

The Search for a Food Bank Farm

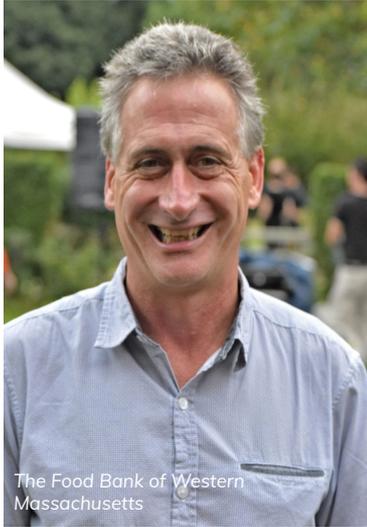
Assessing Farmland Viability in Berkshire County

By Ajay Chatha, Jahnvi Kirtane, Lydia von Schwanenfluegel, and
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Green River Farm, Williamstown

Clients



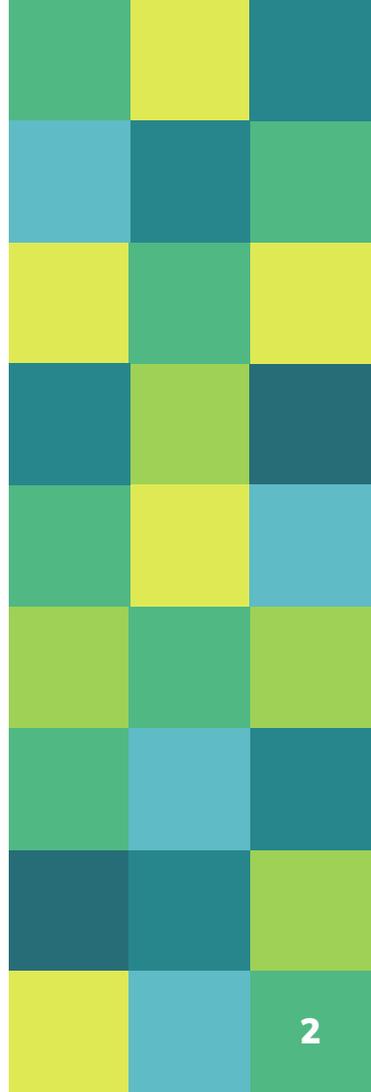
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Executive Director, The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts (FBWM)



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Director of Community Programs,
Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC)



Project Goals

1.
Identify 3-5 viable sites
to develop as farmland
for the Food Bank of
Western Massachusetts
(FBWM)

2.
Produce an inventory of
available farmland in
Berkshire County



Why a Food Bank Farm in Berkshire County?

Loss of Farmland

- Issues concerning older generations of farmers
 - Retirements
 - Estate Planning
- Newer generations' challenges of affording farmland
 - Out-of-State Competition
 - Expensive land
 - Quick real estate market turnaround time



“

Transition gap: “gap in farm and/or farmland ownership between an aging farmer population and a new generation of farmers”

American Farmland Trust

Food Insecurity

- 16,000 individuals/month are food insecure in Berkshire County
- FBWM provides meals to 15,435 individuals a month
- Intersectional justice



Methodology

Background Research and Farm Interviews

- Researched types of farming and land-use
- Land Protections
- Farm interviews



Existing Food Bank Farm Model

- Second Food Bank Farm in Hadley, MA
- 142 Acres
- Contracts two farmers to farm 35 acres
 - Pay rent in produce
- 3 acres of no-till farming for community



Criteria

Acreage	Cleared Acreage	Prime Farmland and Soil of Statewide Importance Acreage	Land Use	Utilities	Housing	Location
Any	20-50	More is preferred	Anything excluding APR, CR, State-owned	Barn, electricity, on-site water source	Yes	Near a population center

Initial criteria for Food Bank Farm provided by clients

MLS Research and Realtor Outreach

- Gain insight into farmland sites on market
- Farmland and Open Space listings
- Realtor outreach
- Directory development
- Collect site-specific information

