



# Keeping Farms and Local Food in Our Future

a Healthy Places by Design workshop



Workshop Facilitator: Sheila Brush  
Grow Smart Rhode Island

**Healthy Places by Design is a project of the Rhode Island Department of Health, funded through a grant from The Centers for Disease Control under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Pub. L. No. 111-5**



## ***ABOUT HEALTHY PLACES BY DESIGN***

Healthy Places by Design seeks to strengthen local land use, transportation and urban design policies and ordinances that guide community decisions about the built environment in order to make those policies and ordinances, and ultimately the built environment, more supportive of physical activity and healthy eating. The project has three main components:

### Healthy Communities Plan

A Healthy Communities Plan, developed with input from local municipalities, will provide a range of policies and strategies that local municipalities can include in Local Comprehensive Plan updates in order to improve community walkability, safety, recreation options, transportation choices, and access to healthy foods. When a municipality submits a Local Comprehensive Plan update to Statewide Planning for approval, the Department of Health will use the Healthy Communities Plan to evaluate how effectively the update supports physical activity and healthy eating.

### Healthy Communities Project

The Department of Health has contracted with three municipalities, Pawtucket, North Kingstown and South Kingstown, who will each partner with one community-based organization to implement changes to local policies in support of physical activity and access to healthy foods. This component has two objectives: to implement policy change by improving municipalities' Comprehensive Plans and to improve the **built environment's effect on health**; and to build capacity for healthier communities by empowering community-based organizations to assess their environments and advocate for change .

- Municipal planners, planning board members and community organizations will attend training on a variety of topics, including the social determinants of health; Health Impact Assessments; the planning process, public participation and coalition building; designing for physical activity and food access; and implementing the Healthy Communities Plan strategies.
- Municipalities will be required to revise their Comprehensive Plans to align them with the Healthy Communities Plan. They may also revise Zoning Ordinances or create special plans, such as an Open Space or Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plans, to support physical activity and improve access to healthy foods.
- Community-Based Organizations will assist the municipalities in completing Health Impact Assessments and facilitating the public participation process, and will also determine health-based policy priorities and develop an Action Plan for advocacy and consensus building in the community around the specific policies.

### Healthy Communities Toolkit

The results from the municipal pilot projects will be used to create a Healthy Communities Toolkit for municipalities with resources for implementing the Healthy Communities Plan. The Toolkit will be available online for use by municipal planners.



***GROW SMART RHODE ISLAND*** promotes sustainable economic growth that builds upon and strengthens Rhode island's exceptional quality of place. The organization, which represents a broad range of interests, engages Rhode Islanders in reducing unplanned growth and sprawl and achieving revitalized and walkable city and town centers, housing options and affordability, expanded transportation choices, a vital agricultural sector and responsible stewardship of natural resources.

To accomplish its goals, Grow Smart

- Publishes research analyzing the impacts of suburban sprawl and urban decay and evaluating the potential effectiveness of policies that have been used elsewhere to combat sprawl;
- Advocates for policies and programs to revitalize urban/town centers, promote compact growth, keep agricultural land in production and open space;
- Provides training workshops and conferences to increase municipal and state capacity to shape growth;
- Maintains an extensive website and publishes a monthly e-brief to increase public awareness about the negative impacts of unplanned, sprawling development.

If you would like to learn more about Grow Smart's work, sign up to receive our monthly e-brief, and link to Community Connections, an electronic calendar of conferences and workshops related to land-use and water resources, go to

**[www.growsmartri.org](http://www.growsmartri.org)**



Grow Smart Rhode Island and its allies formed the ***GROW SMART RI LAND-USE TRAINING COLLABORATIVE*** with the goal of increasing Rhode Island municipal and statewide capacity to deal with complex land-use issues and to shape growth to meet the community’s vision. Through the Collaborative, Grow Smart and more than 20 state agencies and non-profit organizations combine resources to deliver training on various land-use topics to municipal staff, councils, boards and commissions, citizens and citizen groups, for-profit and non-profit developers, planning and design professionals, engineering professionals, land-use attorneys and conservationists. Since 2001, the Collaborative has provided training to almost 2,400 Rhode Islanders.

As the leader of the Collaborative, Grow Smart Rhode Island:

- Secures funding for the Collaborative
- Manages program and materials development
- Schedules training programs and markets programs to appropriate audiences
- Manages record-keeping and budgeting, bookkeeping, consultant contracts, vendor relations

Partnering organizations do some or all of the following:

- Help to identify and prioritize program needs
- Contribute to the development of new programs and materials
- Provide staff to serve as presenters at different programs
- Help to publicize programs
- Provide funding support

