

# Growing Local Economies through Agriculture

## FISCAL YEAR 2020 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Sustain support for regional Buy Local efforts in Massachusetts by retaining the following language and maintaining level funding from the FY2019 budget to the FY2020 budget:

**2511-0100**

*“... provided further, that not less than \$500,000 shall be expended to enhance the buy local effort in western, central, northeastern, and southeastern Massachusetts.”*

If every household in the Commonwealth shifted just \$5 a month towards local food, that would result in:



**\$79.3 million per year in benefit to the local economy**



**1,515 new jobs**



**Increased health with over 263 million servings of fresh, local food**



Jim and Emma Golonka at Golonka Farm Stand | Elizabeth Solaka Photo

### Building a Strong Local Economy

Our statewide network provides critical support to Massachusetts farmers and fishermen, strengthening the local economy, preserving active working lands and waters, and making fresh, local food more available to all members of our communities. Together, we have made notable progress in expanding consumer purchasing that supports local agriculture, as our coalition has grown from four to nine members and our work has gained more traction with the public. **Massachusetts ranks #3 in the nation for per farm sales of agricultural products directly to consumers.**

## Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture



CISA's *Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown®* program, the longest-running agricultural Buy-Local campaign in the country, connects farmers and the community. We manage a robust technical assistance program for farmers that includes workshops (like the one pictured here, on DIY market research). We support efforts to increase availability of local food in low-income communities and perform research on key aspects of the local food system.

## Central Mass Grown



## Berkshire Grown



Berkshire Grown's Guide to Local Food & Farms highlights farms and farmers' markets in the region, including the Berkshire Grown Holiday and Winter Farmers' Markets in Great Barrington and Williamstown. These winter markets generate over \$195,000 in sales for farmers and food entrepreneurs every year to build the local food economy and create bonds between farmers and the community.



## Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP)



SEMAP's yearly Twilight Grower Education workshops offer hands-on skill sharing at the farms of leading local producers. Our work also includes a yearly winter conference for growers; promotion of local fiber, seafood, and dairy; 1:1 technical assistance for beginning farmers; and a program to help farmers develop and trial technologies that are economically and environmentally resilient.

## The Massachusetts Coalition for Local Food and Farms

The Massachusetts Coalition for Local Food and Farms (MCLFF) is an alliance of regionally-based nonprofit 'Buy Local' organizations that together serve all communities in the Commonwealth. We endeavor to grow our Massachusetts economy, promote local agriculture and fisheries, and increase the amount of local food eaten by Massachusetts residents.

## Island Grown Initiative





## Northeast Harvest

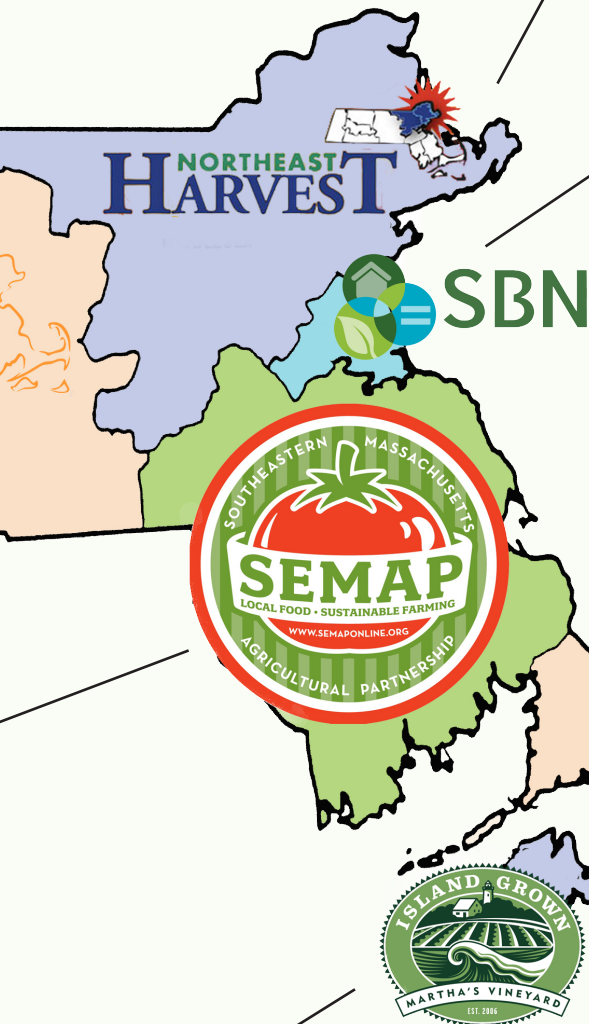
Central Mass Grown connects consumers and farmers through public events, marketing materials, and comprehensive print and online directories. Our education and business development trainings assist farmers across the region to build more sustainable, profitable farm businesses. The ongoing work of CMG creates market opportunities for farms to sell their goods to consumers across Worcester County.



Northeast Harvest connects consumers and farmers through agricultural workshops, workshops for youth from low-income areas, marketing materials, and most recently through our Farmer George initiative – Farmer George appears in person at farms, events, and via social media. Northeast Harvest is committed to growing our local food system for a healthier, more sustainable agricultural community.

## Sustainable Business Network (SBN)

Launched in 1988, the Sustainable Business Network of Massachusetts (SBN) has a mission of building economies that are local, green, and fair. The Local Food Program includes the Boston Local Food Festival which attracts 50,000 people and 100 local food vendors, the Local Food Trade Show, and Eat Local Month in August. We promote local food and advocate for policies to support “healthy local food for all.”



## Buy Fresh Buy Local Cape Cod



BFBLLC promotes local agriculture and expands food access through print and digital campaigns. In addition to branded merchandise and materials, BFBLLC hosted a Farmers' Market Manager conference to address challenges and brainstorm improvements to better serve over 17,000 SNAP recipients on Cape Cod through the HIP program. Our 2018 efforts increased farm and business revenue and promoted Massachusetts agriculture and seafood.

## Sustainable Nantucket



Sustainable Nantucket works to improve the local food system on Nantucket. Via Farm to School, children are educated on the benefits of eating locally and seasonally. Our educational farm is home to four small farm businesses as well as a beekeeping mentoring program and our cooperative CSA provides additional income to island farmers during the shoulder seasons.

Island Grown Initiative is building a regenerative and equitable food system on Martha's Vineyard. At Island Grown we believe everyone should have access to healthy food. We're in the schools, in the community, and in the fields. We work to reduce food waste, increase local food production, and expand access to healthy food for all Islanders.



# The state's investment in our work allows us to:

## Educate consumers about local agriculture

Agriculture is an active and important part of our state economy. Massachusetts has over 7,755 farms, stewarding nearly 524,000 acres and generating sales over \$492 million. We directly reach consumers, educating them about where, why, and how to support Massachusetts farms and related businesses.

### FY 2019 Highlight

SEMAP distributed tens of thousands of copies of their Local Food Guide, promoting local farm businesses, farmers' markets, fairs, breweries, wineries, seafood purveyors, restaurants, and grocers.



Academic Gardening Conference in Worcester, MA  
Central Mass Grown photo

## Increase the availability of local food for all members of the Commonwealth

Access to fresh local food for all people in Massachusetts is fundamental to a healthy and just local food system. We're working to make local food accessible to more people in the Commonwealth than ever before.

### FY 2019 Highlight

Island Grown Initiative served 1,200 people through their mobile market, 25% of whom use food assistance dollars.



C.J. Koshivas on Fairmount Fruit Farm in Franklin, MA  
SEMAP photo.

## Train and support farmers to develop thriving businesses

We directly support over 1,785 farms and local agriculturally-related businesses through our membership, promotion, and training work.

### FY 2019 Highlight

127 farms participated in CISA workshops, networking meetings and direct one-on-one technical assistance.



Goat Nook Farm in Cummington, MA  
Scott Streble photo

**Sustained support is vital for family farms across the Commonwealth.**

**Buy Local campaigns require ongoing support to continue to expand public visibility of local agriculture.**