Realtor	Realtor #	Realtor Email	Call Status	Email Status	Notes	Future Contacts
Burnham Gold	413-458-0093	info@burnhamgold.com	Left message			
Alton & Westall Agency	(413) 458-8366		Directed to matt chow			
Jennifer Burns; MORESI REAL EST	(413) 663-0600	jennifer@moresirealestate.com		Emailed		
matt chow	4138410168		left message			
StoneHouse Properties	4135284211		Directed			
Steepleview Realty	(413) 664-0411		left message			
Michael Hernandez	4133292425	michael@360berkshirerealty.com		Emailed		
Donna Thomas Realty	(413) 664-9271	c21ddt@hotmail.com	will keep us updated			
Home Sweet home	413) 446-8514		left message			
red horse real estate	4132506149		left message			
Nocher realty	4134420200		directed			
MacCaro Real estate	4132434647		left message			
Randy	413-446-0725		called; will get back to email; said best agricultural land is in columbusia county, NY			
Cameron	(413) 770-7712		called; will get back to email			
Bishop West	4134482502		left message			
Greylock Realty	4137439000					
barnbrook realty	4135284423					
William Pitt	4135284192		called, will get back to us "soon"			
Realty Street	4136844000		called, left message			
Wheeler and Taylor	4135281006		called, left message			
The Kinderhook Group	4133291162		called, left message			
Allegre Companies	4139979200		called, left message			
Ashmere Realty	4136550003		called, left message			
Berkshire Dream Home	4134437274		called, Andy Perridick (owner/broker) will call back			
Lance Vermeulen: Great Barrington	4133279252		called, said Lance might be able to help, left a message			
Lance Vermeulen: Lenox	4132164808		called, same as above			
Jason Nocher	413-441-9761		called, left message			
Berkshire Property Agents	(413) 528-6800		called, left message			
Brockman Real Estate - The Berksh	(413) 528-4859		scheduling a meeting			
McFarland Realty Co	(413) 429-7206		left message			
Merchant Logo Housatonic Real Est	(413) 274-5065		left message			
Roberts & Associates Realty, Inc	(413) 637-4200		left message			
Paula McLean Realtors Inc	(413) 441-7067		left message			
Jan Perry Realty & Associates, LLC	(413) 442-5550		nothing			
Berkshire Access Realty	(413) 499-7355		said there's nothing			
Margaret Apkin, TUCKER REAL ES	(413) 822-9601		nothing			

Snapshot of realtor outreach

Parcel Mapping

- View potential sites
- GIS mapping with various filters, like soil type and contour lines

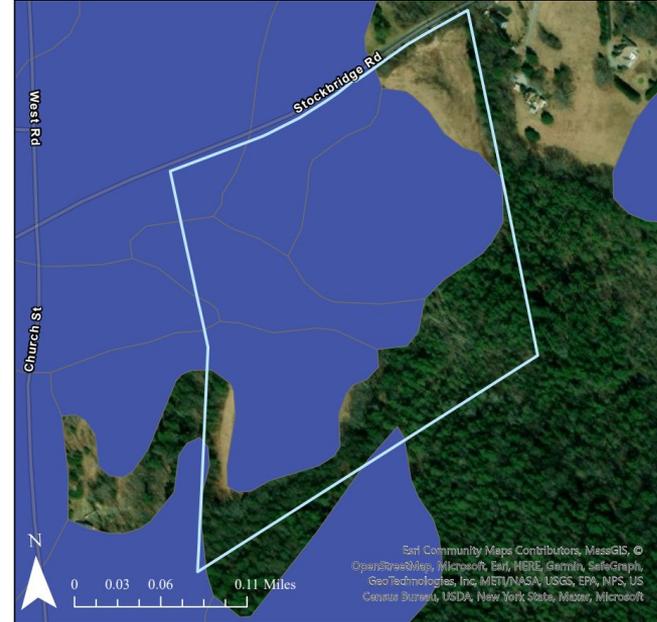


Mapping sites



Legend

545 Stockbridge Road



Legend

545 Stockbridge Road
 Prime Farmland Soil and Soil of Statewide Importance

545 Stockbridge Road

Evaluation Matrix

- Assess and compare potential sites
- Standardize method of ranking sites with respect to size, tillable acreage, soil type, utilities, and housing

