

The **Kingston Agricultural Commission** was created in 2006 and the Right-to-Farm By-law was adopted in 2008. There are currently 5 voting members and 3 associate members. Minutes of all meetings are available on the town web site along with the by-law.

The mission of the Agricultural Commission is to represent the Town of Kingston's agricultural community and interests. Activities of the Agricultural Commission include but are not limited to the following:

- To serve as facilitators for encouraging the pursuit of agriculture in Kingston
- Promote agricultural-based economic opportunities in the town
- Act as mediators, advocates, educators and/or negotiators' in an advisory capacity on farming issues for established town committees and departments
- Pursue all initiatives appropriate to creating a sustainable agricultural community
- Encourage the pursuit of agriculture as a career opportunity and lifestyle

The members of the Agricultural Commission are available to discuss any agricultural issue and resources.

The Agricultural Commission presents a yearly Agricultural Fair and encourages any local agricultural enterprise to participate and highlight their business.

The Agricultural Commission also provides educational programs and supports the Seed Library at the Kingston Public Library.

Members of the agricultural community are encouraged to attend the meetings of the Agricultural Commission as posted on the town website Meeting Calendar.

Members of the Kingston agricultural community are encouraged to join local organizations such as the Plymouth County Farm Bureau as well as groups such as 4-H. Other State and regional organizations such as SEMAP can be valuable resources.

Contact information is available on the Commission's web page on the town website.

The **Right-to-Farm By-Law** encourages the pursuit of agriculture, promotes agriculture-based economic opportunities, and protects farmland within the Town of Kingston by allowing agricultural uses and related activities to function with minimal conflict with abutters and Town agencies. This By-Law applies to all jurisdictional areas within the Town.

The benefits and protections of this By-Law are intended to ***apply exclusively to commercial agricultural practices, located on parcels containing at least 5 acres. Commercial agriculture is defined as utilization of land for the raising of hay, grain crops or livestock for profit. Commercial agriculture practices involve working the land for production.*** See MGL c. 40§ 3 for different acreage requirements

This by-law also provides for the resolution of disputes regarding agricultural operations.

Considerations for agricultural enterprises:

Before you obtain livestock of any kind and establish them on your property:

- Determine in what zoning district your property is located and any special permit needed from the ZBA
- Check the table of Agricultural Uses of the zoning bylaws
- Review the zoning regulations regarding size and placement of buildings and other structures on your property
- Determine the appropriate containment system for your livestock as well as its location in compliance with the zoning regulations
- Check the wetland regulations (Conservation Agent)
- Check for all State regulations
- Maintain noise, insect and odor control
- Limit hours of operation
- Be mindful of the Impact of livestock on neighbors (be a good neighbor)
- Cooperate with animal control and the animal inspector

- Abide by all environmental regulations

Helpful resources:

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Massachusetts Division of Animal Health

Plymouth County Farm Bureau

Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership

Plymouth County 4-H

Plymouth County Beekeepers Association

US Department of Agriculture:

- Natural Resources Conservation Services
- Farm Service Agency
- National Agricultural Statistics Service

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KINGSTON
Massachusetts

Kingston Agricultural Commission

Information
and
Guidelines