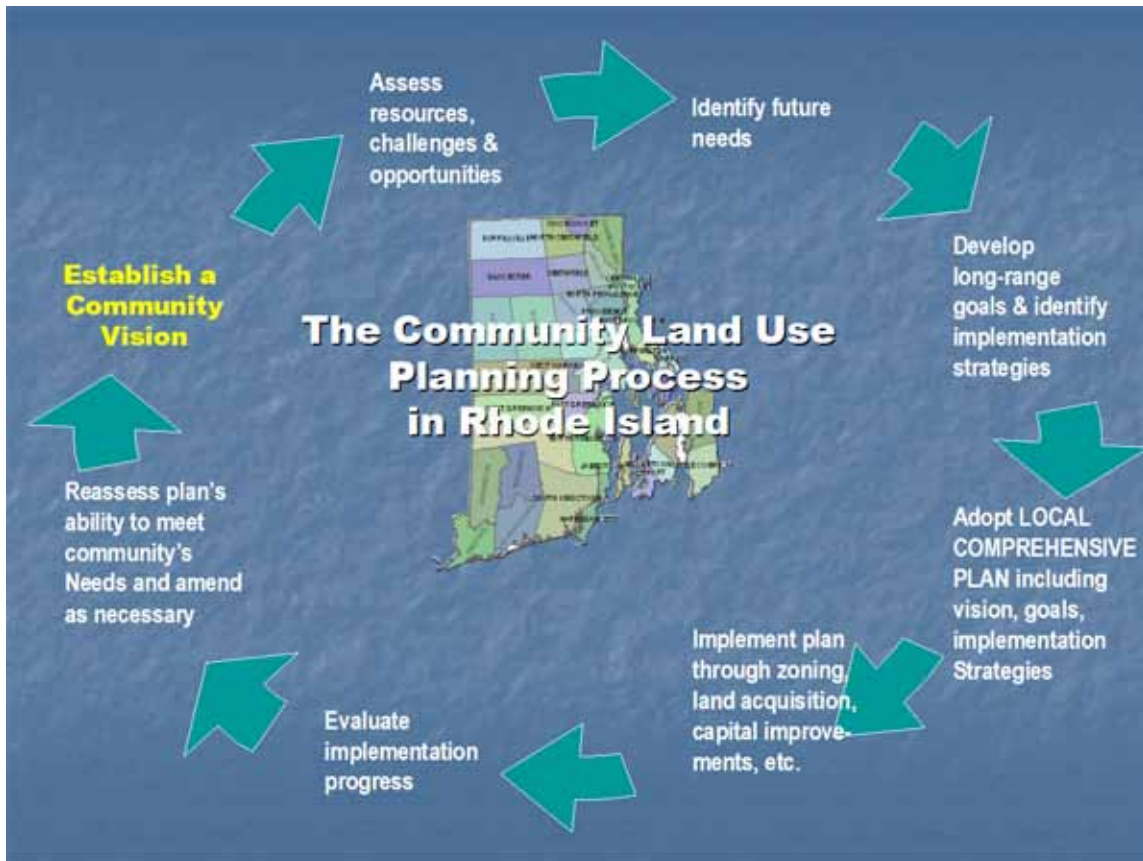
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| <p><u>Training Collaborative Partners</u></p> <p>American Planning Association/RI Chapter<br/>         Aquidneck Island Planning Commission<br/>         Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission<br/>         Housing Network of Rhode Island<br/>         HousingWorks RI<br/>         Local Initiatives Support Corporation<br/>         Narragansett Bay Research Reserve<br/>         Partnership for Community Development<br/>         RI Association of Conservation Commissions<br/>         RI Builders Association<br/>         RI Department of Environmental Management</p> | <p>RI Department of Health<br/>         RI Department of Transportation<br/>         RI Division of Planning/Statewide Planning Program<br/>         RI Historical Preservation &amp; Heritage Commission<br/>         Rhode Island Housing<br/>         RI Land Trust Council<br/>         RI League of Cities &amp; Towns<br/>         RI Water Resources Board<br/>         URI Coastal Resources Center/URI Sea Grant<br/>         URI Cooperative Extension Program<br/>         US Green Building Council – RI Chapter<br/>         Washington County Regional Planning Council</p> |
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## Facilitator

### Sheila Brush, Director of Programs, Grow Smart Rhode Island

As Grow Smart's Director of Programs since 1999, Sheila divides the majority of her time between policy work and managing the Grow Smart RI Land-Use Training Collaborative. For the past several years, her policy work has focused on agricultural viability, a major priority for Grow Smart Rhode Island. Sheila sits on the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee of the RI Agricultural Partnership, a broad coalition of farmers and farm service providers whose mission is to foster the economic viability of the state's agricultural producers, establish a self-sustaining and coordinated delivery of agricultural services and financing to farmers, provide increased food security and access to local food for all Rhode Islanders and cultivate support among the public and policy makers for the future of agriculture. She was active in the development of the *Partnership's 5-Year Strategic Plan for Agriculture*. She is also a member of the newly-established Rhode Island Food Policy Council.

Grow Smart's Land Use Training Collaborative is a coalition of twenty non-profits and state agencies that combine resources to develop and deliver workshops on a broad range of land-use topics to municipal staff, boards and commissions, planning and design professionals and interested citizens. The goal is to build local and statewide capacity to shape community growth in a way that meets our needs for future housing and economic development while at the same time protecting public health, the environment, community character and livability. Since 2001, as manager of the Collaborative, Sheila has led the development and delivery of 26 different programs to more than 2,000 Rhode Islanders.



# Keeping Farms and Local Food in Our Future



a Healthy Places by Design workshop

# Objectives

- Common understanding about what a farm is
- Why we care about preserving farms?
- Good and bad news about current situation
- Some ideas about actions NK could take

**WHAT IS A FARM?**

# RI General Law 2-23-4

## Definition of Agricultural Operations

Any commercial enterprise which has as its primary purpose horticulture, viticulture, viniculture, floriculture, forestry, stabling of horses, dairy farming, or aquaculture, or the raising of livestock including for the production of fiber, furbearing animals, poultry, or bees

and all such other operations, uses, and activities as the director, in consultation with the chief of division of agriculture, may determine to be agriculture, or an agricultural activity, use or operation.

