

MASSACHUSETTS **Farm to School**

Dear Massachusetts Farmer,

I am writing to let you know that in January Massachusetts Farm to School will be contacting you to conduct a brief phone questionnaire to evaluate the impact of institutional sales on farm profitability. It should only take 5 to 10 minutes. The information to be gathered through this questionnaire will help us continue to improve our efforts to assist farmers interested in expanding markets for their products. Massachusetts Farm to School conducted a similar farm income survey in 2010 that provided valuable data to direct programming. This data now needs updating to help us understand the current needs of Massachusetts farmers as we see continued strong demand from institutions for local farm products.

We have a brief list of questions to ask about your 2014 farm sales - both direct sales of products to institutions as well as sales to distributors that deliver the products to institutions. For example, some of the questions include:

- What institutions/distributors did you sell to?
- What product was most profitable?
- What were your estimated sales to institutions as a % of total gross sales?

Individual farm data collected will be kept confidential, and not shared or published outside Massachusetts Farm to School. Individual results will be aggregated to show the overall impact of institutional sales on Massachusetts farms. While we would like accurate data when available, estimates are fine for our purposes.

In order for results to be representative we are hoping for a good response rate to this questionnaire and encourage your participation. As a thank you for your time, all farmers that participate by February 15 will be entered in a raffle for a \$100 gift card. Two winners will be notified in March. If you would prefer to respond to the questionnaire via email, rather than over the phone, please send an email to melissa@massfarmtoschool.org

I hope you enjoy the holidays and look forward to talking with you in the new year. In the meantime, if you have any questions about this survey or institutional sales, please contact the Mass Farm to School office at 413-253-3844 or info@massfarmtoschool.org.

Sincerely,

Melissa Adams
Farm Planning Consultant
Massachusetts Farm to School