

# Maine Farming: Renaissance in Progress



# 8,173 Farms in 2012

Up from 7,196 in 2002 (+13.5%)



48% of farms list  
farming as primary  
occupation

Up from 43% in 2007

Exceeds national  
average of 47%



29% of farmers are  
women

Up from 25% in 2007



30% of farmers are age 55-64  
29% of farmers are over 64



Farmers age 25-34 increased 40%  
since 2007



# Two Tracks

## Commodity Farming



## Local Agriculture



# Farming in Maine is Growing

## Poised for Further Growth

### Fundamentals Are Good



# # 1 Plenty of Land



## #2 Abundant Water



# #3 Good Growing Conditions



## #4 Strong Markets



# Still, Maine is no Iowa



**Can farming here be more than a side-show?**

# New England Food Vision

- Studied New England's ability to feed itself
- Considered population trends, eating habits, and land availability and suitability
- Results: NE could grow 1/2 to 2/3 of ALL its food
- But Maine would need to increase production 3X

But just because this could happen,  
doesn't mean it will

- Farming in Maine is hindered by current realities (economic and demographic)
- There is not much market for additional local production at prices that work for farmers
  - Food prices are distorted
  - Land prices are based on development value, not farm-use value
- Maine needs new infrastructure to support farming (especially “Ag in the Middle”)

# New Infrastructure we're seeing

## On Farm

Greenhouses

Cheese rooms

Poultry processing

## Off Farm

Retail

Processing

Storage/Aggregation

# Unity Food Hub

Multi-purpose Facility

Post-harvest handling

Cold storage

Aggregation

Multi-farm CSA  
assembly/distribution

Occasional Retail

Commercial Kitchen

Event space

Future restaurant?