**The mixed-use of farms and farmlands for other forms of enterprise is hereby recognized as a valuable and viable means of contributing to the preservation of agriculture.**

# Why should we care about the farms in our community?

- Healthy foods -- availability and safety



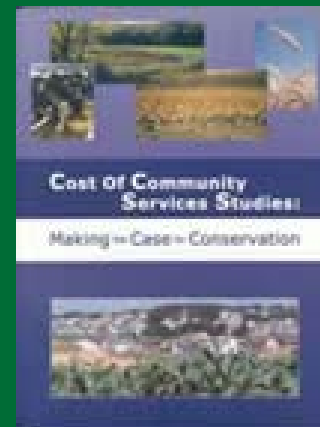
# Why should we care about the farms in our community?

- Economics

- Agriculture is part of the RI economy, the local economy

- Agritourism and availability of local foods contribute to success of RI's tourism and restaurant industries

- Fiscal impact on municipal budgets



# Why should we care about the farms in our community?

- Environmental benefits
  - Wetland buffers
  - Wildlife habitat
  - Groundwater recharge
  - Help control flooding
  - Air quality

# Why should we care about the farms in our community?

- Community livability
  - Scenic working landscapes



# Why should we care about the farms in our community?

- Community livability
  - Family activities



# Why should we care about the farms in our community?

- Community livability
  - Recreational sites



# Why should we care about the farms in our community?

- Community livability
  - Connections
    - with the past
    - with our community
    - with the food we eat



# Why should we care about the farms in our community?



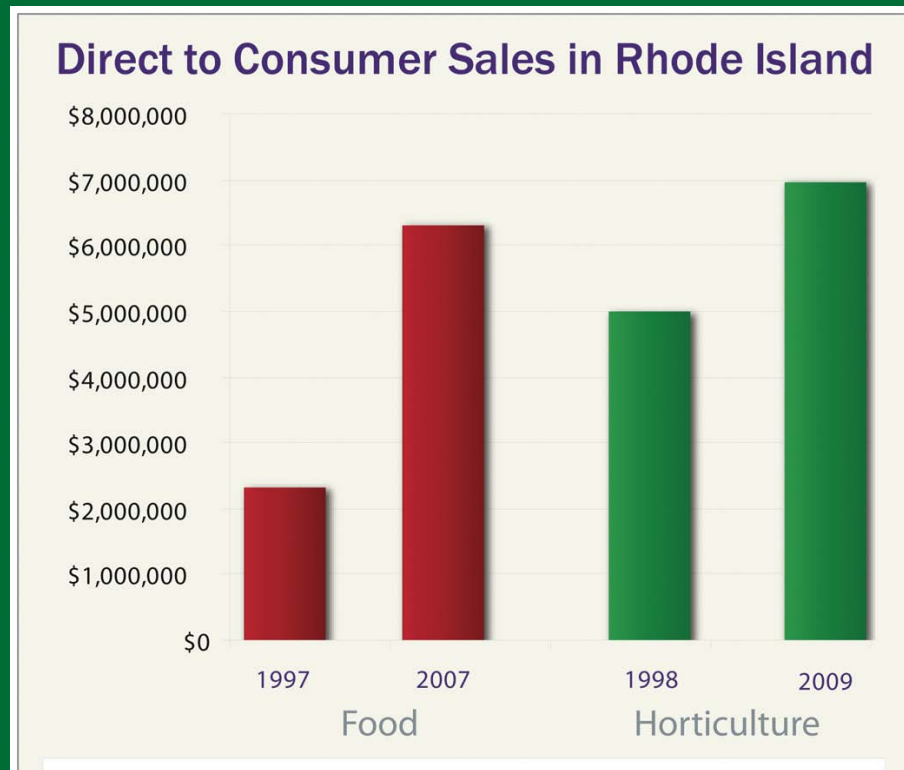
*Fertile land takes thousands of years to develop plus a combination of climate, geology, biology and good luck*

# Current US Food System is unsustainable

- RI consumers depend on food from thousands of miles away
  - Rising oil prices = increased transportation costs
  - Vulnerable to supply disruptions
  - Environmental impacts of shipping food
- Food safety issues
- Lower quality

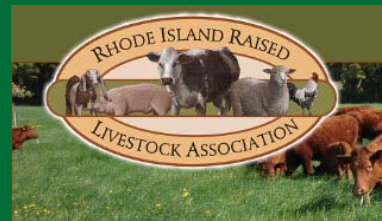
# The Good News

- Local food movement = increased support for local farms, products



# The Good News

- Number of farms in RI increased by 32% between 2002 and 2007
- Farmers are forming cooperatives, using new marketing approaches

