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SEMAB OFFERS LOCAL FARMS LOW-COST HELP TO PLAN FOR FUTURE:

**LOCAL NONPROFIT NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL
FARM TRANSFER PLANNING ASSISTANCE**



EAST WAREHAM, MA – As part of its new Farms Forever program, SEMAP (Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership) has raised funds to support low-cost, individualized farm transfer planning assistance for a limited number of area farms. The goal of SEMAP’s Farms Forever program is to sustain working farmlands and to help new and second-generation producers to begin farming in Southeastern Massachusetts.

“We know farm transfer planning is a tough topic,” said Sarah Kelley, SEMAP Executive Director. “It’s hard enough to take care of day-to-day operations, much less plan to ensure a farm’s working future when it changes hands. When we asked local producers what we could do to help them with farm transfer planning, they told us, ‘We need someone to help us figure out the first step. We need one-on-one help to sort out all the issues—taxes, retirement, insurance, how to talk to family members.’ SEMAP is trying to meet those needs by making low-cost, one-on-one farm transfer planning assistance available to farms in our region.”

SEMAB is actively seeking farm applicants for this assistance. The farm transfer planning assistance will be provided by Land For Good, Inc., a New Hampshire-based nonprofit organization that specializes in farmland transfer and tenure. Funding for the program is provided by the A.D. Makepeace Neighborhood Fund.

Applicants to Farms Forever can get help at two levels from Land For Good. The “Getting Started” level lasts from 3-6 months and involves an initial assessment; the creation of an action plan; referrals to attorneys and financial planners; and follow-up

support. The “Start to Finish” package runs approximately 12 months and includes an initial assessment; an action plan; recruitment and coordination of service providers such as attorneys and financial planners; assistance with assembling documents; periodic consultations; follow-up and a final meeting.

Funding from the A.D. Makepeace Neighborhood Fund and First Pioneer Farm Credit covers two-thirds of the cost of services; farmers pay \$150 for the first level of assistance and \$300 for the second.

“Land For Good is a trusted partner for SEMAP and we know they will provide a quality service,” stated Kelley. “LFG will guide farms through transfer planning step by step, and help them get the peace of mind of knowing that a detailed plan is in place for the future of their farm. We encourage any interested local farm to apply for this assistance.”

Local farms can apply with a brief 2-page application due by Friday, February 2, 2007. Applications can be obtained from Sarah Kelley at SEMAP 508-295-2212 ext. 50 or skelley@umassd.edu, or by visiting SEMAP’s website at www.semaponline.org for a downloadable application.

SEMAP is a non-profit organization whose mission is to help agricultural enterprises in Southeastern Massachusetts (Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, Nantucket and Dukes Counties) achieve economic success. This mission is supported through two main program areas: Market Development (increasing demand for local farm products through a Buy Local Campaign and Business-to-Business Network), and Business/Technical Assistance (providing business education and assistance to local farms through courses and workshops, publications, and the Farms Forever program).

SEMAP formed in 1998 as a partnership of regional service providers, local growers, and educational organizations. This partnership endures in the 40-member SEMAP Coordinating Council, a group of representatives from local farms, service providers, and the community who help ensure that our programs meet the agricultural community’s needs. To learn more, visit www.semaponline.org

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