Criteria	Scoring					
	Weight	1	2	3	4	5
Utilities and Housing (a "utility" is defined as electric, water, sewer, or housing)	2	1 utility	2 utilities	3 utilities	4 utilities	5 utilities
Total Acreage	3	<20	20-29.9	30-49.9	50-99.9	100+
Prime Farmland/Soil of Statewide Importance Acreage	4	0	0.01-5	5-9.9	10-19.9	20+
Cleared Acreage	5	<3	3-6.49	6.5-9.9	10-19.9	20+

Key for Evaluation Matrix

Site	Total Acreage Score (*3)	Cleared Acreage Score (*5)	Prime Farmland and Soil of Statewide Importance Acreage Score (*4)	Utilities and Housing Score (*2)	Total Score
Max Score	15	25	20	10	70
W	15	25	20	10	70
H	15	25	20	4	64
V	15	20	20	6	61
P	6	20	20	10	56
S	15	15	16	10	56
O	15	25	4	8	52
Y	6	20	16	8	50
M	15	5	20	6	46
J	12	10	12	10	44

Snapshot of conversion of raw data into index score (weighted). Sorted largest to smallest.

Site Recommendations

Green River Farm, Williamstown, MA

Parcel	Acreage	Cleared Acreage	Prime Farmland and Soil of Statewide Importance Acreage	Land Use	Utilities	Housing
Ideal	Any	20-50	More is preferred	Anything excluding APR, CR, State-owned	Barn, electricity, heating, on-site water source	Yes
Whole Parcel	244	134.11	120	217.3	Electricity, private water, sewer,	Yes
Subdivision	65	40	49.65	38 under APR	0	No

Matrix of Green River Farm

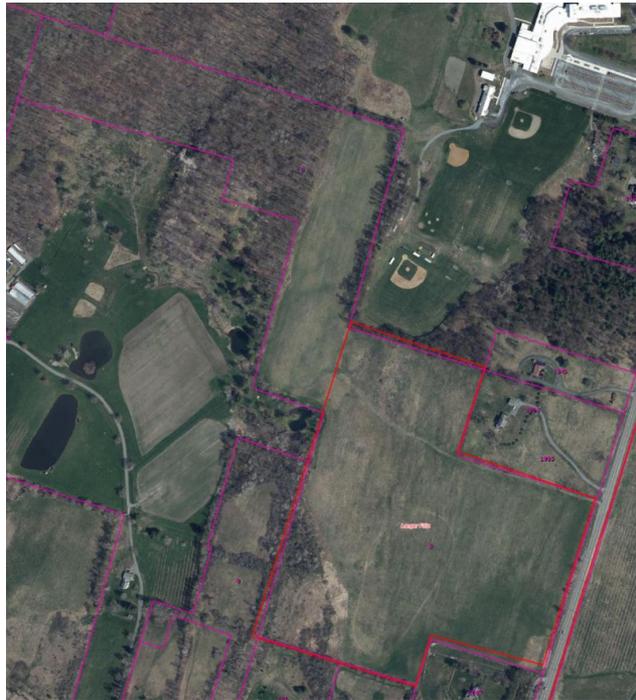


Legend
 □ Green River Farm



Legend
 □ Green River Farm
 ■ Prime Farmland Soil and Soil of Statewide Importance