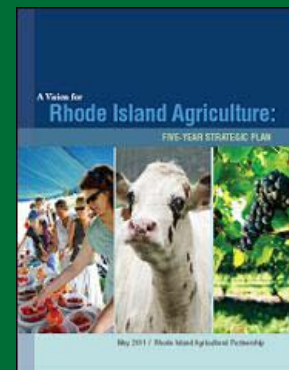


# The Good News

- Non-profits supporting farmers



- New coalition initiatives promoting agriculture, food security



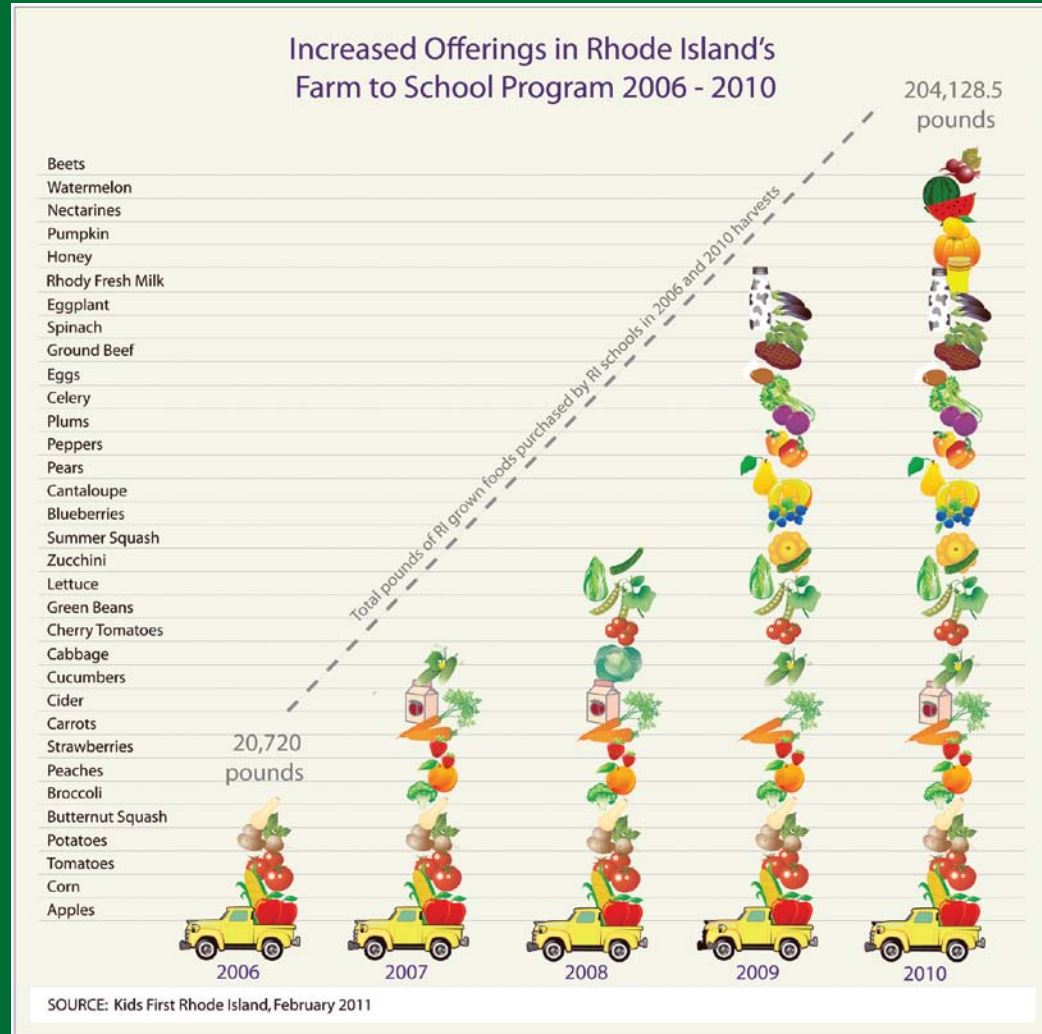
# The Good News

- Increase in # farmers' markets



# The Good News

- Increase in institutional use



# The Good News

- RI restaurants seeking local produce





# The Good News

- Federal assistance programs make local food accessible for lower income households

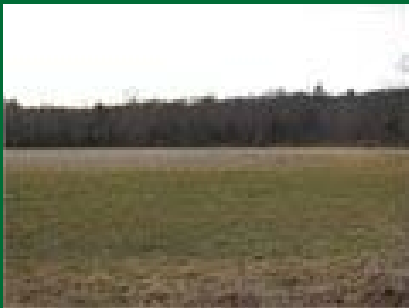


# The Bad News: Our farms are in danger

- Land costs and development pressure



OH THE POSSIBILITIES!!! 34+ acres with visibility on Rte 95 and Rte 3 in Hopkinton! Previously set up for a gentlemans farm, building on site ready for you to finish as you wish! Zoned residential, Agricultural uses acceptable! Potential of 14 lots! [\\$975,000](#)



2400 feet of frontage on 145+ acres in Richmond. 2 acre zoning, currently in agricultural use. Old logging roads throughout, mature timbers, mostly high & dry. [\\$1,912,800](#)

# Our farms are in danger

- Farmers are aging

# Our farms are in danger

- Non-existent or inadequate “infrastructure”
  - Division of Agriculture staffing
  - Technical and business education
  - Knowledgeable lenders
  - Wholesalers and distributors
  - Food processing businesses, facilities
  - Farm suppliers
  - Veterinarians

# Our farms are in danger

- Few people in our communities understand agriculture

**If we want to save farms for the future  
we must understand farming as a business  
with the same needs as other businesses**

- **Credit**
- **Supplies, services**
- **Labor**
- **Regulations**
- **Control expenses and maximize  
revenue to make sufficient profit**

## And with unique needs

- Land
- 24/7 nature of the business
- High degree of risk
- Adapt to new practices, technologies
- Diversify in response to changing markets

