

# NH Agriculture Today



# NH Definition of Agriculture

RSA 21:34-a

Defines farms and  
Farming activities



# The Numbers

- 2012 Agricultural Census shows 5% increase in farm numbers in NH (4% decrease nationwide)
- Smaller farms
- #1 in the nation for direct marketing sales as a percentage of all farm sales
- #2 in the nation for percentage of all have direct sales



# More Numbers

- #1 in the nation for organic sales as a percentage of all farms sales
- #6 in the nation for CSAs as a percent of all farms
- #3 in the nation for women principal farm operators as a percentage of total operators



# New England States' National Rankings

- **Direct Market Sales as a Percentage of all Farm Sales**
  - New Hampshire, 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Rhode Island, 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Massachusetts, 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - Connecticut, 4<sup>th</sup>
  - Vermont, 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Maine, 8<sup>th</sup>
- **Percentage of all Farms that have Direct Sales**
  - New Hampshire, 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Rhode Island, 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - Massachusetts, 4<sup>th</sup>
  - Maine, 5<sup>th</sup>
  - Vermont, 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Connecticut, 7<sup>th</sup>

# New England States National Rankings

## Organic Sales as Percent of All Agricultural Sales

- New Hampshire, 1<sup>st</sup>
- Vermont, 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Massachusetts, 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Maine, 4<sup>th</sup>
- Rhode Island, 10<sup>th</sup>
- Connecticut, 24<sup>th</sup>



# NH Agriculture Today

- Diversified
- Dynamic
- Large number of small farms



# NH Agriculture Today

## Top industry segments

### Ornamental Horticulture



### Dairy



# Agritourism



2002

16 farms, \$265,000

2007

88 farms, \$2.3 million

2012

190 farms, \$3.8 million



# New Hampshire Farms

- A viable, dynamic industry integrated within New Hampshire's communities
- Diverse products and services for local to international markets
- Stewards of nearly a half million New Hampshire acres
- Major contributor to our character and quality of life



# Why it matters to your town

## 1982-2010 Land Use Change in NH\*:

- Cropland acres -25%
- Pastureland acres -28%
- Developed land acres +80.5%



- Rockingham County lost 1/3 of its prime farmland in just five years, 1997-2002

\* National Resources Inventory USDA-NRCS

# Planning and Zoning RSA 672:1

- III-b. Agriculture makes vital and significant contributions to the food supply, the economy, the environment and the aesthetic features of the state of New Hampshire, and the tradition of using the land resource for agricultural production is an essential factor in providing for the favorable quality of life in the state. ...



# Planning and Zoning RSA

**674:32-a Presumption.** – In accordance with RSA 672:1, III-d, whenever agricultural activities are not explicitly addressed with respect to any zoning district or location, they shall be deemed to be permitted there, as either a primary or accessory use, so long as conducted in accordance with *best management practices adopted by the commissioner of agriculture, markets, and food and with federal and state laws, regulations, and rules.*



# 674:32-b Existing Agricultural Uses



Any agricultural use which exists pursuant to RSA 674:32-a may without restriction be expanded, altered to meet changing technology or markets, or changed to another agricultural use, as set forth in RSA 21:34-a, so long as any such expansion, alteration, or change *complies with all federal and state laws, regulations, and rules, including best management practices* adopted by the commissioner of agriculture, markets, and food; subject, however, to the following limitations:

# 674:32-b Existing Agricultural Uses

I. Any new establishment, re-establishment after disuse, or significant expansion of an operation involving the keeping of livestock, poultry, or other animals may be made subject to special exception, building permit, or other local land use board approval.

II. Any new establishment, re-establishment after disuse, or significant expansion of a farm stand, retail operation, or other use involving on-site transactions with the public, may be made subject to applicable special exception, building permit, or other local land use board approval and may be regulated to prevent traffic and parking from adversely impacting adjacent property, streets and sidewalks, or public safety.

# 674:32-c Other General Provisions

- I. The tilling of soil and the growing and harvesting of crops and horticultural commodities, as a primary or accessory use, shall not be prohibited in any district.
- II. Nothing in this subdivision shall exempt new, re-established, or expanded agricultural operations from generally applicable building and site requirements such as dimensional standards, setbacks, driveway and traffic regulations, parking requirements, noise, odor, or vibration restrictions or sign regulations; provided, however, that in circumstances where their literal application would effectively prohibit an agricultural use allowed by this subdivision, or would otherwise be unreasonable in the context of an agricultural use, the board of adjustment, building code board of appeals, or other applicable local board, after due notice and hearing, shall grant a waiver from such requirement to the extent necessary to reasonably permit the agricultural use, unless such waiver would have a demonstrated adverse effect on public health or safety, or the value of adjacent property. Such waiver shall continue only as long as utilized for the permitted agricultural use.

# 674:32-c Other General Provisions

III. Nothing in this subdivision shall apply to any aspect of an agricultural operation determined to be injurious to public health or safety under RSA 147. Nothing in this subdivision shall be deemed to modify or limit the duties and authority of the department of environmental services under RSA 485 or RSA 485-A or the commissioner of the department of agriculture, markets, and food under title XL.

IV. Nothing in this subdivision shall be deemed to affect the regulation of sludge or septage.



# Federal and State Regulations



- Wetland and highly erodible soils
- Food safety and sanitation
- Pesticide use
- Water quality, nutrient management
- Market-driven certifications and requirements

# The mission of the Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food

*is to promote agriculture in the public interest and to serve farmers and consumers in the marketplace. The department assures safe and healthy food supplies, provides accurate information on prices and availability of farm commodities and crops and develops markets for the state's farmers.*



# Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP's) Defined

- BMPs are management, agronomic, and structural practices that permit economically viable production while achieving the least possible adverse impact upon the environment, including water quality.
- The practices are based on the best available research and scientific data.

