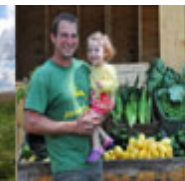


Vision of Farm Conservation Future in Massachusetts

Cris Coffin, American Farmland Trust





MA Food System Plan: Land Goals

1. More land is in active agricultural use
2. More farmland and prime farm soils are permanently protected
3. More farmers have more secure access to farmland
4. Farms contribute to a healthy environment and farmers are supported in protecting natural resources
5. Farmers are able to sustain economically viable operations on their land



1. More Land is in Active Agriculture

- ✓ *Better data needed to establish baseline and track*
- ✓ *Reduce farmland conversion*
 - Codify & strengthen state farmland mitigation policy
 - Evaluate state policies around solar development
 - Modify state estate tax
 - More succession planning/support for senior farmers



1. More Land is in Active Agriculture

- ✓ ***Increase acreage available for agriculture***
 - Reduce 61A acreage threshold
 - Revisit Wetlands Protection Act
 - Create a state farmland restoration program?

- ✓ ***Conserved land remains in active agriculture***
 - Work with state agencies, towns and LTs to expand/encourage farming on protected lands
 - CRs are more farm-friendly
 - MDAR relaxes rules on donated APRs



2. More Farmland and Prime Farm Soils are Permanently Protected

- ✓ *APR Program increases its pace of protection*
 - More \$\$
 - Create state farmland protection plan as alternative pathway to ALE eligibility
 - Reconsider price/acre limit
 - Eliminate requirement that land be in active agriculture
 - Increase state conservation tax credit, and make better use of it in APR projects
 - Improve use of CPA for farmland protection?



2. More Farmland and Prime Farm Soils are Permanently Protected

- ✓ ***Inventory all state-owned land***, identifying lands with High agricultural value that should be permanently protected
- ✓ ***Create statewide TDR credit bank***
- ✓ ***Create coalition of agriculture, conservation and food organizations*** to collaborate and advocate around farmland issues



3. More Farmers Have More Secure Access to Land

- ✓ ***State-owned land is more available for farming***
 - Inventory looks at management objectives
 - Examine state bid requirements; also leases rather than licenses
 - Allow retained revenues
 - Normal agriculture practices, consistent with mission of agency



3. More Farmers Have More Secure Access to Land

- ✓ *State will help connect farm seekers with farmland owners*
 - Matching services are better supported
 - Farm linking data bases are integrated and expanded
 - APR stewardship helps ID opportunities for sale or lease of land to farmers



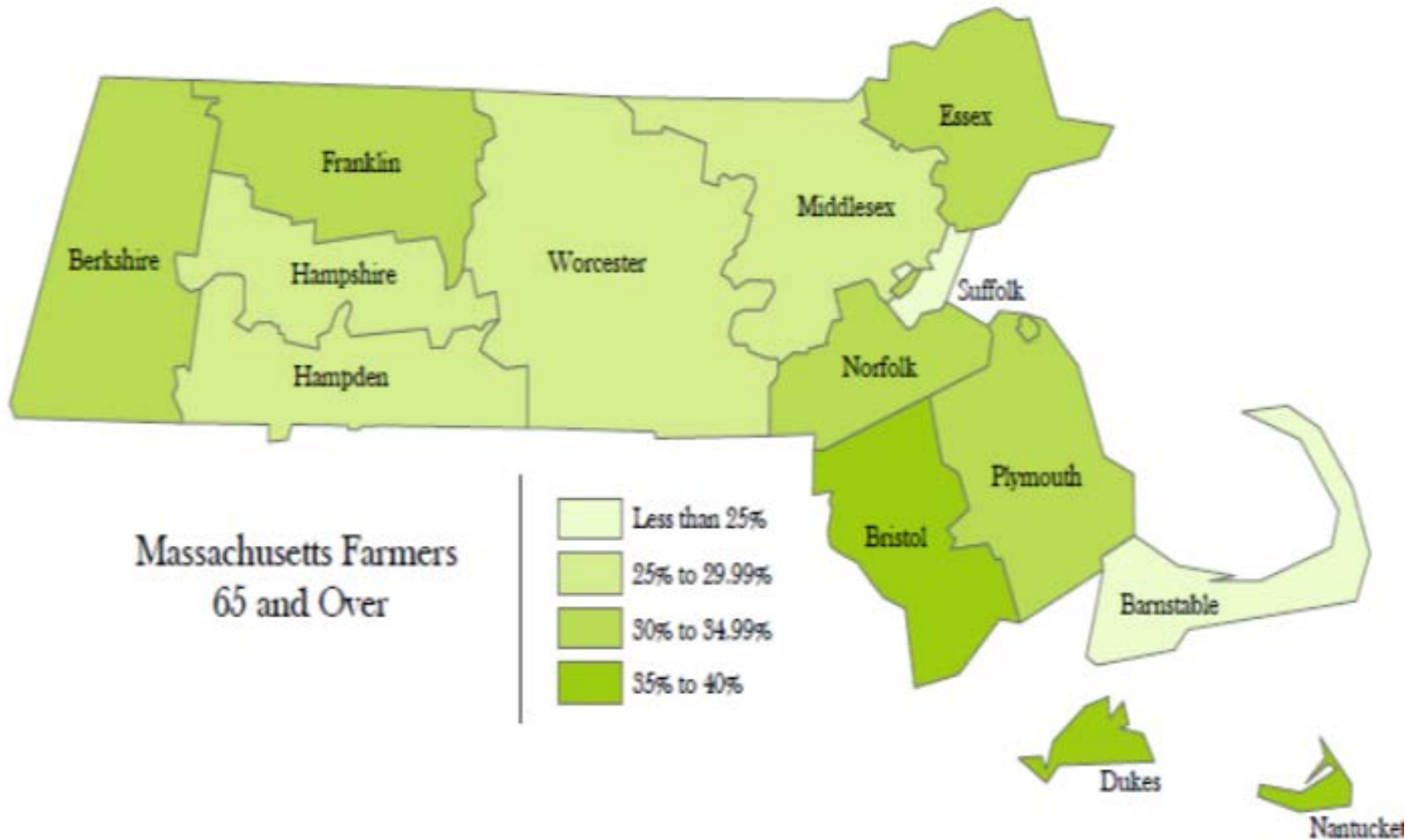
3. More Farmers Have More Secure Access to Land

