



## March 7-9, 2017 at the Sturbridge Host Hotel in Sturbridge, MA

### Wednesday, March 8

7:00 am - 8:00 am: Registration and Trade Show

8:00 am - 9:30 am: Keynote: Are You in Marketing? Isn't Everyone?  
Speaker: Craig Ostbo, Managing Partner, Koopman Ostbo, Portland, OR

Craig Ostbo, from Koopman Ostbo Marketing Communications in Portland, Oregon will challenge the perception that just because your job title or business card doesn't say "marketing" doesn't mean you aren't responsible for marketing your farm's brand. Craig will emphasize the reality that your farm's brand is the single most valuable asset of your business. By the end of the keynote, you will not only agree that YOU are in marketing, you will realize that you too have a brand. And because you represent your business, regardless of your title, YOUR brand impacts your BRAND!

9:30 am - 10:00 am: Break/Tradeshow

10:00 am - 11:15 am: Breakout Sessions #1

**Agritourism:** Getting Started in Agritourism: Regulatory Hurdles and Resources  
Speakers: Frank Di Luna, Partner, Murtha Law, Woburn, MA; Brad Mitchell, Deputy Executive Director, Mass Farm Bureau Federation, Marlborough, MA

The success of the Buy Local movement has given rise to a sharp increase in agritourism, with consumers wanting to spend time on farms and farms looking to hold events. These include everything from haunted hayrides to weddings. Activities often include the preparation and serving of food. Unfortunately, many legal definitions of "agriculture" do not include such activities which may leave farms in conflict with zoning, health, and other restrictions. During this interactive session, Mass Farm Bureau staff and legal counsel will discuss a few case studies where towns attempted to regulate agritourism and a model by-law to address these concerns.

**Business Planning: Legal Structures for Your Farm**

Moderator: Annie Lemelin, Regional Coordinator of Legal Food Hub, Conservation Law Foundation, Boston, MA

Speakers: Craig Todaro, Partner, Goodwin Procter, Boston, MA

Learn or refresh your memory about the pros and cons (formation, management, taxation, ease of transfer, etc.) of various business legal structures. From partnerships to LLCs to non-profits, learn what business structure is best for your farm.

**Market Options: Determining the Right Marketing Strategy for My Farm**

Moderator: Jaime Smith, CT Department of Agriculture, Hartford, CT

Speakers: Gary Keough, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Concord, NH;  
Additional speakers TBA

Farmers markets, farmstands, CSA's, Wholesale or Retail? How do you decide? Hear from a panel of farmers on how they determined the marketing options they did and why. What were the determining factors and what changes have they made along the way? Also hear the results of USDA's Local Foods Marketing Practices Survey, including data from New England.

**Value Added: The Latest Food Trends and the Power of "Local"**

Moderator: Bonita Oehlke, Marketing Specialist, MA Dept. of Agricultural Resources, Boston, MA

Speakers: Liz L'Toile, Four Star Farms; Northfield, MA; Ron Tanner, Specialty Food Association, NYC; Additional Speaker TBA

More healthy and yet more decadent, more exotic and yet more comforting...this year's food trends have dominated the food scene and driven new product development. A snapshot of the food products that show the most common trends will help you consider how both large and small business food product introductions have shaped consumer tastes and affect their buying choices. With a focus on the trustworthiness of local, a grain producer and a bakery using that grain will share their stories.

11:15 am - 12:15 pm: Trade Show

12:15 pm - 1:15 pm: Locally Grown Lunch

1:15 pm - 2:30 pm: Breakout Sessions #2

**Social Media and Online Marketing: Three Astounding Ways Social Media is Impacting Your Business (Whether You Like it or Not)**

Speaker: Craig Ostbo, Managing Partner, Koopman Ostbo, Portland, OR

Do you really know how social media is impacting brands, customers, employees, and businesses? Using real-world examples, Craig will explore three ways social media is transforming our world, our brands and our ability to engage with our consumers. More importantly, he'll explore the newfound power social media provides consumers and will help you to understand who truly owns your brand. Hint: It's not you!

**Business Planning:** Create a Marketing Plan to Achieve Your Sales Goals

Speakers: Julia Shanks, Principal, Julia Shanks Food Consulting, Cambridge, MA; Myrna Greenfield, Top Egg, Good Egg Marketing, Jamaica Plain, MA

Successful farmers must be skilled at business planning and marketing, not just production. Too often they are managed separately, without recognizing their interdependencies. This workshop will teach you how to create detailed revenue goals (which will guide production plans) and a marketing plan for achieving those goals.

