

April 2014 Issue

Holden AgCom News

Our Mission Statement: To serve, promote, and enhance agriculture within the Town of Holden; To be a liaison between town officials and residents; To provide a resource to assist local farmers and help preserve the town's open space



What we are plowing toward:

Assisting our Board of Selectman with guidelines on Chapter 61A Right of First Refusal Procedures

Our Meetings

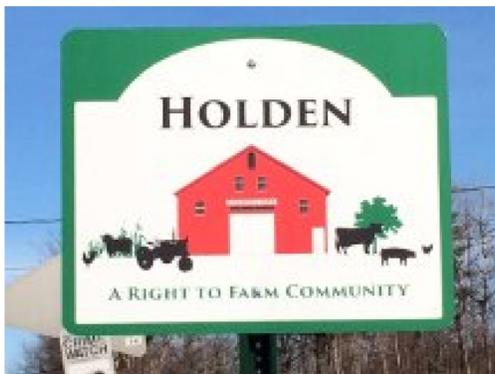
Are open to the public and are held once a month on every 3rd Tuesday at 6:30pm in the Selectman Room of the Starbard Building

Next Mtg is on Tuesday, May 20th.

Edible Plant Gardening Classes:

The Friends of the Red Barn are hosting a series of gardening classes every Saturday at 10:00 am through May 17th. These classes are being hosted by Jonathan Hart who is a Member of the Holden AgComm, professional gardener and certified permaculturalist. For more information on these exciting and informative classes go to www.redbarnholden.org

The Holden Grange is holding an Open Night on April 28th at 7:00pm at the Holden Senior Ctr. The emphasis will be on plants that are best suited for local growing. For more information contact merryhavens@yahoo.com



Right to Farm Signs

The AgComm is proud to announce our Right to Farm Signs have been completed and posted throughout town. After extensive hard work from our team and working with The Friends of the Red Barn we have our very own original design that we feel best displays the past, present and future agricultural aspirations of Holden. These signs help express our continued dedication toward enhancing and supporting all agricultural endeavors within our community.

As an added benefit to our residents, all of our ten signs are currently open for personalization. This is a great marketing opportunity for a local business or you may dedicate a sign to a former Holden farmer. There would be a one time fee for this service and all proceeds would be used toward maintaining agricultural exposure in Holden.. For more information please contact Jim Dunn at: jdunniiii@charter.net.

How to avoid eating GMO foods

by Jonathan Hart

These are the most common Genetically Modified Foods as of 2014:

Corn - One of the hardest to avoid - about 88% of all corn grown in the US is genetically modified (GM). Unless the label says organic or GMO free, chances are its GMO.

Don't forget about derivatives of corn like corn syrup, fructose and a host of others (see the "invisible GM Ingredients" section at www.nongmoshoppingguide.com for a complete list). Corn is also a popular animal feed...beef, dairy products, chicken, eggs, pork, etc. may all be affected by GMO consumption by the animals.

Soy - Another tough one to avoid - 90% of all soy grown in the US is a GMO variety. Don't forget that vegetable oil and vegetable protein is also usually made out of soybeans! Also don't forget about derivatives like Soy Lecithin (found in most chocolate). Soy can also be found in nearly any animal feed. Again, see the non-gmo shopping guide for a complete list of food additives derived from GMO ingredients.

Sugar Beets - 95% of the sugar beet crop in the US is GM. Over half of the sugar consumed in the US comes from sugar beets. The rest of our sugar comes from sugarcane, which is not GM. The problem is that many foods containing sugar don't specify the source. When in doubt, I choose to opt out and avoid eating it. Domino (eastern US) and C&H (western US) are two large brands that still use 100% cane sugar and are very inexpensive.

Canola - Another crop where 90% of what is grown in the US is GM. Non-GM canola oil is hard to find. I like light olive oil and coconut oil as alternatives to canola.

Milk - Recombinant bovine growth hormone (rGBH) is a GM synthetic growth hormone injected into cows to increase milk production. The US is the only industrialized nation to use this compound. Thankfully, use of the hormone has dropped (maybe to less than 20% of total milk production) and some companies are now labeling their product as "rGBH free". Look for it, or buy organic.

Cotton - We don't eat the fibers but we do eat the seeds, in the form of cotton seed oil, and 90% of US cotton is a GMO. Many a potato chip is fried in cotton seed oil, and it shows up in many other places too, such as an additive to nuts. Read those labels carefully!

Aspartame - This is an artificial sweetener made from GM micro-organisms. It has been around since the 1960's but the name keeps changing due to its bad reputation.

NutraSweet, Equal, and now Aminosweet are all names for Aspartame. It is found in sugar free products of all types, from soft drinks to children's chewable vitamins.

We hope you've enjoyed this latest version of our newsletter. If there is a topic you wish for us to cover please let us know. Also, if you know someone whom you think may also enjoy this periodical, please forward us their information. Thank you, The Holden AgComm. To Contact the Holden Agcom you may email us at holden.agcom@gmail.com or you can reach our Chair Person Denise Cummings at northwoodsfarm@live.com.