

# Local Agriculture Supports Resilient Local Economies

## FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET PROPOSAL

The state's nine Buy Local organizations connect farmers and communities. We create resilient local food economies that are better equipped to handle disruption from pandemics, supply chains, and climate change.

Our statewide network provides critical support to Massachusetts farmers and fishers. We strengthen local economies, preserve active working lands and waters, and make fresh, local food more available to all people within the Commonwealth.



Meghan Arquin (L) and Emily Landeck (R) of Riverland Farm in Sunderland, MA  
Leslie Lynn Lucio Photo

**Sustain support for regional Buy Local efforts in Massachusetts by retaining the following language funding from the FY2022 budget to the FY2023 budget:**

**2511-0100**

**“ . . . provided further, that not less than \$750,000 shall be expended to enhance the buy local effort in western, central, northeastern, and southeastern Massachusetts.”**

If every household in the Commonwealth shifted just \$5 a month towards local food, that would result in:



**\$79.3 million per year in benefit to the local economy**



**1,515 new jobs**



**Increased health with over 263 million servings of fresh, local food**

## Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA)



CISA's *Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown*® program, the longest-running agricultural Buy Local campaign in the country, connects farmers and the community with consumer education and our online guide. We provide technical assistance to help farmers with marketing, financial management, and climate adaptation. We support efforts to increase availability of local food in low-income communities through our Senior FarmShare program and support for HIP.

## Central Mass Grown (CMG)



CMG supports the food system in Worcester, the heart of the commonwealth and home to 1,568 farms. CMG creates market opportunities for farms and connects consumers and farmers through public events, marketing, and comprehensive print and online directories. Our business development trainings assist farmers to build more sustainable, profitable farm businesses.

## Northeast Harvest (NH)



Northeast Harvest connects farmers with the consumers in Essex and Middlesex counties, supports farmers by offering workshops, and markets farms and farmers' markets by producing a Local Food Guide and providing reusable shopping bags. Northeast Harvest has reached out to our farmers to assist them in any way needed throughout the pandemic.

## Sustainable Business Network (SBN)

Launched in 1988, the Sustainable Business Network of Massachusetts (SBN) supports building economies that are local, green, and fair. We run the Boston Local Food Festival, Local Food Trade Show, Eat Local MA App, August Eat Local Campaign, and the Craft Spirits and Brew Fest, supporting hundreds of local food producers with the ultimate goal of healthy local food for all.



## Berkshire Grown (BG)



Berkshire Grown works to support and sustain a local food economy in the Berkshire region of Western Massachusetts. We promote buying and eating local food with our annual Guide to Local Food & Farms and our eight winter farmers markets. We provide farmers with technical assistance to build sustainable farm businesses and our food access work purchases thousands of pounds of food from local farms.

## Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP)



SEMAP supports local farms throughout Bristol, Plymouth, and Norfolk counties. We provide technical and business assistance to farmers and aquaculturists, from balancing budgets to better field practices, as well as promotional help for farms and other food businesses. Every year, our Local Food Guide is distributed across our region, with over 10,000 copies reaching consumers to promote local growers, markets, restaurants and more.

## The Massachusetts Coalition for Local Food & Farms (MCLFF)

MCLFF is an alliance of regionally-based nonprofit 'Buy Local' organizations that together serve all communities in the Commonwealth. We endeavor to grow our Massachusetts economy, promote local agriculture and fisheries, and increase the amount of local food eaten by Massachusetts residents.