# And regional challenges

- US policy favors larger farms in other parts of country
- Short growing season

# What can our municipality do to help preserve working farms?

## 1. Involve farmers in community planning and decision-making

- Recruit farmers to serve on Planning Commission, Zoning Board, Economic Development Advisory Committee, Conservation Commission
- Establish an Agricultural Commission to promote agriculture/recruit farmers to serve

# What can a municipality do to help preserve working farms?

## 2. Clearly express community desire to preserve working farms in Local Comprehensive Plan

- Include detailed discussion of agriculture and its importance to the community in the Local Comprehensive Plan
- Consider conducting a town agricultural inventory and include in Local Comprehensive Plan

# What can a municipality do to help preserve working farms?

## 3. Zoning ordinances

- Provide clear definitions of agricultural terms, uses
- Allow agriculture in more districts
- New growing practices
- On-farm retail
  - Farmstands
  - Allow off-farm produce sales
- Farm Signage

- **On-farm processing**



- **Allow seasonal agritourism activities by right**

- **Compatible non-agricultural businesses**

# What can a municipality do to help preserve working farms?

## 4. Municipal Tax Policies

- Tax farmland based on its use, not how it's zoned
  - RI Farm, Forest and Open Space Act
  - Property tax exemptions

# What can a municipality do to help preserve working farms?

## 5. Farmland preservation and use

- Proactive outreach to farmland owners
  - Encourage succession planning, applications to ALPC
- Establish municipal fund to purchase farmland development rights
- Work with state/federal farmland protection programs to purchase development rights

# -Use NK's Transfer of Development Rights program

Owner of "sending" parcel sells development rights in exchange for permanent conservation easement.

sending area



Slide source: Horsley Witten Group

receiving area



Owner of "receiving" parcel buys development rights to build at densities higher than allowed under base zoning.

- Include agricultural land preservation in your municipal land trust's mission and/or work with private land trusts in your community
- Craft easements and deed restrictions that ensure farmland will continue to be farmed and provide sufficient flexibility for farm to adapt over time



# What can a municipality do to help preserve working farms?

## 7. Support and celebrate local agriculture and foods

- Provide space for local farmers' markets – if possible in a place that will also benefit other businesses
- Require that school district's lunch program expand use of local fruits and vegetables, dairy products
- Include info about local farming and links to local farm businesses on town website

- Encourage incorporation of working farmland in Conservation Development projects
- Lease municipal land to farmers

# What can a municipality do to help preserve working farms?

## 6. Limit impacts of new development

- Require sub-division buffers at developer's expense
- Real Estate disclosure form -- required by law
- Notify farmers if a proposed law or ordinance will affect them -- required

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Sources and Legal Caveat:** The definitions provided in this glossary are intended to help Rhode Island officials and citizens understand terms often used when discussing agricultural viability and farmland preservation. They are not intended to serve as legal definitions for use in municipal ordinances. Where definitions provided are taken directly from RI state law, the law is cited. All definitions taken directly or adapted from the American Farmland Trust Farmland Information Center's FACT SHEET: GLOSSARY are identified by (AFT). All definitions taken directly or adapted from the Grow Smart RI Land Use Training Collaborative's Rhode Island Citizens Guide to Smart Growth Terms and Concepts are identified by (GSRI.) Where definitions were taken from other sources, those sources are identified at the end of the individual definition. If a source is not provided, then the definition was created for this glossary.

### AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS

RI Law § 2-23-4: *"Any commercial enterprise which has as its primary purpose horticulture, viticulture, viniculture, floriculture, forestry, stabling of horses, dairy farming, or aquaculture, or the raising of livestock, including for the production of fiber, furbearing animals, poultry, or bees, and all such other operations, uses, and activities as the director, in consultation with the chief of division of agriculture, may determine to be agriculture, or an agricultural activity, use or operation. The mixed-use of farms and farmlands for other forms of enterprise is hereby recognized as a valuable and viable means of contributing to the preservation of agriculture.*

*(b) Nothing herein shall be deemed to restrict, limit or prohibit nonagricultural operations from being undertaken on a farm except as otherwise restricted, regulated, limited or prohibited by law, regulation or ordinance or to affect the rights of persons to engage in other lawful nonagricultural enterprises on farms, provided, however, that the protections and rights established by this chapter shall not apply to such nonagricultural activities, uses or operations."*

### AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

#### AGRITOURISM

Agricultural tourism is a commercial enterprise at a working farm conducted for the enjoyment or education of visitors, and that generates supplemental income for the owner. Agritourism offers seasonal employment opportunities within a community and new sources of income for farmers. It is a prime direct marketing venue to market a farm experience and to add value to those products sold on the farm. It represents a new opportunity for many farm families who seek to continue their farming traditions.

