & T.F. Green.

**Hotel Reservations:**  
 Overnight rooms are available at the Sturbridge Host Hotel on Tuesday, February 24 through Thursday, February 26th. Reservations must be made with the hotel directly.

**To make a hotel reservation online:**

1. Visit [www.sturbridgehothotel.com](http://www.sturbridgehothotel.com)
2. Select 'Reservations' on the left of the page, then 'Group Reservations' at the top of the page.
3. In the 'Attendee Code' area type in the code: Market
4. Select the night you'd like to stay over, your room, and complete the form.



**To make a reservation by calling the hotel directly:**

1. Call: 508-347-7393.
2. Reference the Harvest New England Conference to receive the discount room rates.

Reservations made by 5:00 pm on February 2, 2009 shall receive the following rates (tax not included):

## Schedule ~ Tuesday, February 24

12:30 - 5:00 pm	<b>Preconference Workshop, New England farmers' Market Managers Workshop</b> Join farmers' market managers from across New England for this half day workshop targeted to those that manage at farmers' markets. Registration includes refreshments.
12:30 - 5:00 pm	<b>Preconference Workshop, Expanding Regional Agritourism, One Farm at a Time</b> Generating revenues from agritourism depends on your success in developing your farm's products, venue, and environment seeking a multi-attraction destination. Representatives from the northeastern states who were recently awarded a two-year grant to work with you and lead a highly interactive tour de farm to help you discover what works, what's needed, and how to get where you want to go with your business.

To register online and for a complete list of workshop speakers go to [www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org)

## Schedule ~ Wednesday, February 25

7:30 - 8:30 am	Registration, Trade Show and Continental Breakfast
8:30 - 8:45 am	Welcome by Connecticut Department of Agriculture Commissioner, F. Philip Frelli and Massachusetts Ag Commissioner
8:45 - 10:30 am	<b>General Session #1. The Best of New England</b> Back by popular demand! This session was a hit at the 2007 conference. Join this lively and informative discussion as some of the farm marketers describe hot trends, marketing success stories, unexpected outcomes, and other tales and tips from the farm.
10:30 - 11:00 am	Break/Visit Trade Show
11:00 - 12:15 pm	<b>General Session #2. Food Safety - A "Must Have" Component of your Farm's Marketing Program</b> Consumers expect safe food. Can your farm deliver? Beyond that, can your food safety plan work as a marketing tool? Learn what's new in the realm of education and training, government regulations, industry standards and third-party certification programs -- and how you can make the issue of food safety work for you.
12:15 - 1:15 pm	Locally Grown Lunch
1:15 - 1:45 pm	Break/Visit Trade Show

Tracks	Promote Your Business	Expand Your Business	Advance Your Business	Sustain Your Business	Expand Your Business	
1:45 - 3:00 pm	<b>Paid vs. Free Media Where Should You Put Your Resources</b> This workshop will provide you with ideas on cost-free ways to market farm events as well as the benefits of having a paid media/newspaper marketing campaign. You'll learn the questions to ask yourself, the media, and how to go about creating marketing opportunities.	<b>Agritourism Development Get Visitors to the Farm &amp; Keep Them Coming Back</b> Examination about farm destinations is growing among tour operators. They know what it takes to attract visitors and keep them coming back. Hear from some of the best about the key to smart tourism development, meeting the needs of visitors, establishing partnerships and more.	<b>State Resources for Advancing Your Market</b> Everyone wants to take advantage of free resources and your state Department of Agriculture has tons of them! Come hear what marketing programs your state Department of Agriculture has to offer!	<b>Growing New Farmers</b> Are you a starting farmer? Do you know the key steps you must take to establish yourself as a business and begin farming? Join staff from the Small Farms Institute to learn what you need to do to become successful.	<b>1:45 - 3:00 pm</b> <b>Farm 1</b> 55 people preregistered require to "test" than to exchange half day two farms	

**2009 Sponsors of the Conference**

Be a Sponsor!  
 If you'd like to be a sponsor of the 2009 Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference & Trade Show go to [www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org) for details or contact Jane Smith at [jane.smith@stg.gov](mailto:jane.smith@stg.gov).

Thank you to our current sponsors!

## Registration Form



### Attendee Information

Farm/Business Name:			
First Name:	Last Name:		
<b>Additional family members or employees:</b>	2. First Name:	Last Name:	
	3. First Name:	Last Name:	
	4. First Name:	Last Name:	
	5. First Name:	Last Name:	
	6. First Name:	Last Name:	
Address:			
City:		State:	Zip:
Phone:		Fax:	
Email:			

Check single-day registration.