## Martha's Vineyard Agricultural Society (MVAS)

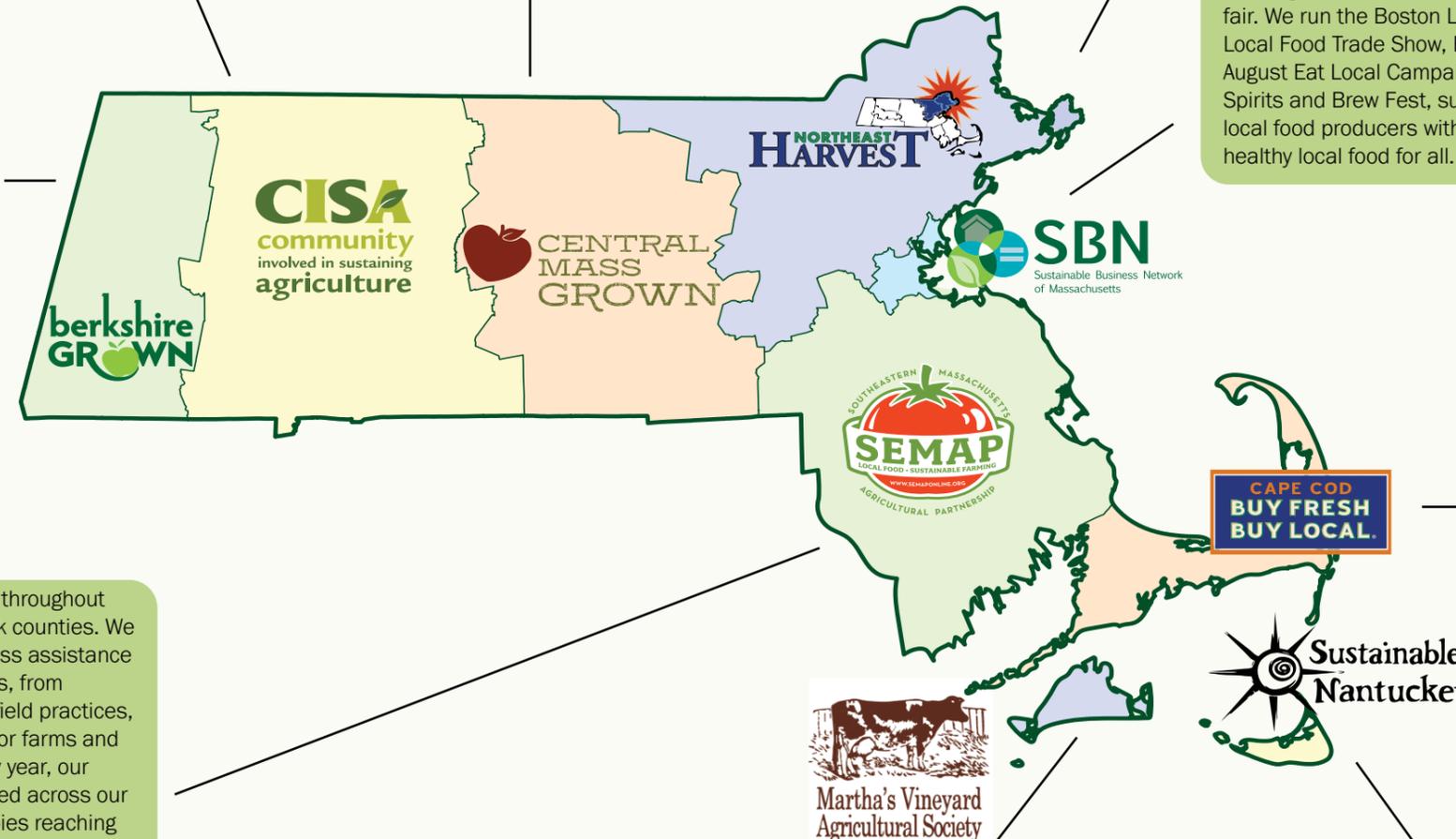


MVAS and its members support and promote the production, marketing, preservation, and enjoyment of agriculture on Martha's Vineyard. In addition to hosting the West Tisbury Farmers Market on our grounds, we provide grants, educational opportunities, and support to our island farmers to aid in their production and marketing to the community.

## Sustainable Nantucket (SN)



Sustainable Nantucket drives the island's locally grown food system. Our Community Farm Institute teaches new farmers and supports five farm businesses; Farm to School teaches youth the benefits of growing and eating healthy local food; Nantucket Grown Brand links locally grown and produced foods to the island's buyers; and our Farmers and Artisans Market celebrates all things grown or crafted on island.



## Buy Fresh Buy Local Cape Cod (BFBLCC)



BFBLCC promotes local agriculture to consumers through print and digital campaigns, unifying Cape Cod's local food under one brand and supporting local food suppliers. We also collaborate with community partners and farmers to address the increasing needs of Cape Cod's diverse population experiencing food insecurity through our ethnic gardens program, a mobile market, value-added oyster products and educational outreach to schools.

## Agriculture is an active and important part of our state economy.

Massachusetts has over 7,755 farms, stewarding nearly 524,000 acres and generating sales over \$492 million. It also ranks #3 in the nation for per farm sales of agricultural products directly to consumers.

## The state's ongoing investment in our work allows us to be there when farms and consumers need us:

### Educating consumers about local agriculture

We directly reach consumers, educating them about where, why, and how to support Massachusetts farms and related businesses.

#### Pandemic Highlight

When the pandemic hit, consumers were desperate to find food without going to the grocery store. Our guides were kept up-to-date so consumers knew what farms and local food retailers were open, and whether they offered curbside pick up, delivery, or online ordering.



Sustainable Nantucket photo.

### Training and supporting farmers to develop thriving businesses

We directly support over 1,785 farms and local agriculturally-related businesses through our membership, promotion, and training work.

#### Pandemic Highlight

Our organizations helped farms understand pandemic restrictions, access PPE, testing, and vaccinations, and adapt their sales channels to serve consumers directly.



"Twilight Meeting" at Spring Rain Farm in Taunton, MA  
SEMAP photo

### Increasing the availability of local food for all members of the Commonwealth

Access to fresh local food for all people in Massachusetts is fundamental to a healthy and just local food system. We're working to make local food accessible to more people in the Commonwealth than ever before.

#### Pandemic Highlight

Together we helped people access local food through HIP and SNAP, supporting new HIP vendors so they could serve consumers, and educating service providers and SNAP clients about HIP availability and locations.



Distributing Local Food to Community Members  
Buy Fresh Buy Local Cape Cod photo

**Sustained support is vital for family farms across the Commonwealth.**

**Buy Local campaigns require ongoing support to continue to expand public visibility of local agriculture.**