

February 2016 Newsletter (Correct Link)

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February 2016

Dear Friends,

We are reaching the home stretch of winter (though in New England, it hasn't been much of a winter this year!) and unless you are a frequent winter farmers' market shopper you may be hankering for another growing season of fresh, local produce right now. We know that we are! New Entry's [World PEAS CSA Shares](#) - those bountiful weekly deliveries that support beginning farmers and underserved communities - are now available to order! Our 2016 season will continue to grow and expand providing sustainably grown produce to the Greater Boston area under the direction of our [new Food Hub Manager](#), Kristin Whitmore.



Our winter [Farm Business Planning Course](#) is also  wrapping up this month with another cohort of aspiring farmers who are putting the polish on their final business plans in preparation for this year's growing season. Applications for our [Incubator Farm](#) sites are coming in and returning producers are on pins and needles waiting to see if they will be able to expand production this year as well. It is always a challenge with limited acreage on our Incubator farms. We are continually training new producers each year through our business planning courses and many of those graduates need land on the incubator farms. At the same time, we have returning farmers in their second or third year on the incubator farm who want to expand production on more acreage. It's a balancing act and a puzzle putting it all together and keeping some land fallow for sustainable land management. We hope to have it all sorted out soon so producers can firm up crop plans, seed orders, and market commitments. Seeds are already germinating in heated greenhouses or under grow lights tucked in spare bedrooms, living rooms, basements, or wherever there is space to grow!

New Entry is also gearing up for numerous upcoming [conferences and events](#). We encourage you to attend and learn more about New Entry's programs, glean some new skills from our knowledgeable staff presenting at the conferences, or just to say hello! Spring is right around the corner, but there is still plenty of time to learn something new. As our featured farmer, [Christine Lacasse](#) puts it, "Every farmer does things a different way, there is always something new to learn and improve."

In This Issue

- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [New Entry's 2015 Program Highlights!](#)
- [Farmer Profile: Christine Lacasse](#)
- [Welcome to our new World PEAS Food Hub Manager!](#)
- [The Growing Need for New Farmers in America](#)
- [Making It Happen: Profitability and Success Workshops](#)
- [Choose Fresh and Local License Plate](#)

Upcoming Events

February 28 - Land Access and Leasing with Noelle Fogg & Kathy Ruhf, [Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership \(SEMAP\) Conference](#), Dighton, MA, 9 am - 5 pm

March 2 - [Wholesale Success Workshop](#), Brigham Hill Community Barn 37 Wheeler Road, North Grafton, MA 01536, \$25, 8:30 am - 5 pm

March 12 - [Massachusetts Urban Farming Conference](#), Northeastern University, 8 am - 5:30 pm

March 25 & 26 - [Just Food? Forum on Land Use, Rights and Ecology](#), Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA

March 31 - Farm Business Planning Course Graduation, Lowell Office, 6 pm, more info to come

April 5 - Massachusetts Agriculture Day at the Statehouse, Boston, MA

New Entry's 2015 Program Highlights!

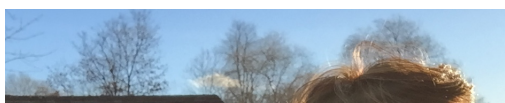
In 2015, New Entry was able to make an impact throughout the food system, from farmer training and production of fresh, healthy, local food, to the distribution and consumption of that fresh produce to consumers and low-income families. Our diverse set of local, statewide, and national programs address the life cycle of starting, growing, and expanding farm, food security projects, and connecting food to local communities. Our supporters, funders, volunteers, and donors make New Entry's work possible. We thank you for your commitment to a healthy, just, and sustainable food system and encourage your continued support! Check out our 2015 program highlights [here](#).



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Farmer Profile: Christine Lacasse

Christine Lacasse is celebrating something new: her Meadow River Farm in Rehoboth, Massachusetts recently became a certified NPIP participant. NPIP certification, which



stands for National Poultry Improvement Plan, assures her customers that her poultry flock has been tested and is free of Avian influenza and



been tested and is free of Avian Influenza and other diseases that affect chickens. It means that her chicken stock is traceable, and allows her to ship fertilized eggs.

NIIP certification may not seem like a big deal to most, but to Christine it is a sign of her farm's continued growth since her graduation from New Entry in the spring of 2012. She feels that the information she learned while at New Entry helped make her more aware of the business of farming: she now knows how to find the resources she needs and how to make an enterprise budget, which is a planning tool that helps her balance her potential income with expenses associated with a particular farm product.

She credits her steady growth to concepts she has learned from participating in workshops and classes, including New Entry's Farm Business Planning Course. She says she still attends lots of workshops, even though she has been farming for several years. "Something I've learned along the way is that just because I'm doing something one way doesn't mean ten other farmers do things the same way – you may ask one question and get ten different answers." Christine values the knowledge and expertise of other farmers, and has learned to take advantage of the relationships she has cultivated over the years. But she tries to give back too: she says educating families about the nuances of raising chickens is one of her favorite things. Read Christine's full story [here](#).

Welcome to our new World PEAS Food Hub Manager!

New Entry is excited to welcome [Kristen Whitmore](#) as the new [World PEAS Food Hub](#) Manager. This position is a new one at New Entry - the World PEAS Food Hub Manager will be responsible for the overall growth and direction of the food hub. Luckily Kristen believes in using participatory approaches to community development to engage farmers and community members in the creation of sustainable local food systems. Kristen will be overseeing the distribution of fresh, locally-grown produce to over 30 distribution points across the Greater Boston area through our CSA



produce to over 30 distribution points across the Greater Boston area through our CSA and low-income food access programs. With her extensive experience in running a large commercial CSA program and managing farmers' markets, she is more than prepared for the job! Read Kristen's full bio [here](#).

The Growing Need for New Farmers in America



New Entry's Project Director, Jennifer Hashley, is featured in "*New Hands*", a short film directed and produced by Dan Chamberlain, a graduate student at Cornell University, that highlights the need for more beginning farmers in America. We have a large number of retiring farmers across the US (over 70% of our farmland will change hands in the next 20 years), yet access to land, access to capital, and access to training are big challenges for new farmers. Showing a viable career pathway in agriculture is needed to attract and retain a next generation of food producers and land stewards. Watch the film [here](#)!

Making It Happen: Profitability and Success Workshops

During the winter months, most farmers spend a little (or a lot) of time inside focusing on the financial planning components of their farm business. New Entry is here to support



farmers in those endeavors. [Noelle Fogg](#), New Entry's [Farmland Matching Service](#) Coordinator, has been out and about across the state training farmers on improving their financial literacy and imparting important management skills at events like the NOFA/Mass Winter Conference and through a workshop series called: Making It Happen: Profitability and Success. With collaboration from [The Carrot Project](#) and [Central Mass Grown](#), Noelle has traveled across Massachusetts training growers on farm economics.

These five-hour workshops funded by the [Northeast Risk Management Education](#)

These five-hour workshops, funded by the [Northeast Risk Management Education](#) program, help small farmers build sound financial systems and use those systems to make smart business decisions. Farmers learn about effective financial management tools and how and when to use them to improve their farm business.

For the Central Massachusetts gathering, 12 farmers convened at Union Station in Worcester, MA. The farm businesses present at the workshop varied from Christmas tree farms, to livestock, to diversified vegetables, to a transitioning farm preparing for succession, but they were all attending to further their farm financial knowledge. Several New Entry Farm Business Planning Course graduates and former incubator farmers joined to continue honing their financial management skills. The workshop served as a safe place for farmers to share their own experiences with different business and/or CSA models.



The Making It Happen: Profitability and Success Workshop series is the result of a Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) research project that tracked the economic changes in 30 different farms throughout the Northeast. The workshops are designed to focus on and develop financial management, analysis, and recordkeeping skills that farms in the study were struggling to adopt. The workshops aim to help farmers: improve productivity, reduce costs, increase net farm income, and improve overall quality of life. Afterwards, participants may also sign up for one-on-one financial planning assistance. The Making It Happen program continues to build on the skills provided in these workshops with webinars, resources, and other case studies. Find those materials [here](#).

For more farm financial resources, check out [New Entry's Farm Financial Management and Financing Resources page](#).

Choose Fresh and Local License Plate

We did it! Thanks to your support, the [Choose Fresh & Local license plate](#) will be on the

road mid-2016. Registration is now closed, but it's not too late to fill out an [interest form](#)



or encourage others to do the same! By filling out the interest form, we will personally alert you when the plates are available for purchase directly from the RMV. We have a short-term goal of getting to 3,000 plates in the next couple of years.

The funds raised from these plates will support New Entry's work with new and beginning farmers on our incubator farms and beyond, including training and resources as well as continuing to develop a strong statewide Beginning Farmer Network. They will also help Mass Farmers Markets continue to support farmers markets in the state. Additionally, having these plates on the road will continue to raise awareness of local agriculture in Massachusetts and help build strong markets for farmers statewide.

The cost is \$20/year on top of regular registration fees (or \$40 per two-year renewal) - all fully tax deductible - it's an easy way to contribute and show your support of local food, farmers, and markets! Fill out an [interest form](#) today. Visit our website to find out [how it works](#) - THANK YOU!

Our Mission



Well-trained farmers are key to building sustainable local food systems, and New Entry prepares new and beginning farmers for success through comprehensive training and technical assistance in all aspects of farm production and management. Our mission is to assist multi-cultural individuals with agricultural backgrounds to successfully enter farming in Massachusetts.

The broader goals of New Entry are to support the vitality and sustainability of the region's agriculture, to build long term economic self-reliance and food security among participants and their communities, and to expand access to high-quality, culturally appropriate and locally-grown foods.

To learn more, visit www.nesfp.org.

Get Involved

Join us in helping cultivate and sustain the next generation of farmers who will care for our farmland,

supply our markets, provide food to our schools, and contribute to a vibrant local economy in our communities.

Volunteer

Volunteer with New Entry World PEAS Food Hub at least two days per week for the entire season and receive a weekly CSA Share.



Support local agriculture and get your specialty Choose Fresh and Local License Plate today!

Donate

Your tax-deductible donation is accepted on-line through: Tufts University's Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy. **Designate the Friedman School, and New Entry Sustainable Farming Project** to be sure your gift supports new farmers.

Upcoming Classes

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We welcome your feedback!

Please write to nesfp@tufts.edu with any feedback or topics you would like us to cover to improve the quality of our newsletter.

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New Entry Sustainable Farming Project

45 Merrimack St
Lowell, MA 01850

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