Agritourism can include farm stands or shops, U-pick, tours, on-farm classes, pumpkin patches, Christmas tree farms, winery weddings, orchard dinners, youth camps, barn dances, fee hunting or fishing, guest ranches, agriculture related festivals and fairs, Horseback riding, farmers markets, on-farm vacations

#### APPRAISAL

A systematic method of determining the market value of property. **(AFT)**

#### AQUACULTURE

"... the propagation and rearing of aquatic organisms in controlled or selected aquatic environments for any commercial, recreational, or public purpose." NOAA policy cites bait production, wild stock enhancement, fish culture for zoos and aquaria, rebuilding of populations of threatened and endangered species, and food production for human consumption as potential purposes of aquaculture in the United States. (U.S. Department of Commerce, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) )

## **BARGAIN SALE**

The sale of property or an interest in property for less than fair market value. If property is sold to a qualifying public agency or conservation organization, the difference between fair market value and the agreed-upon price can be claimed as a tax-deductible charitable gift for income tax purposes. Bargain sales also are known as conservation sales. **(AFT)**

## **BUFFERS**

Physical barriers that separate farms from land uses that are incompatible with agriculture. Buffers help safeguard farms from vandals and trespassers, and protect homeowners from some of the negative impacts of commercial farming. Vegetated buffers and topographic barriers reduce the potential for clashes between farmers and their non-farming neighbors. Buffers may be required by local zoning ordinances. **(AFT)**

## **CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT**

A form of zoning that allows houses to be built close together in areas where large minimum lot sizes are generally required. By grouping houses on small sections of a large parcel of land, cluster zoning can be used to protect open space. Also known as cluster development, land preservation subdivision, open land subdivision and open space subdivision. **(AFT)**

## **COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA)**

A form of direct marketing of farm products that involves customers paying the farmer in advance for a weekly share of the harvest. Customers are often called shareholders. In some cases, shareholders may participate in farm work and farm decisions. Farms that use this marketing strategy are called "CSA farms" or "CSAs." CSA is also known as subscription farming. **(AFT)**

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

A regional, county or municipal document that contains a vision of how the community will grow and change and a set of plans and policies to guide land use decisions. Comprehensive plans also are known as general plans and master plans. **(AFT)**

## **CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT**

A creative land use technique that allows a community to guide growth to the most appropriate areas within a parcel of land to avoid impacts to the environment and to protect the character-defining features of the property. The goal is to accommodate growth while preserving at least 50% of the parcel as meaningful open space in perpetuity. There need be no increase or reduction in the number of lots that could be supported by conventional development; instead the lots are carefully situated to protect natural and cultural resources and lot sizes may be smaller than lots required by underlying zoning. **(GSRI)**

## **CONSERVATION EASEMENT**

Legally recorded, voluntary agreements that limit land to specific uses. Easements may apply to entire parcels of land or to specific parts of the property. Most are permanent; term easements impose restrictions for a limited number of years. Land protected by conservation easements remains on the tax rolls and is privately owned and managed; landowners who donate permanent conservation easements are generally entitled to tax benefits. **(AFT)**

## **COST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES STUDY**

A case study method of allocating local revenues and expenditures to different land use categories. COCS studies reveal the net contribution of residential, commercial, industrial, forest and agricultural lands to local budgets. **(AFT)**

## **CURRENT USE ASSESSMENT**

A form of differential property tax assessment that permits eligible land to be assessed at its current use rather than at its zoned use. Rhode Island municipalities are enabled to establish current use assessment under the Farm Forest and Open Space Act. **(AFT)**

## **DEVELOPMENT**

*RI Law § 45-24-31. The construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation, or enlargement of any structure; any mining, excavation, landfill or land disturbance; or any change in use, or alteration or extension of the use, of land.*

## **DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

Development rights entitle property owners to develop land in accordance with local land use regulations. In some jurisdictions, these rights may be sold to public agencies or qualified nonprofit organizations through a purchase of agricultural conservation easement or purchase of development rights program. Sale of development rights to a public agency or land trust generally does not pass any affirmative interest in the property. Rather than the right to develop the land, the buyer acquires the responsibility to enforce the negative covenants or restrictions stipulated in the development rights agreement. Development rights may also be sold to individuals or a public agency through a transfer of development rights program. In this case, the buyer does acquire a positive right to develop land, but the right is transferred to a site that can accommodate growth. **(AFT)**

## **DIRECT MARKETING**

Any marketing method whereby farmers sell their products directly to consumers. Examples include roadside stands, farm stands, U-pick operations, community supported agriculture or subscription farming, farmers' markets, etc. (UC Small Farm Program)

## **DIVERSIFICATION**

In the agricultural context, diversification can be regarded as the re-allocation of some of a farm's productive resources, such as land, capital, farm equipment and paid labor, into new activities. These can be new crops or livestock products, value-adding activities, provision of services to other farmers and, particularly in richer countries, non-farming activities such as restaurants and shops. Factors leading to decisions to diversify are many, but include; reducing risk, responding to changing consumer demands or changing government policy, responding to external shocks and, more recently, as a consequence of climate change. (Wikipedia)

**FARM** A business which grows food (including fruits, vegetables, livestock and aquaculture) and natural plant or animal fibers (including sod and nursery products) for commercial purposes.

## **FARM, FOREST AND OPEN SPACE ACT**

### **FARMERS MARKET**

A market, often held outdoors in a public place at regular times, at which local farmers and fishermen sell fruit, vegetables, meat, seafood, locally processed foods and other farm products directly to consumers. (Note: this is a generic definition. Some municipal zoning ordinances in RI may contain specific definitions.)

**FARMSTAND (SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS ROADSIDE STAND)** A seasonal or permanent building, booth or stall, located on a farm and used for the retail sale of fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, herbs and other products raised on the farm. May also involve the sales of farm-processed food products and/or baked goods and home-made handicrafts. Municipal zoning ordinances differ widely as to allowable floor area, parking requirements and what may be sold (eg, unprocessed farm products only vs both unprocessed and processed farm products, allowing only produce raised on the farm vs some produce raised on nearby farms.)