**Market Options:** Understanding the Impact of the Farm to Institution Market in New England

Moderator: Nessa Richman, Farm to Institution New England, Kingston, RI

Speakers: Danielle Fleury, Farm to School Regional Lead, USDA Northeast Region, Boston, MA; Simca Horwitz, Eastern Mass Director, Massachusetts Farm to School Project; Jennifer Obadia, Eastern U.S. Regional Director, Healthy Food in Health Care Program, Health Care Without Harm, Somerville, MA

The New England Farm to Institution Metrics Project was initiated by Farm to Institution New England in 2015. It is a data-driven overview of the impact of the farm to institution supply chain, from production through consumption. The project focuses on three institutional sectors: K-12 schools, colleges/universities and hospitals. This workshop will include a presentation and small group dialogue.

**Value Added:** Value-Added Farm Ingredients for Success: Top Three Steps to be Production Ready

Moderator: Roz Freeman, Community and Operations Manager, Commonwealth Kitchen, Dorchester, MA

Speaker: Amanda Kinchla, Extension Assistant Professor, Department of Food Science, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA

Included in the list of topics to be considered to transform farm ingredients into value-added products, understanding three key concepts from the start can streamline the process: Considering food safety from the beginning; Recognizing at the start whether the product will be artisanal or mass produced; and understanding the product as a formula to inform product development and processing. These three steps will get you to the finish line faster! Amanda Kinchla, UMASS, has been providing one day workshops on product development in collaboration with shared use kitchens across Massachusetts. This session will focus on top recommendations.

2:30 - 3:00 pm:

Break/Trade Show

3:00 pm - 4:15 pm: Breakout Sessions #3

**Social Media and Online Marketing:** Get More from Your Online Marketing and Social Media

Speakers: Myrna Greenfield, Top Egg, Good Egg Marketing, Jamaica Plain, MA; Carole Soule, Owner, Miles Smith Farm, Loudon, NH

Social Media and online marketing can be a great way to market your farm or food business if you use them strategically. This interactive workshop will demonstrate how to use your online presence to achieve your business goals. The panel and participants will share favorite online marketing tools and tips.

**Business Planning:** Farm Energy 101: Learn More About the Direct and Indirect Benefits of Making Your Farm Sustainable

Speakers: Liz Budd, CET/Mass Farm Energy Program; Anne Correia, USDA Rural Development, West Wareham, MA; Amanda Fargo-Johnson, CT Farm Energy Program, Haddam, CT; Alex DePillis, VT Division of Agricultural Development, Montpelier, VT

Are you looking to make your farm more energy efficient or implement renewable energy on your farm? This session will highlight what states in New England have to offer in terms of incentives and technical assistance. Learn about the value of implementing on farm energy projects not only for your bottom line but also for the indirect values to the environment, marketing, labor reduction, better crop production, and more efficient running operations.

**Market Options:** Integrating the FSMA Produce Safety Rule with State Initiatives in New England

Speakers: Michael Botelho, Coordinator, Commonwealth Quality Program/Massachusetts Produce Safety Initiative, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, Boston, MA; Additional speakers TBA

Representatives of state programs including the Massachusetts Commonwealth Quality Program and Massachusetts Food Safety Initiative will provide an overview for support of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Rule. Regional collaboration, as well as the future possibility of regional marketing initiatives will also be discussed.

**Value Added:** Where's the Value? Bringing Farm Viability into Aggregation and Processing

Moderator: Sarah Waring, Executive Director, Center for an Agricultural Economy, Hardwick, VT

Speakers: Roz Freeman, Community and Operations Manager, Commonwealth Kitchen, Dorchester, MA; John Waite, Western MA Food Processing Center, Greenfield, MA; Jessie Rye, Co-Executive Director, Farm Fresh Rhode Island, Pawtucket, RI

Food hubs, business incubators, and commercial kitchens serve new and established local food producers looking to increase and/or diversify their markets. This session will explore services and opportunities available to farms and small businesses to help them become more economically viable, by addressing new trends in demand, opportunities in value-added production and new markets.