Payment <i>see below for fee information</i>	Quantity	Registration Fee	Subtotal
First full-conference registration	1	@	=
Additional family members/employees		@	=
One-day registration (if Day: Wed. or Thurs. (circle one))		@	=
Agritourism Preconference Workshop		@ \$30.00	=
Marketing Managers Preconference Workshop		@ \$30.00	=
Marketing Half Day Tours (limited to 55 people) Wed. or Thurs. (circle one)		@ \$15.00	=
<b>Total enclosed</b>			

Please send this form with a check payable to **Harvest New England** for the total registration fees to:  
 HNE Ag Marketing Conference  
 c/o Connecticut Department of Agricultural  
 165 Capitol Ave, Rm 129  
 Hartford, CT 06106

**Conference Registration Fees**  
 Full conference registration includes access to all general and breakout sessions, the trade show light continental breakfast, and lunch each day.

Standard Conference Registration (until 2/6/2009):	\$85.00
Additional Family Member/Employee Registration:	\$70.00
One Day Registration:	\$50.00
Late/On Site Registration (after 2/6/2009):	\$125.00
Late/On Site Add'l Family Member/Employee Registration (after 2/6/2009):	\$110.00
Late/On Site One Day Registration (after 2/6/2009):	\$85.00



**2009**

**Harvest New England  
Agricultural Marketing  
Conference & Trade  
Show**

February 24<sup>TH</sup> - 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2009  
 Sturbridge Host Hotel  
 Sturbridge, Massachusetts

[www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org)

### Keynote Speaker: Mel Allen

#### Voices Of New England

Mel Allen will give a commentary on New England life through the voices of its people. His earlier assignments at Yankee were to find New England stories; however, in his search, he found more than just stories – he heard the voices of New England, voices one can never forget. He met interesting and passionate people and from asking them questions and listening to their answers, he discovered the unexpected. He will share these “Voices of New England” with conference and trade show attendees.

Allen is the fifth editor of Yankee Magazine since it was founded in 1935. His career at Yankee spans nearly three decades, during which he has edited and written for every section of the magazine, including home, food, and travel. In his pursuit of stories, he has traced a sled dog team, crawled into the dens of black bears, fished with the legendary Ted Williams, picked potatoes in Aroostook County, and stood beneath a battleship before it was launched.

Mel teaches magazine writing at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

About Yankee: Yankee Magazine was founded in 1935 and is published from its office in Boston. It is the oldest magazine devoted to New England. It features coverage of travel, home, food, and more. With a paid circulation of 350,000 and a total audience of 2.5 million, it is published by Yankee Publishing Incorporated, one of the few remaining independent publishers in the United States. It owns the nation's oldest and most produced periodical, The Yankee Almanac. More information on Yankee Magazine is available at YankeeMag.com.



## Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference & Trade Show

February 24<sup>TH</sup> - February 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2009  
 Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, Massachusetts

NEW! To register online and for the latest conference updates visit [www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org).

This event is your best opportunity in 2009 to learn how to:  
 Promote Your Business • Advance Your Business • Expand Your Business • Sustain Your Business

**Conference highlights include:**

- Keynote Speaker Mel Allen**, editor of Yankee Magazine, will give a commentary on New England life through the voices of its people. He will share these “Voices of New England” with conference and trade show attendees.
- Over 20 breakout sessions on a wide range of topics including business development, culinary tourism, branding, online marketing and sales, and much, much more!
- A lively and informative “**Best of New England**” panel will feature some of the top farm marketers from all six New England states.
- A session on **Food Safety-A “Must Have” Component of your Farm’s Marketing Program**, will tell you how to make your food safety plan a marketing tool for your business.
- What’s better than hearing about successful farm marketing? How about *seeing* successful farm marketing on a **farm tour**! Half day tours will be available each day to two area farms.
- Want more? Join us for the pre-conference workshops: the **New England Farmers’ Market Managers Workshop** where farmers’ market managers from across New England will convene to discuss new ideas and pressing issues or **Expanding Regional Agritourism, One Farm at a Time** which will help attendees discover what works, what’s needed, and how to get where you want to go with agritourism.

**Keynote Speaker:** Mel Allen will give a commentary on New England life through the voices of its people. His earlier assignments at Yankee were to find New England stories; however, in his search, he found more than just stories – he heard the voices of New England, voices one can never forget. He met interesting and passionate people and from asking them questions and listening to their answers, he discovered the unexpected. He will share these “Voices of New England” with conference and trade show attendees.



**For more information please contact Jaime Smith at 860-713-2559.**

Excerpt from Conference Program:

The complete conference agenda can be found on the Conference website:  
<http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/tab2.aspx?EventID=652438>



## Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference & Trade Show

February 24 - February 26, 2009



[www.harvestnewengland.org](http://www.harvestnewengland.org)



*Editor of  
Yankee Magazine*

**Keynote Speaker:**  
**Mel Allen** will give a commentary on New England life through the voices of its people. His earlier assignments at Yankee were to find New England stories; however, in his search, he found more than just stories – he heard the voices of New England, voices one can never forget.

Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, Massachusetts



1

## Conference Evaluation Form:

**Harvest New England – Conference Assessment**  
**Your Opinion Please! Your assessment of Harvest New England 2009 will enable us to continue to improve the program to meet your needs and interest.**

1. What was your main reason for attending the Harvest New England (HNE) Conference?

2. Overall, how well did the HNE Conference meet your expectation(s)?  
 Extremely well      very well      moderately      somewhat      not at all  
 5                      4                      3                      2                      1

3. How would you improve future HNE Conference?

4. Was there enough time to interact with other participants?

Conference Arrangements:

Great	Satisfactory	Could be improved	Your Suggestions
5. Conference dates were well publicized.			
6. Information was timely & sufficient to make a decision to attend.			
7. Breakouts were the right length.			
8. Choices of breakout topics were appropriate.			
9. Timing/number of breaks were sufficient.			
10. Location of conference.			
11. Use of local products in breakfast, lunch, breaks, and trade show reception.			
12. Registration cost.			

Breakouts:

12. Which breakouts (that you attended) did you find the most helpful/informative?

13. Which breakouts (that you attended) were the least helpful?

14. What topics would you suggest for future HNE breakouts?

15. Were take-home materials provided at the breakouts you attended? Yes      No

15a. Which would you prefer: (circle your choice)  
 a. Handouts given during the breakouts  
 b. All breakout handouts be posted on the web

Trade Show:

	Extremely Well	Very Well	Moderately	Somewhat	Not At All
	5	4	3	2	1

16. How well did the Trade Show meet your expectations?      5   4   3   2   1

17. How was the selection and type of vendors?      5   4   3   2   1

18. Number of vendors      5   4   3   2   1

19. Was there enough time to visit the trade show?      5   4   3   2   1

About You:

20. What is the biggest challenge you face in your business?

21. What was most valuable to you throughout HNE Conference?

22. What was the least helpful throughout HNE Conference?

23. One thing I will do in my business as a result of attending the HNE Conference:

Thank you!!

If you find this evaluation after the conference, please mail this to:  
 Jaime Smith, CT Dept of Ag, 165 Capitol Ave, Rm 129, Hartford, CT 06106

# What can I do to keep produce safe at home?

- Choose produce that is not bruised or damaged.
- Refrigerate or chill produce immediately after harvest or purchase.
- Wash hands with warm water and soap, rinse with warm water and dry with a clean towel.
- Wash fresh fruit and vegetables under cool running tap water. NEVER use detergent or soap. Air dry or dry with a clean paper towel.
- Scrub firm produce such as melons and cucumbers with a clean, hard bristle brush under cool running water.
- Cut away any bruised or damaged areas with a clean knife.
- Don't cross contaminate. Always wash cutting boards, counters, utensils, and dishes that come in contact with raw meat, seafood, or poultry with warm water and soap and rinse with hot water before using to prepare produce
- Store produce above meat, seafood, or poultry in the refrigerator.

For more information:

Call URI Gardening/Food Safety Hotline 1-800-448-1011  
(Mon.-Thurs. 9 a.m.-2 p.m.) or visit [www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.shtml](http://www.uri.edu/ce/ceec/foodsafety.shtml)

Project funded by:

Rhode Island Department  
of Environmental Management  
Division of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture



UNIVERSITY  
OF RHODE ISLAND  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
FOOD SAFETY  
EDUCATION PROGRAM

# Food Safety is Everybody's Business

## Farm to Table

### What is the GAP program?

A voluntary grower certification program

A joint effort of

- University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Food Safety Program
- Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management/Division of Agriculture
- Rhode Island growers



### How does a grower become GAP certified?

- Participate in training that includes principles of growing, harvesting, processing, and transporting fresh fruit and vegetables
- Take part in on-farm consultations with URI staff
- Take part in audit by Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management/Division of Agriculture staff
- Undergo yearly audit to maintain certification

### Produce Safety Concerns

**Harmful microorganisms (pathogens) are a part of the farming / growing environment. Produce can become contaminated at any point from the farm to the table by**

- Soil
- Water
- Poor worker hygiene
- Poor sanitation practices
- Wild and domestic animals
- Improper post-harvest handling
- Dirty harvesting/selling containers



**How are Rhode Island farmers addressing these concerns?**

**By participating in the voluntary Good Agricultural Practices Program.**

**RI GAP—  
Applying Food Safety Principles from Farm to Market**

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U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Photos courtesy of KIDS FIRST!