### **FEE SIMPLE**

A form of land ownership that includes all property rights, including the right to develop land. **(AFT)**

**FOOD SYSTEM** The various activities and entities involved in moving food from farms and fishing boats to the consumer and in recycling unused food and food scraps. The food system is shaped by

**FOOD CONSUMPTION (A COMPONENT OF FOOD SYSTEM)** The activities involved in obtaining, preparing and eating foods.

**FOOD PRODUCTION (A COMPONENT OF THE FOOD SYSTEM)** Activities/enterprises associated with growing edible plants; raising livestock and poultry for meat, eggs and milk; cultivating farm-raised fish and shellfish; catching wild fish and shellfish

**FOOD PROCESSING (A COMPONENT OF THE FOOD SYSTEM)** Activities/enterprises associated with transforming raw plant and animal products into marketable forms

suitable for direct human consumption or for use as ingredients. This transformation increases the value of the products.

**FOOD DISTRIBUTION (A COMPONENT OF THE FOOD SYSTEM)** Activities/enterprises associated with transporting and storing food products

**FOOD RESOURCE RECOVERY/WASTE MANAGEMENT (A COMPONENT OF THE FOOD SYSTEM)** The activities whereby discarded food materials are collected, sorted, processed and either used as food or converted into other materials and used in production of new products. Includes backyard composting, large-scale composting, edible food waste recovery, recycling, land filling.

**FOOD SALES (A COMPONENT OF THE FOOD SYSTEM)** Activities/enterprises associated with marketing food to consumers via supermarkets, grocery stores, farm stands, farmers markets, food pantries and all types of restaurants.

### **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)**

A method of storing geographic information on computers. Geographic information can be obtained from a variety of sources, including topographical maps, soil maps, aerial and satellite photographs and remote sensing technology. This information can then be used to create special maps for recordkeeping and decision-making purposes. GIS systems may be used to maintain maps of protected land or make decisions about which farmland to protect. **(AFT)**

### **LAND LINK**

A program that matches retiring farmers who want to keep their land in agriculture with beginning farmers who want to buy a farm. Land Link programs are designed to facilitate farm transfer, usually between farmers who are not related to each other. **(AFT)**

### **LAND TRUST**

A private, nonprofit conservation organization formed to protect natural resources such as productive farm and forest land, natural areas, historic structures and recreational areas. Rhode Island is one of few states that also have municipal land trusts. Land trusts acquire land through purchase or donation. They may also purchase development rights. They educate the public about the need to conserve land, and some provide land use and estate planning services to local governments and individual citizens.

### **LAND USE REGULATION**

RI Law § 45-22-2.4. *A rule or statute of general application adopted by the municipal legislative body which controls, directs, or delineates allowable uses of land and the standards for these uses.*

**LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (OFTEN CALLED THE “COMP PLAN”)** In Rhode Island, the plan adopted by each municipality to guide the future development of a community. State law (RI 45-22.2) mandates that every municipality must adopt a local comprehensive plan.

### **LOCAL FOOD**

The term “local food” means different things to different people. One definition of “local” is that the product is being marketed or consumed in the state in which it was produced. Another is that the product is being marketed within a certain number of miles of its origin. The USDA defines that distance as less than 400 miles. In New England, the distance used is often considerably less than 400 miles.

### **MIXED USE**

RI General Law § 45-24-31. *Mixture of land uses within a single development, building, or tract.*

## **NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)**

Formerly known as the Soil Conservation Service, NRCS is a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture that provides leadership and administers programs to help people conserve, improve and sustain our natural resources and environment. The agency provides technical assistance to farmers and funds soil conservation and farmland protection programs. It also maintains statistics on farmland conversion. NRCS has offices in every state and in most agricultural counties. **(AFT)**

## **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

Generally, zoning regulations that permit uses based on a particular set of standards of operation rather than on a particular type of use. For example, performance standards provide specific criteria limiting noise, air pollution, traffic impacts, and the visual impact of a use. (GSRI)

## **PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PDR)**

PDR programs pay farmers to keep their land available for agriculture. Landowners sell the development rights to a public agency or private conservation organization. Landowners retain full ownership and use of their land for agricultural purposes. PDR programs do not give government agencies the right to develop land. Development rights are extinguished in exchange for compensation. **(AFT)**

## **REAL ESTATE TRANSFER TAX**

A state or local tax imposed on the sale of real property. **(AFT)**

## **RECEIVING AREA**

Areas designated to accommodate development transferred from agricultural or natural areas through a transfer of development rights program. **(AFT)**

## **RHODE ISLAND GAP GROWER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

GAP means Good Agricultural Practices, and describes key steps that growers can use to help reduce or minimize contamination of produce by disease-causing organisms. These practices are part of a voluntary food safety program developed by FDA and USDA for fruit and vegetable growers. The goal is to help reduce foodborne illness. The voluntary Rhode Island GAP Grower Certification Program is a joint effort of the Division of Agriculture, RI Department of Environmental Management, the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Food Safety Education Program, and RI growers. The program begins with training for growers and their workers on the application of GAP food safety principles to the growing, harvesting, processing and transporting of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Once a grower feels that they have met the RI GAP guidelines, a staff person from the RI Division of Agriculture visits the farm for a review of GAP practices. This audit confirms that the grower has successfully applied required GAP practices during growing, harvesting, processing and transporting of fresh fruits and vegetables. After a successful audit, the grower will be certified as a RI GAP grower. The grower must be audited once every year in order to maintain the GAP Grower Certification.

