



community
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Winter Workshops 2008-2009

Incentives for Energy Projects: USDA Rural Energy for America Program Grants Part 1: Info Session

Wednesday, January 7th, 9:00 am–12:00 pm

Attend a free workshop series for farmers and forest product business owners about financial incentives available through the USDA 9007 Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). REAP funding supports a diverse range of clean energy technologies: not only biofuels but also wind, solar, biomass electricity, biogas and energy efficiency. In 2008, fifteen Massachusetts rural small businesses and farmers received \$1,039,177 through this program, seven with technical assistance from the MA Farm Energy Program.

The workshop is sponsored by the MA Woodlands Institute and the MA Farm Energy Program of Berkshire-Pioneer RC&D, with funding support from the USDA/Rural Business Enterprise Grant, and will be held at the South Deerfield Town Hall (8 Conway Street). The workshop is FREE and light refreshments will be served. To register or for more information, contact Emily Boss, MA Woodlands Institute, at 413-397-8800 or emily@masswoodlands.coop

Incentives for Energy Projects: USDA Rural Energy for America Program Grants Part 2: Grant Application Workshop TBD

A follow-up grant application workshop will be held with one-on-one technical assistance for those interested in applying for a REAP grant and/or guaranteed loan. Pre-registration is required for this session and participants must have attended a prior USDA REAP informational meeting or previously applied for a USDA energy grant. This is a FREE workshop. Refreshments will be provided. To register or for more information, contact Emily Boss, MA Woodlands Institute, at 413-397-8800 or emily@masswoodlands.coop

Continuing The Legacy of Your Farm: Succession Planning for Retiring and Next- Generation Farmers

Wednesday, January 21, 6:00 pm-8:30 pm

It's never too early -- or too late -- to plan for your farm transfer. If you hope to pass your farm to the next generation or to someone outside the family, this workshop is for you. In this introductory session, Dave Gott and Kathy Ruhf will go over the basics of farm succession planning, from goal setting to land use, retirement, estate and legal issues. Workshop participants are eligible for follow-up small group or individual sessions to get into more detail. Dave and Kathy have worked with farm families around succession issues for many years and both live in western Massachusetts.

Funding for this project was provided by the Northeast Center for Risk Management Education and USDA/CSREES to the University of Vermont and is sponsored by the Transferring the Farm Project and Land For Good. The workshop will take place at the CISA office, 1 Sugarloaf St. South Deerfield. Cost is \$15.00 for Local Hero Members (all participating family members included) and \$20 for non-Local Hero members/farms (all participating family members included) and light refreshments are included. To register contact Devon at 413-665-7100 or devon@buylocalfood.com.

Creative CSA Practices

Saturday, February 21, 10:00am

Come learn about creative, exciting directions that CSA farms in the Valley and beyond are exploring, including off-farm CSA deliveries, partnerships with local schools, winter CSA best practices, and more. Take advantage of the opportunity to meet and network with other CSA farmers at this free workshop! Organized in partnership with Hampshire College CSA. For more information, contact Claire at CISA, (413) 665-7100 or claire@buylocalfood.com.

Women in Agriculture Day Long Retreat

Date: TBD

A day-long retreat will be planned for early 2009. More details will follow.

(turn over)



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CISA (Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture) will be holding a **Marketing 101** six-workshop series focused on developing marketing strategy. The workshops will review different elements of a well-rounded marketing strategy that will allow farmers to understand and maximize their use of each according to the needs of their business. Participants can sign up for the whole series or just the workshops that meet their needs. Participants that attend the whole series will be eligible for additional one-on-one service to begin to implement marketing strategies. This Marketing 101 workshop series is based upon work supported by USDA/CSREES under Award Number 2007-49200-03888.

An Introduction to Best Marketing Practices
Wednesday, January 28, 6:00pm-8:30pm
(Snow date: Thursday, January 29th 6:00-8:30pm)
Mitch Anthony from Titanium, Inc. in Greenfield will introduce the concept of marketing and branding agricultural businesses and talk about the importance of putting your customers and their needs at the center of your marketing strategy. The session will help participants define their "target audience" and provide exercises and tools to help farmers develop or update their own plans for reaching out and connecting with their customers.

Paid Advertising Options
Thursday, February 5, 6:00pm-8:30pm
A good message run often enough will succeed in print, on the radio and on TV. Learn tips for creating customer-focused advertising from Mark Lattanzi, WRSI Radio. Understand the pros and cons of paid media. Debunk some of the 'common knowledge' about marketing. Leave with a clearer idea of how to position your business to attract customers and a better understanding of how to successfully purchase advertising.

Simple Strategies for Free Advertising
Thursday, February 12, 5:30pm-8:00pm
Diana Rodgers from Green Meadows Farm will introduce farmers to "earned" media and share ideas on how to get "free" advertising for the farm via press releases, calendar listings, e-newsletters and much more. Participants will learn how to develop a press release, where to send them and how to "talk" to the media to get coverage of events at your farm.

Merchandising/On-site Marketing
Wednesday, March 4, 6:00pm-8:30pm
Karen Randall from Randall's Farm will introduce farmers to techniques to maximize sales once customers get to their place of business. This on site workshop will take you from the curb to the back room of merchandising. Topics covered will include curb appeal, signage, displays, cross merchandising, pricing, in-store promotions, and customer service. NOTE: This workshop will be held at Randall's Farm, 631 Center Street, Route 21 in Ludlow.

A Website for Your Farm
Wednesday, March 11, 6:00pm-8:30pm
Farmers will learn about internet tools such as websites, on-line stores and email newsletters. Web designer, Mary Hager from Function First Design, will outline goals every farmer should consider when developing a website and will talk about the various tools and techniques farmers can implement to increase traffic and sales.

Marketing Plan Review
Tuesday, March 24, 6:00pm-8:30pm
This workshop is for participants who enrolled in the whole series to share their marketing plans with classmates and speakers in order to receive feedback and advice. Participants will also sign up for the additional limited One-on-one support to begin to implement their marketing plans.

***Please note that the snow date for Marketing 101 workshops #2-5 is March 18th, 6:00pm -8:30pm.*
Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture: This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

