

How to Help Maine Farmers and Farm Businesses: The Needs of Maine Agriculture

*Let's find ways
to address...*

Labor Issues

- Shortage of Farm Workers
- Affordable Employment Costs and Regulations
- Ag Sector Specific Workforce Training

Stewardship of Farm Resources

- Human Resources (*Farm Families & Employees*)
- Energy (Reducing costs & Improving efficiency)
- Water (Continued access & Responsible use)
- Soil (Promoting healthy soil through Best Management Practices)

Access to Business Support Services

- Support Transition & Innovation
- Support Farm Transfer & Succession (*Generational transfer of farm businesses & keeping land in agricultural production*)
 - Provide Relief to Tax Burdens
- Increase Affordable Access to Broadband
- Improve Access to Financial, Legal, Insurance, & Management Expertise & Services in the Private Sector

Financial Sustainability

Farm Economics

- Solutions to Rising Production/ Processing Costs
 - Reasonable & Affordable Regulations
- Improve Accessibility of Capital to Agricultural Businesses / Educating the Finance Community about Agriculture & Ag Risks
 - Support a Maine Brand & Give Farmers Tools to Market their Products

Investments in Agriculture/Aquaculture Research & Development

- Investments in Agriculture & Business Technical Assistance Services Infrastructure—Public Sector
- Support for UMaine Cooperative Extension / UMaine Colleges & Experiment Stations



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Central Themes to Support All Types of Maine Agriculture

Farm financial profitability is the key to achieving effective sustainability of all of Maine's resources.

All Maine agricultural businesses (farms, processors, distributors, etc.) **operate** in the local/state/regional economy, and **compete** in the global economy.

Agriculture—especially food production—is one of the most heavily regulated economic sectors.

Agriculture has so many different products and systems that a *one-size-for-all* approach seldom works—especially in Maine's very diverse ag economy.

Maine farms and food producers are small businesses. They are employers, taxpayers, land owners, residents, community leaders, & natural resource managers.

The financial success of Maine farms fuels the local economy across Maine.

For more information about AgCOM, go to: www.maineagcom.org or e-mail: info@maineagcom.org

The statements made are the result of a multi-year project to gather broad-based input from farmers and participants in Maine Agriculture. These included many public meetings at AgCOM and elsewhere, and a Statewide Engagement Process to identify Maine Farmers' Needs & Priorities, which is summarized in a report which can be found at

<http://maineagcom.org/2019/08/farmer-needs-assessment-information/>