# Manual of BMPs for Agriculture in NH

- The manual lists and discusses BMPs for manure, agricultural compost, and chemical fertilizer.
- The use of BMPs for agriculture is an effective tool to achieve the balance between fostering viable farm production and protection of the state's waters.

# Complaint Resolution Process

Even with good farm management, weather, schedules, and ground conditions may at times cause environmental and social problems from agricultural operations.



Residents claim that such odors diminish their comfort, quality of life, and property values.

# Horse Manure Storage funded by an ANM grant





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NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## Agricultural Commission

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**Contact:**     [Erick Sawtelle](#)  
603-234-7907

**Address:**     Agricultural Commission  
7 Mast Road  
Lee, NH 03861

**Phone:**        603-659-5414

**Fax:**            603-659-7202

**Meeting Info:**   Last Tuesday of each month  
7:00 pm  
2nd Floor of Town Hall



[Meeting Agendas](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

### **Additional Links:**

<a href="#">Farmer's Market</a>	<a href="#">Farmer's Market Facebook Page</a>	<a href="#">2014 Upcoming Events Brochure</a>
<a href="#">Backyard Farming Initiative</a>	<a href="#">Agriculture and Farm Brochure</a>	<a href="#">Agricultural Series Living Healthy with Living Things</a>
<a href="#">Meet the Agricultural Commission</a>	<a href="#">2014 Meeting Schedule</a>	

# Who ya gonna call?

- NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food  
[www.agriculture.nh.gov](http://www.agriculture.nh.gov)
- UNH Cooperative Extension  
[www.extension.edu](http://www.extension.edu)
- Local Agricultural Commission  
RSA 673:4-b

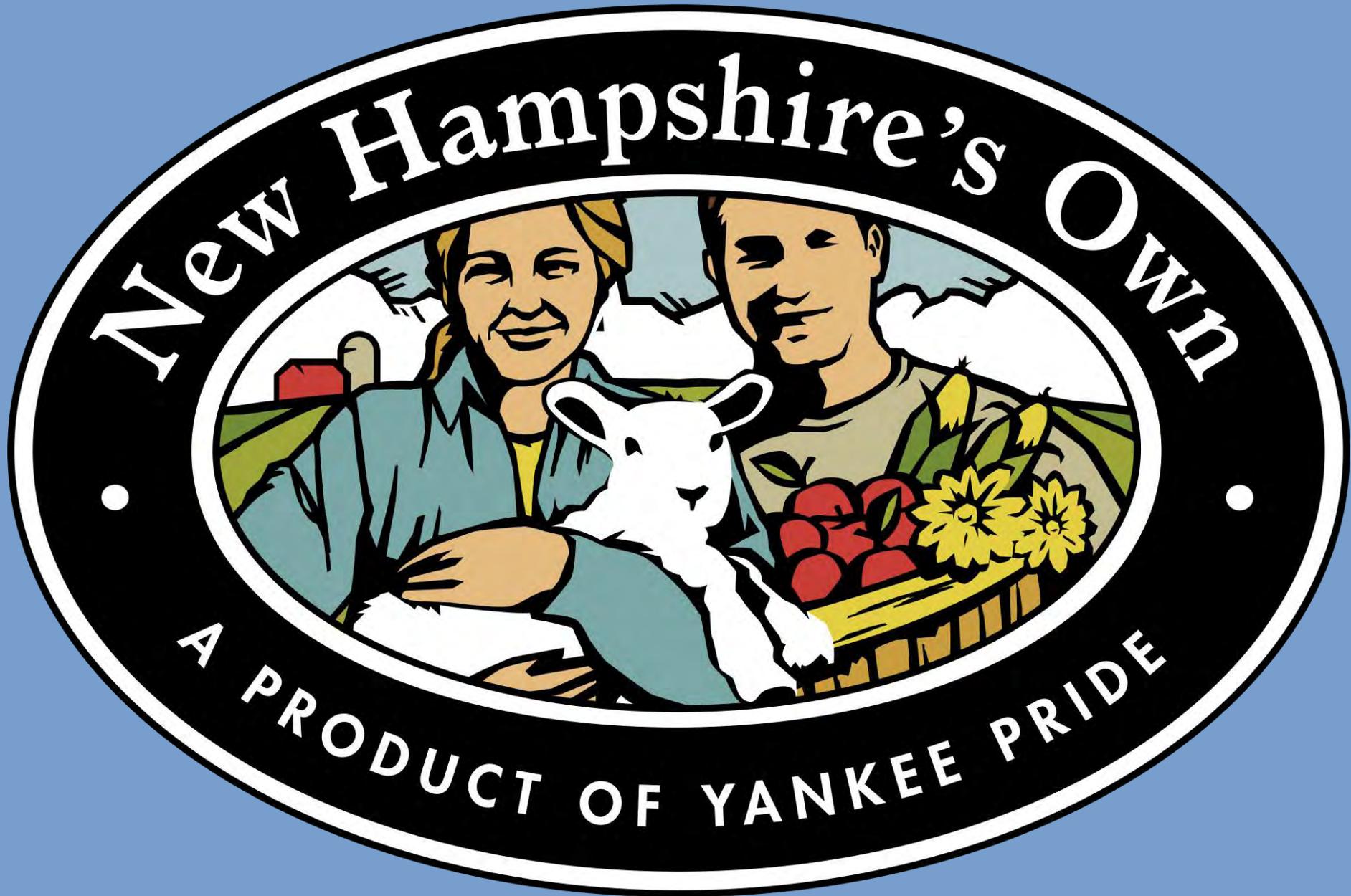


# Who ya gonna call?

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/s/>

- County Conservation Districts – see Personnel Directory on NRCS-NH website



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