4:15 pm - 6:30 pm: Trade Show; Reception in the Trade Show starting at 5:00 pm

## Thursday, March 9

7:00 am - 8:00 am: Registration and Trade Show

8:00 am - 9:30 am: General Session: Media Strategies: When Things Go Right....and Wrong  
Speakers: Craig Ostbo, Managing Partner, Koopman Ostbo, Portland, Oregon and panel of growers and media professionals, TBA

Craig Ostbo will moderate a panel of industry and media professionals from around New England including producers, media specialists, and communication directors. From their real-world circumstances, you'll learn tips, tricks and techniques designed to help you develop a plan for preparedness to promote the good and address the seemingly bad. Special emphasis will be placed on dealing with an investigative media during a perceived crisis. Armed with the tools for success, you'll leave understanding how the best defense is a good offense.

9:30 am - 10:00 am: Break/Trade Show

10:00 am - 11:15 am: Breakout Sessions #4

**Social Media and Online Marketing:** Social Media Primer: Get up to speed on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and More

Speakers: Diane Baedeker Petit, Public Affairs Officer, UDSA NRCS, Amherst, MA, , Jenny Durocher, Farm Manager, Cider Hill Farm, Amesbury, MA; Samantha Whittier, Whittier Farms, Sutton, MA : Additional speaker TBA

Still not sure what a tweet is? Signed up for Facebook but don't know what to do with it? And, what's an Instagram anyway? We'll hash out hashtags, tweets, mentions, posts, blogs, likes, friends, followers and more. Hear from other farmers how they set-up and manage their social media.

**Business Planning:** You Already Have the Most Profitable Tool You'll Ever Own

Speakers: Erin Pirro, CAC, Farm Business Consultant, Farm Credit East, ACA, Enfield, CT

If you're only keeping financial records to do your tax return, you're really missing out! These ten tips will make a positive impact on the profit of a farm of any size. Bring your 2016 Profit and Loss Statement and 12/31/16 Balanced Sheet and learn how good management records can be the most profitable tool you'll ever own.

**Market Options:** Cooperating Together to Reach New Markets

Speakers: Sylvian Bukasa, Board Treasurer, New American Farmers Cooperative, Dunbarton, NH; Jonah Fertig, Cooperative Food Systems Developer, Cooperative

Development Institute, Durham, ME; Hussein Muktar, Outreach Coordinator, Cultivating Community, Lewiston, ME

We will explore models in the Northeast of how farmers, including new Americans, workers and consumers are working together in cooperatives to open new markets, including institutions and multi-farm CSA's. You will walk away with tools, resources and inspiration to start or continue organizing cooperatives that benefit farmers.

**Agritourism:** On-Farm Food Festivals and Dinners.

Speakers: TBA

Learn from a panel of farmers who have incorporated on-farm culinary options into their farm business—what has worked, what hasn't, and options to consider.

**Value Added:** Commercial Kitchens: Got products? Work up the Value Chain to Develop Value-Added Products and Expand Your Business

Moderator: Bonita Oehlke, Marketing Specialist, MA Dept. of Agricultural Resources, Boston, MA

Speakers: Chris Callahan, The Northeast Center to Advance Food Safety Lead, University of Vermont Ag Engineering, Burlington, VT; Rooster Fricke, Nobska Farms, Woods Hole, MA; Carolyn Grieco, Carolyn's Farm Kitchen, MA; Judith Sedor, New Gate Farm, Windsor, CT

When does it make sense to lease space to add value to farm products and at what point is it reasonable to build a commercial kitchen on the farm? What are the major decision points? How does the Food Safety Modernization Act and the Preventive Controls for Human Food relate to small processors? What resources are available relating to regulations, construction and equipment?

11:15 - 12:30 pm: Trade Show

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm: Locally Grown Lunch

1:30 pm - 2:45 pm Breakout Sessions #5

**Social Media and Online Marketing:** Social Media 360: Promoting Farmer Owned Brands Online

Moderator: Candace Karu, Social Media Expert, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Waitsfield, VT;

Speakers: Candace Karu, Social Media Expert, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Waitsfield, VT; Jenni Tilton-Flood, Farmer/Owner, Flood Brothers Farm, Clinton, ME; Amanda Freund, Farmer, CowPots/Freund's Farm Market & Bakery, East Canaan, CT

This session will showcase how brands and their farmer owners can authentically and positively impact marketing efforts by implementing tiers of brand, farmer co-operation/coordination, and farm specific messaging that support and enhance each other to reach individual and shared goals

**Business Planning:** Running Your Business (Instead of Letting it Run You!)

Speakers: Erin Pirro, CAC, Farm Business Consultant, Farm Credit East, ACA, Enfield, CT;  
Additional speaker TBA

Almost no one starts a business because they want to run a business. They start a business because they are good at what they do and want to be their own boss! Join Erin Pirro to learn some simple steps you can take to ease some of the headaches of business ownership.

**Market Options:** Meet the Buyers Forum: Selling to Institutional Markets and Distributors

Moderator: Simca Horwitz, Farm to Institution New England and Eastern Massachusetts Director, Massachusetts Farm to School Project

Participants: Black River Produce; Western Mass Food Processing Center; Rhode Island School of Design; Native Maine Produce; Red Tomato, Farm Fresh Rhode Island.

Additional participants TBD

Farmers interested in selling to distributors or institutional markets in New England can join this session to learn more about how to access these markets and to meet directly with potential institutional buyers and distributors.

**Agritourism:** How Can Agritourism Work on Your Farm?

Moderator: Gail McWilliam Jellie, Director of Agricultural Development, NH Department of Agriculture, Concord, NH

Speakers: Nigel Manley, Society for the Protection of NH Forests, Rocks Estate, Bethlehem, NH; Kathy Sherman, Sherman Farm, Conway, NH; John Moulton, Moulton Farm, Meredith, NH; Sheri St. Laurent and Jennifer Adams, The Inn at East Hill Farm, Troy, NH

Agritourism activities can diversify a farm's bottom line directly, or indirectly by drawing people to the farm. The variety of agritourism experiences is huge – from as simple as u-pick opportunities to farm stays. If you are considering adding agritourism to your farm, listen to the experiences of these New Hampshire panelists who have incorporated agritourism to the benefit of their operations.

**Value Added:** Developing a Value Added Meat Supply chain

Moderator: Edith Murnane, Food and Farm Venture, Boston, MA

Speakers: Bill Cavanaugh, Meat Specialist, Business Incubation, Mad River Food Hub, Waitsfield, VT; Kate Stillman, Owner, Stillman Quality Meats, Hardwick, MA; Additional Speakers TBA

Local meat sourcing is a top culinary trend. As evidence of the demand, livestock producers and processors report stronger sales and interest among consumers for value-added products. Trends, marketing information and examples will provide an array of information to understand adding value to meat products.

2:45 pm - 3:15 pm      Break/Trade Show. Show closes at 3:15 pm

**Social Media and Online Marketing:** Financing and On-Line Crowd Funding Platforms: How does it Work? Is it Right for Me?

Moderator: Dorothy Suput, Executive Director, The Carrot Project, Boston, MA

Speakers: Willie Crosby, Fungi Ally, Hadley MA; Julia Lemieux, Windy Ridge Organics, Hawley, MA; Roger Phillips, Sub Edge Farm, Farmington, CT

From the experience of different farms, you will learn about their experiences using crowd funding sites such as Kickstarter and others. What worked and why? What was challenging? Were there any surprises? Presenters will include farms that have used different crowd funding platforms to provide a range of experiences and to give you a sense of how the various platforms differ.

**Business Planning:** Farm Succession and Transfer: An Essential Part of a Successful and Sustainable Farm Business

Speakers: Tess Brown-Lavoie, Land for Good, Kenne, NH; Richard Cavanaugh, Common Grow, Petersham, MA; Additional speaker TBD

Don't put off succession planning for your farm! Marketing and other farm business decisions are influenced by the prospects for succession, whether or not you have an identified successor. This session will offer information, tools, support and resources to help farm families integrate succession into business planning, and empower participants to begin the process or take concrete next steps.

**Federal Partners:** USDA Assistance Programs: Enhancing Production, Adding Value and Increasing Food Access

Speakers: Christine Kimball, Loan Specialist, USDA Rural Development, Amherst MA; Diane Baedeker Petit, Public Affairs Specialist, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Amherst, MA, Dawn Pindell,

Outreach Specialist, USDA Farm Service Agency, Tolland, CT; Tom Smiarowski, UMass Extension Crop Insurance/Risk Management, Amherst, MA

Learn about USDA programs and services and collect contact information for service providers who can help your farming or food production enterprise.

**Value Added:** Marketing Your Value Added Product

Speakers: Luca Carnevale, Executive Director of Operations, Hope & Main, Warren, RI; Craig Colvin, Owner, Bear Pond Farm, Glastonbury, CT; Sean Horrigan, Founder, PR Guy, Boston, MA

The value added track concludes with a panel of marketing and business front line thinkers who will focus on strategies to build brand awareness and equity, labels with a story, powerful public relations, efficient and effective social media and other marketing topics critical for small value-added producers to grow and prosper!