## **RIGHT-TO-FARM LAW**

A state law or local ordinance that protects farmers and farm operations from public and private nuisance lawsuits. A private nuisance interferes with an individual's use and enjoyment of his or her property. Public nuisances involve actions that injure the public at large. **(AFT)**

## **SENDING AREA**

Area to be protected through a transfer of development rights program. Owners of land located within the sending area may sell their development rights to private individuals or a public agency; the rights are used to obtain increased density in a designated receiving area. **(AFT)**

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

A term used to describe land use activities that meet the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (GSRI)

### **TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR)**

A program that allows landowners to transfer the right to develop one parcel of land to a different parcel of land to prevent farmland conversion. TDR programs establish “sending areas” where land is to be protected by agricultural conservation easements and “receiving areas” where land may be developed at a higher density than would otherwise be allowed by local zoning. Landowners in the sending area sell development rights to landowners in the receiving area, generally through the private market. When the development rights are sold on a parcel, a conservation easement is recorded and enforced by the local government. In some cases, the local government may establish a “TDR bank” to buy and sell development rights. The development rights created by TDR programs are referred to as transferable development rights or TDRs. **(AFT)**

### **URBAN AGRICULTURE**

The growing, processing, and distribution of food and other products through intensive plant cultivation and animal husbandry in and around cities. It includes farming at the city’s edge in suburban greenbelts, vegetable plots in community gardens, and food production in vacant inner-city lots. Urban agriculture, which includes raising food both for commercial purposes and for home consumption, comprises fish farms, farm animals, municipal compost facilities, schoolyard gardens and greenhouses, restaurant-supported salad gardens, backyard orchards, rooftop gardens and beehives, window box gardens, and much more. **(Southside Community Land Trust.)**

### **VALUE-ADDED**

Any activity or process that alters the original agricultural product or commodity for the purpose of gaining a marketing advantage. Value-added may include bagging, packaging, bundling, pre-cutting, etc. **(UC Small Farm Program)**

## **RESOURCES: AGRICULTURE-RELATED ENTITIES IN RHODE ISLAND**

### **GOVERNMENT**

**RI Department of Environmental Management -- Division of Agriculture**

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/agricult/index.htm>

**RI Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission**

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/pubs/regs/regs/agric/alpcfp07.pdf>

**Natural Resources Conservation Service – RI Office**

<http://www.ri.nrcs.usda.gov/>

**URI College of the Environment and Life Sciences**

Cooperative Extension Program: <http://cels.uri.edu/ce/>

Sustainable Agriculture: <http://cels.uri.edu/sustainableag/>

### **NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

**Farm Fresh Rhode Island**

<http://www.farmfreshri.org/>

**Kids First RI**

<http://www.kidsfirstri.org/>

**New England Farmways and RI Center for Agricultural Promotion and Education (RICAPE)**

<http://www.nefarmways.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/home.showpage/pageID/8/index.htm>

**RI Land Trust Council**

<http://www.rilandtrusts.org/>

**RI Food Policy Council**

<http://www.rifoodcouncil.org/>

### **PRODUCER-LED ORGANIZATIONS AND MARKETING COLLABORATIVES**

**RI Agricultural Partnership**

<http://www.rhodyag.org/>

**RI Farm Bureau**

<http://rifb.org/>

**RI Raised Livestock Association**

<http://www.rirla.org/>

**Rhode Island Nursery & Landscape Association, Inc.**

<http://www.rinla.org/index.asp>

**Rhody Fresh**

<http://rhodyfresh.com/>

## **RESOURCES:**

### **SELECTED CURRENT RI STATE LAWS PERTAINING TO AGRICULTURE**

#### **CHAPTER 2-23**

##### **Right to Farm**

<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE2/2-23/INDEX.HTM>

#### **CHAPTER 2-23.1**

##### **Notification to Farmers**

<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE2/2-23.1/INDEX.HTM>

#### **CHAPTER 44-27**

##### **Taxation of Farm, Forest, and Open Space Land**

<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/statutes/title44/44-27/INDEX.HTM>

##### **A Citizen's Guide to the Farm, Forest, and Open Space Act**

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/forest/pdf/citgui03.pdf>

##### **Recommended Values for Land designated under Farm Forest Open Space Act**

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/agricult/pdf/values.pdf>

## **RESOURCES:**

### **NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/ PUBLICATIONS FROM OTHER STATES**

#### **American Farmland Trust**

Home page: <http://www.farmland.org/>

Growing Local program: <http://www.farmland.org/programs/localfood/default.asp>

#### **Farmland Information Center**

A partnership between the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and American Farmland Trust. the FIC is a clearinghouse for information about farmland protection and stewardship. Site provides model ordinances, easements, fact sheets on agricultural preservation topics, links to farmland planning publications from other states and much more.

<http://www.farmlandinfo.org/>

#### **Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit – module on Agricultural Preservation**

[http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart\\_growth\\_toolkit/pages/mod-ag.html](http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/mod-ag.html)

#### **Connecticut Planning for Agriculture website**

<http://ctplanningforagriculture.com/>

includes link to publication *Planning for Agriculture: A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities*