

Agriculture in Westport

WESTPORT AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION



WHAT DOES THIS SIGN MEAN AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The Agricultural Commission has installed these signs on all major roads leading into Westport. It tells visitors (and residents) that Westport has adopted a Right to Farm Bylaw to protect and encourage commercial agriculture by protecting farmers and farm operators against nuisance lawsuits.

Over the past 30 years, as productive farmland has been converted to residential development, persons not involved in farming have moved into traditional agricultural areas and with them they sometimes bring new complaints concerning odor, flies, dust, noise from field work, spraying of farm chemicals, slow-moving farm machinery, and other necessary products of farming operations.

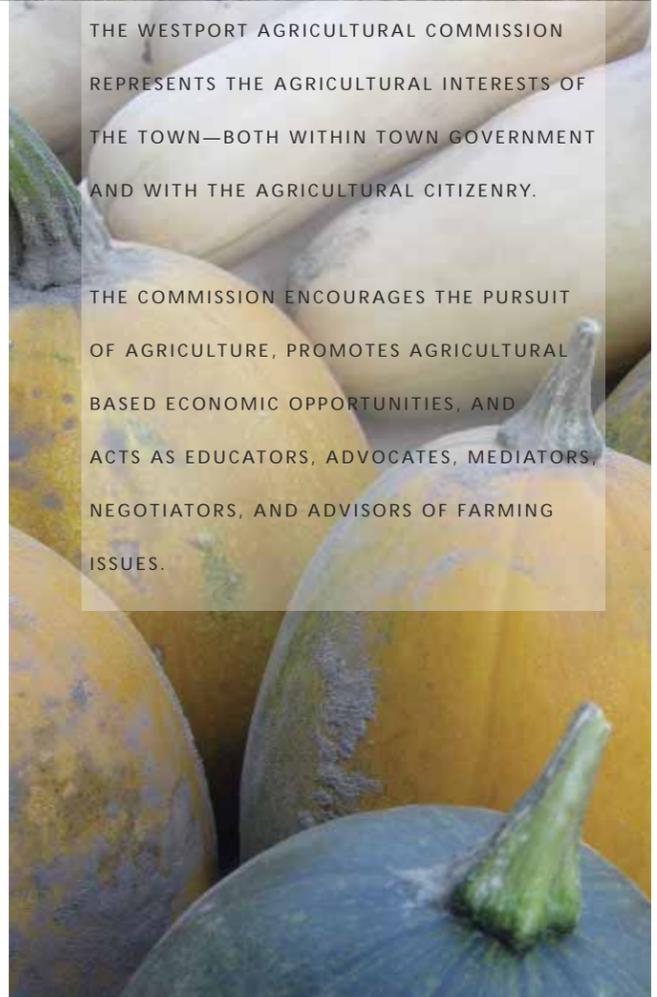
Many states, including Massachusetts, adopted Right to Farm language in their state statutes to protect active farmers from nuisance lawsuits from neighbors. To see the actual bylaw, visit the Agriculture Commission page in the Town of Westport's website. (www.westport-ma.com/agcom).

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This brochure was funded by proceeds from 2010 *Taste of Westport* event, hosted by Westport Rivers Vineyards; photos: Steve Connors and Jon Alden; history notes: Norma Judson.

THE WESTPORT AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION REPRESENTS THE AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS OF THE TOWN—BOTH WITHIN TOWN GOVERNMENT AND WITH THE AGRICULTURAL CITIZENRY.

THE COMMISSION ENCOURAGES THE PURSUIT OF AGRICULTURE, PROMOTES AGRICULTURAL BASED ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES, AND ACTS AS EDUCATORS, ADVOCATES, MEDIATORS, NEGOTIATORS, AND ADVISORS OF FARMING ISSUES.



WHY BUY LOCAL?

Locally grown produce, meat, and value added products are fresh, healthy, and of high quality. Buying locally grown products also supports the farming traditions and agricultural economy in Westport.

HOW DO FARMS BENEFIT WESTPORT AND ITS RESIDENTS?

Farm products offer our residents and visitors a wide array of meats and produce, cheeses, eggs, plants, natural fibers, wine and beer. Our horse farms bring both boarding horse owners and visitors interested in equine events.

Farms are an integral part of Westport's pastoral landscape and attract tourists to our farms and other businesses in town.

Farm operations and acreage place lower demand on Town services and infrastructure than land that has been developed into residential lots. Therefore, the presence of large agricultural tracts in Westport helps keep property taxes down for all residents.



WESTPORT'S AGRICULTURAL PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Westport's agricultural history is rich and varied. Early Westport settlers followed the lead of Native Americans, raising corn, beans, squash and tobacco. Westport farmers also grew potatoes, barley, wheat and rye. The Macomber Turnip originated here and is known across the country. Orchards of apple, peach, and pear have been a fixture of local agriculture, while native cranberries were raised in the Horseneck dunes. Farmers gathered seaweed for fertilizer and harvested marsh grass from along our tidal rivers.

For a brief period Westport was home to a fledgling silk industry that planted mulberry trees to feed the silkworms. Local farmers collected vegetable and flower seeds and raised bulbs, selling both locally and through mail order. Livestock including dairy cows, sheep, cattle, and poultry were commonly raised.

Westport farm products were shipped in all directions. The huge Macomber Nursery located in Central Village shipped nursery stock to Providence, Boston and beyond. Locally produced milk, eggs, vegetables, fruit and ice were sold off wagons in Westport and transported and sold in area towns. Mariners, like Paul Cuffe, shipped products up and down the coast and to the Islands.

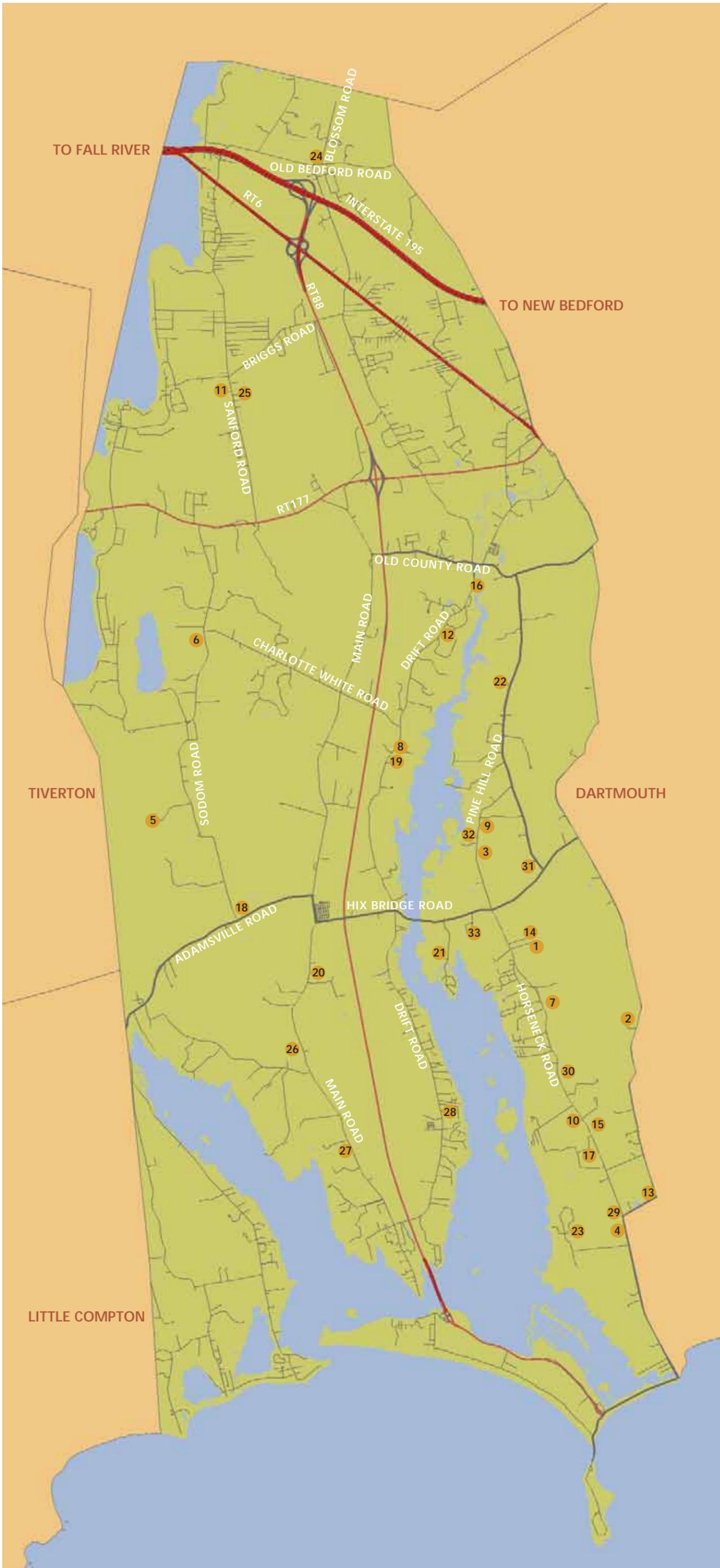
Today, farming in Westport carries on the independent spirit and individualism of the past. The increase in smaller, retail farm operations over the past 30 years has led to a high diversity of crops being raised and sold. Westport farmers sell their products at roadside stands, farmers markets, and to niche markets such as high end restaurants in the Boston and Providence metro areas. The interest in organic food has led several farms to convert to organic production. Beekeepers are benefitting from the wide variety of orchard blossoms and vegetable flowers.

Livestock farming also has responded to changing and smaller markets. Westport's barns now house dairy cows, dairy goats, beef cattle, horses, chickens, ducks, and alpacas. Value-added products such as specialty cheese made from Westport milk are the signature of today's Westport farming.

As the public's appetite for locally grown foodstuffs and farm products increases, so grows the success of small and large scale farms alike.



Westport Farms



- 1 **ACHESON FARM** 508-636-4912
feed, grain
- 2 **ALLEN FARMS** organic
farmers mkt, wholesale, veg, herbs
- 3 **BERRY HILL FARM** 508-636-8976
open to public, blueberries, wholesale
- 4 **JOHN BETTENCOURT FARM** 508-636-4328
hay, straw
- 5 **BRISTLECONE FARM** 508-636-2552
xmas trees
- 6 **DEVOL FARM** 508-636-2210
pick your own blueberries
- 7 **DIAMOND ACRE FARM** 508-636-2834
open to public, farmstand
- 8 **DRIFTWAY MEADOWS** 508-636-8620
horses
- 9 **FIGUERIDO'S GREENHOUSE** 508-636-4084
open to public, plants
- 10 **GOLDEN ROBIN** 508-636-8579
farm stand, blueberries, strawberries, hay
- 11 **GOLDEN TOUCH FARM** 508-672-3727
alpaca
- 12 **HANA'S HONEY** 508-636-5564
honey
- 13 **HILLTOP FARM** 857-636-9674
open to public, farmers mkt
- 14 **JUST BEER** brewed at Buzzards Bay Brewing
508-636-2288 open to public, beer
- 15 **C. LEDOUX WOOD FARM**
wood
- 16 **LYONS BROOK FARM** 508-636-2552
open to public, milk goats
- 17 **OLD WESTPORT FARM** 508-636-5368
wood
- 18 **ORR'S FARM** 508-636-4274
open to public, farm stand
- 19 **NOQUOCHOKE ORCHARDS** 617-416-2140
open to public, fruit, veg, farmstand
- 20 **NORTHSTAR FARM** 508-636-0866
farmers market, veg, wholesale
- 21 **PARADISE HILL FARM** 978-590-6537
open to public, farmers mkt, veg, fruits
- 22 **PINE CREST XMAS TREE FARM** 508-636-4567
open to public, xmas trees
- 23 **RIVER ROCK FARM** 508-636-5586
open to public, organic meat
- 24 **SAMPSON POTATO FARM** 508-730-8641
open to public, farmstand, farmers mkt,
wholesale, firewood
- 25 **SANFORD FARM** 508-672-0674
pick your own blueberries
- 26 **SHY BROTHERS FARM** 508-965-6560
cheese
- 27 **SKINNY DIP FARM** 401-592-0237
open to public, farmers mkt, veg, flowers
- 28 **STONEHAVEN FARM** vmerlier@verizon.net
open to public, eggs, meat
- 29 **TRIPLE S FARM** 508-958-5493
meat, wholesale
- 30 **TRIPP FARM** 508-636-2126
open to public, organic blueberries, wholesale
- 31 **TRIPPS DAIRY FARM** 508-763-1160
open to public, compost
- 32 **WASONTUXET FARM** 774-930-3463
meat
- 33 **WESTPORT RIVERS VINEYARD** 508-636-3423
open to public, wine