- ✓ *Farmland owners are incentivized to sell or lease land to a farmer*
 - Research 61A options: level of benefit linked to-
 - Food production
 - Written lease agreement

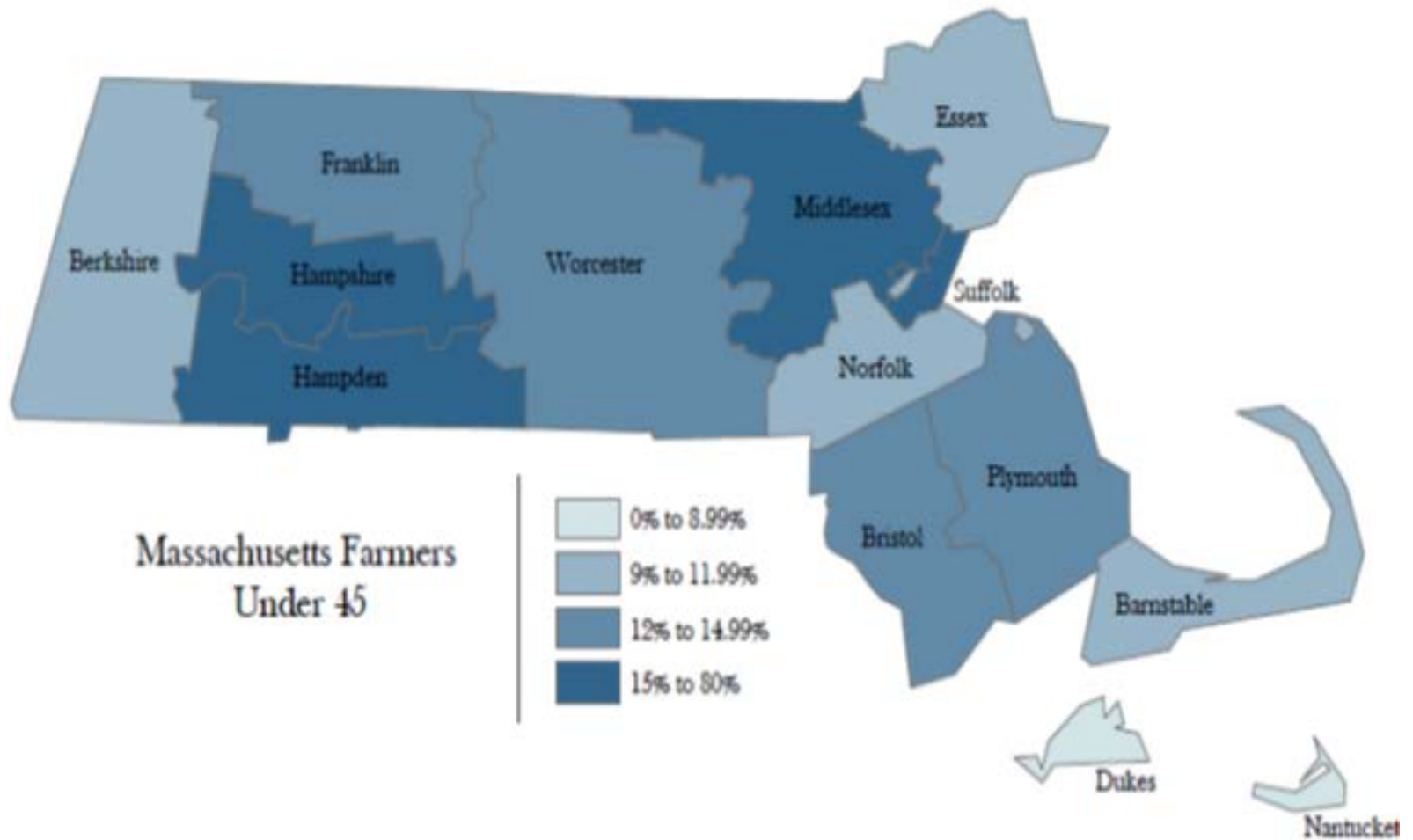
- ✓ *More land trusts and municipalities lease land to farmers*

- ✓ *Farmers have access to affordable housing on/near their farms*

Who Farms It?



Who Farms it?



Who Is Farming What?

