



## The Pilgrim Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Area Council, Inc.

# 2008 Annual Report & Highlights

Providing assistance to locally elected officials, civic leaders and community organizations to plan and implement projects for natural resource conservation and community development

[www.pilgrimrcd.org](http://www.pilgrimrcd.org)

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The Pilgrim RC&D Council serves southeastern Massachusetts' 70 towns and cities. In fiscal year 2008 17 projects were completed while 8 remained active. Projects received over \$ 1 million in contributions and 1.3 million citizens were served.

The USDA-NRCS provides technical assistance for the RC&D program. The Pilgrim RC&D Council has successfully brought a return of more than \$6 for every dollar the federal government provides. The Pilgrim RC&D Council receives program and project contributions from grants and services provided by federal, state, regional, local, and private entities.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

#### MASSACHUSETTS AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONS - MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITIES FIRST STATEWIDE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION'S CONFERENCE

The Pilgrim RC&D Council planned and coordinated the first statewide gathering of Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions. At the conference, AgCom members learned about available resources, networked with other town AgComs and attended workshops addressing:

- Public Relations: Raising the Visibility of Agriculture in the Community
- Inventories of Agricultural Land, Farms & Farmers at the Local Level
- Massachusetts Buy Local Programs & Campaigns
- Farmer Preservation, Farm Transfer- How to Keep Farmers on the Land
- Laws & Regulations Affecting Agriculture: Zoning, Health, Right to Farm, & Chapter 61
- The Wetlands Protection Act & Agriculture: Working with Your ConCom
- Funding AgCom Efforts
- Farmland Protection Tools
- Conflict Management & Resolution



AgCom members also discussed their future and the whether a need exists for organizing a statewide association of Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions. Work continues on this issue.

Support for the Conference was provided through generous grant funding and technical assistance from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture, Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, and American Farmland Trust.

#### CAPE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONS SPRING & FALL GATHERINGS

The Pilgrim RC&D provided organizational and funding assistance to the Yarmouth and Falmouth AgComs who hosted Spring and Fall gatherings of Cape AgComs. Cape AgComs meet twice a year to network and discuss issues such as regional food production and food security, securing land for food production, community farms, agriculture in regional plans, supporting Buy Local efforts, and fostering the organization of AgComs on the Cape.

[www.massagcom.org](http://www.massagcom.org)

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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

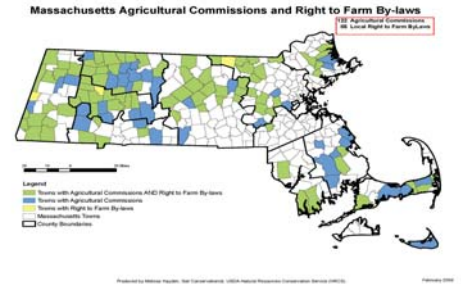
### ORGANIZING AND SUPPORTING TOWN AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONS

The Pilgrim RC&D continues to provide Agricultural Commission (AgComs) organization and support assistance to farmers and municipalities within the region and throughout the Commonwealth. Support assistance provided to AgComs following their formation includes facilitating goal setting sessions and work plan development, developing draft local Right to Farm bylaw language, organizing and coordinating regional and statewide AgCom Conferences, grant proposal writing to support AgCom activities, and directing AgCom members to needed technical and financial resources. In the year 2001 there were six AgComs in Massachusetts, today there are 122 AgComs and 89 municipalities with local Right to Farm bylaws.

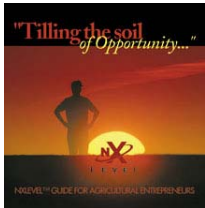
## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

### EXPLORING YOUR SMALL FARM DREAM

The Pilgrim RC&D partnered with the MA Department of Agricultural Resources to administer the delivery of "Exploring the Small Farm Dream: *Is Starting an Agricultural Business Right for You?*" Fifty four individuals from 33 businesses participated in three courses offered across the state. Participants discussed current opportunities in small-scale agriculture, explored their objectives, assessed personal and financial resources, conducted preliminary market research and developed action plans for pursuing their interests in food and farming business development.



### TILLING THE SOIL OF OPPORTUNITY, NXLEVEL AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS PLANNING



Thirty one individuals representing 22 farm businesses graduated from two Tilling the Soil of Opportunity agricultural business planning courses this past year.

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) offers the widely acclaimed course each year. This innovative, farmer friendly course focuses on existing agricultural businesses that will benefit from an organized look at their current operation in order to plan for growth and change. Over 240 Massachusetts agricultural enterprises have completed TTS. Pilgrim RC&D is proud to assist MDAR in the delivery of these valuable courses.

### 2008 HOWARD AND MARY HAYWARD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP: CHRISTINA MARGARET COLARUSSO

Christina Margaret Colarusso, a resident of Middleboro and senior at Coyle and Cassidy High School in Taunton, was the 2008 recipient of the Howard & Mary Hayward Memorial Scholarship. Margaret received the scholarship for her award winning essay "Natural Resource Conservation and Economic Development Opportunities in My Community." Christina is pursuing a degree in Marine Safety and Environmental Protection from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy.



## NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

### MODEL LOCAL SEPTIC SYSTEM REGULATIONS FOR WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

Pilgrim RC&D continued efforts to assist with developing model local Board of Health septic system regulations for water quality protection. RC&D is partnering with the Town of Carver AgCom, ConCom, BOH and Applied Environmental Design and Research.

### FURTHER 2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

- Grant proposal writing & assistance: Dept. of Homeland Security, Wildfire Prevention Planning on the Urban Fringe  
Dept. of Homeland Security, Assistance to Firefighters – Air Quality Improvement  
Northeast SARE – Rehoboth AgCom Farm Needs Inventory  
MA Dept of Ag Resources – Statewide AgCom Conference  
MSPA – Statewide AgCom Conference  
Makepeace Fund – Farmers Market Website & Community Devel't Coordinator  
Agricultural Commissions
- Facilitate goal setting sessions: Carver Arts, Culture and Tourism Committee and Carver's Green Committee
- National approval for 5-year Area Plan: RC&D, National Headquarters approved Council 5-year strategic plan for community development, land and water conservation and energy conservation and renewable energy promotion.
- "Circle of Diamonds" Status: Pilgrim RC&D retains Circle of Diamonds status. Pilgrim RC&D exemplifies responsibility for public accountability and demonstrates a positive impact on the quality of life within SEMass through our quality programs and services.

FY 2008 FINANCIAL STATEMENT (January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008)			
<b>REVENUES</b>		<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Public Support	\$165,000.00	Grants & Scholarships	\$ 500.00
Program Revenue	\$ 50,040.00	Prof. Fees & Contracts	\$ 9,859.00
Investment Income	\$ 270.00	Program Expenses	\$165,000.00
Membership Dues	\$ 2,800.00	Non-profit Admin	\$ 3,912.00
<b>TOTAL Revenues</b>	<b>\$218,110.00</b>	<b>TOTAL Expenses</b>	<b>\$179,271.00</b>
<b>Beginning Year Balance:</b>	<b>\$ 31,500.00</b>	<b>End Year Balance:</b>	<b>\$ 70,339.00</b>