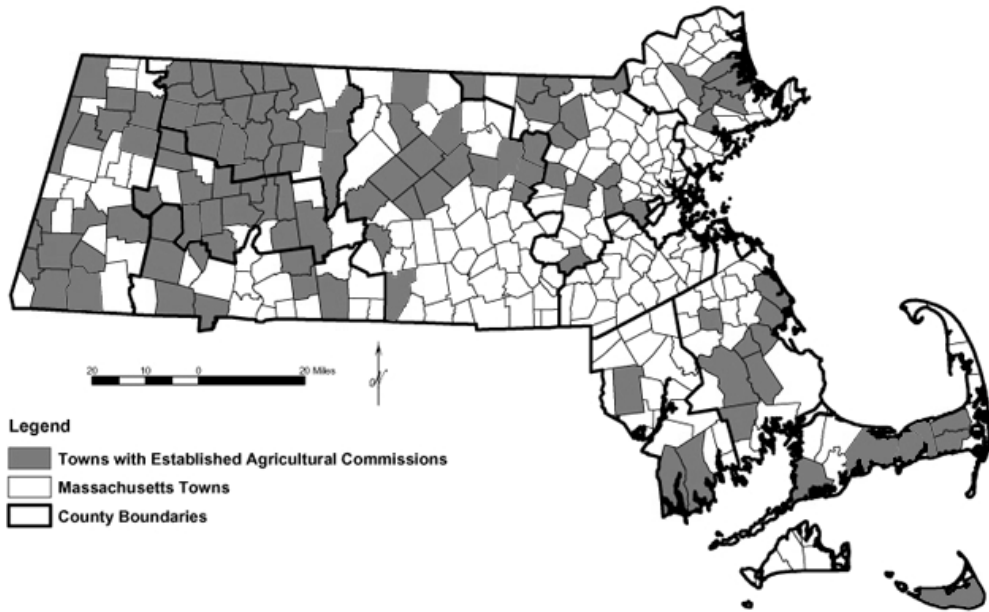


Agricultural Commissions in Massachusetts

- There are a total of 131 agricultural commissions in the state of Massachusetts.



Adams	Dalton	Hawley	Newbury	Stockbridge
Agawam	Danvers	Heath	Newton	Stow
Alford	Dartmouth	Holden	Northampton	Sturbridge
Amherst	Deerfield	Holliston	Northfield	Sudbury
Ashburnham	Dennis	Hubbardston	Oakham	Sunderland
Ashby	Dracut	Huntington	Orange	Templeton
Ashfield	Dunstable	Ipswich	Paxton	Topsfield
Barnstable	Duxbury	Kingston	Pepperell	Townsend
Barre	East	Lancaster	Phillipston	Ware
Becket	Bridgewater	Lanesborough	Plainfield	Wendell
Belchertown	Egremont	Lee	Plymouth	West Boylston
Berlin	Falmouth	Leverett	Plympton	W. Brookfield
Bernardston	Framingham	Leyden	Princeton	W. Stockbridge
Blandford	Gill	Lincoln	Rehoboth	Westford
Bolton	Goshen	Littleton	Richmond	Westhampton
Boxborough	Granby	Ludlow	Rochester	Westminster
Boxford	Granville	Marshfield	Rowe	Weston
Brewster	Great	Middleboro	Rowley	Westport
Buckland	Barrington	Middlefield	Rutland	Whately
Carver	Greenfield	Millis	Savoy	Wilbraham
Charlemont	Groton	Monson	Sheffield	Williamsburg
Chelmsford	Hadley	Monson	Shelburne	Williamstown
Cheshire	Hamilton	Montague	Shutesbury	Winchendon
Chester	Hancock	Monterey	South Hadley	Windsor
Chesterfield	Hardwick	Montgomery	Southampton	Worthington
Colrain	Harvard	Nantucket	Southbridge	Yarmouth
Conway	Harwich	New Marlboro	Southwick	
Cummington	Hatfield	New Salem	Sterling	

- **What is an agricultural commission (AgCom)?**

- AgComs are committees formed at Town Meeting through the passage of a local by-law.
- Each town can decide what the duties and responsibilities of the AgCom will be. These
- are outlined in the by-law.
- Under Massachusetts law, communities can create committees at the town level that serve in the interest of that town.

- **What does an AgCom do?**

- Serves as a local voice advocating for farmers, farm businesses and farm interests
- Provides visibility for farming
- Works with other town boards about issues facing the town
- Helps resolve farm related problems or conflicts
- Protects farmland and natural resources

- **Why are town AgComs forming?**

Many towns trying to balance growth and quality of life issues are creating AgComs. The intent of an AgCom is simple :protect agricultural lands, preserve rural character, provide a voice for farmers, and encourage agricultural based businesses.

- **Who can serve on an AgCom?**

Anyone who is a resident of the town is eligible to sit on a town board or commission. However, the by-law created and passed by the town determines the number of members and composition of the commission. In towns with existing AgComs there are several types of members – voting, alternate, and advisory. Each town should decide what type of membership and qualifications are appropriate for their community.

- **Does an AgCom cost the town money?**

Each town should decide what is an appropriate budget for their AgCom. Existing AgCom budgets range from \$0 to \$1,000 per year.

- **Are AgComs regulatory?**

Unlike some other town committees, AgComs do not operate under any regulatory authority from the Commonwealth. While town conservation commissions implement the State Wetlands Protection Act and planning boards enforce the local zoning code, AgComs are created at Town Meeting to represent farming interests in the town - but they do not have any legal mandate or enforcement authority.

- **What are some AgComs doing in Massachusetts?**

- Adopting local right-to-farm by-law
- Obtaining technical assistance on nonpoint source pollution, conservation farm
- planning, manure management, environmental stewardship
- Raising monies for farmland protection and economic development
- Starting local farmer's market
- Providing mediation and conflict resolution on farm related disputes within town
- Collaborating with other town boards on development proposals
- Holding educational workshops on intergenerational transfer of property,
- Chapter 61 lands, farm viability, and Agricultural Preservation Restrictions

- **Need More Information?**

Visit the Massachusetts Agricultural Commission website: www.massagcom.org