Green River Farm



65 Acre Green River Farm Parcel

461 Loop Road, Savoy, MA

Parcel	Acreage	Cleared Acreage	Prime Farmland and Soil of Statewide Importance Acreage	Land Use	Utilities	Housing
Ideal	Any	20-50	More is preferred	Anything excluding APR, CR, State-owned	Barn, electricity, heating, on-site water source	Yes
461 Loop	133	30+	0	Not preserved	Electricity, private sewer, no heating	Yes

Matrix of 461 Loop Road



Legend

 461 Loop Road



130 Old Orebed Road, Lanesborough, MA

Parcel	Acreage	Cleared Acreage	Prime Farmland and Soil of Statewide Importance Acreage	Land Use	Utilities	Housing
Ideal	Any	20-50	More is preferred	Anything excluding APR, CR, State-owned	Barn, electricity, heating, on-site water source	Yes
130 Old Orebed	163.61	23	92.4	Not preserved	Electricity, barn	No (House needs to be torn down)

Matrix of 130 Old Orebed Road



Legend

130 Old Orebed Road



Legend

- 130 Old Orebed Road
- Prime Farmland Soil and Soil of Statewide Importance

130 Old Orebed Road

Alternative Recommendations for the FBWM

Connecting Disparate Parcels

- Propose buying multiple parcels <5 miles apart
- Filtered for parcels above 5 acres
- Strong candidate: 545 Stockbridge Rd. and Rattlesnake Mountain Rd.



Other Alternative Models

- Mixed Crop and Livestock Farming (MCL)
- Pasture-Raised Poultry and Beef
- Hydroponics Facility



Pasture land at East Mountain Farm

Other Alternative Models

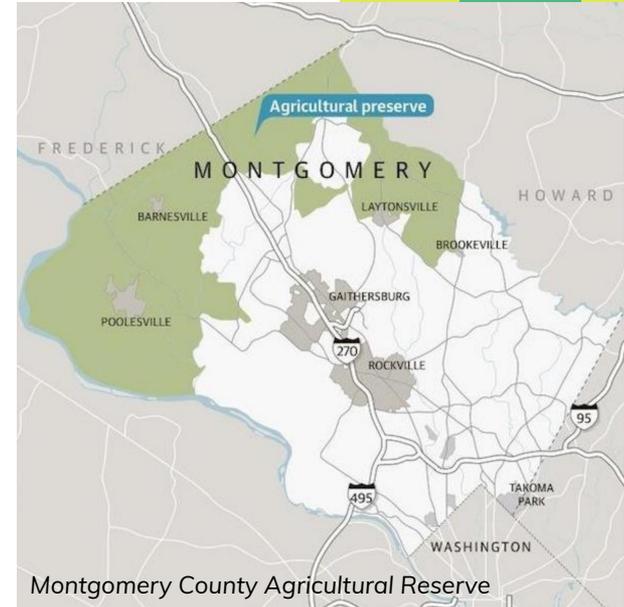
Benefit	Model		
	Mixed Crop and Livestock Farming	Pasture-Raised Poultry and Beef	Hydroponics
Less land	✓	✓	✓
Greater variety of land	✓	✓	✓
More diverse products for FBWM	✓	✓	
More diverse outputs for the farm	✓		



Recommendations for the State and Non-Profits

Recommendations for State and Municipal Governments

- Create farmland inventory position at the FSA
- Implement agricultural zoning
 - Model: Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, MD



Recommendations for Non-Profits

- Compensation for farmers
- Consistent communication
- Realtor trainings

Residential Bathroom 1 Bedrooms 3 Square Feet 2,380 Acreage 546.59

Make these 500+ acres of prized columbia county farmland the beginning of your next chapter. The possibilities are many given that the land is unencumbered by agricultural or conservation easements and provides an...

Listed By Jennifer Capala Of William Pitt Sotheby's - Lenox'

Listing Information on MLS Site

Recommendations for the BNRC

Recommendations for the BNRC

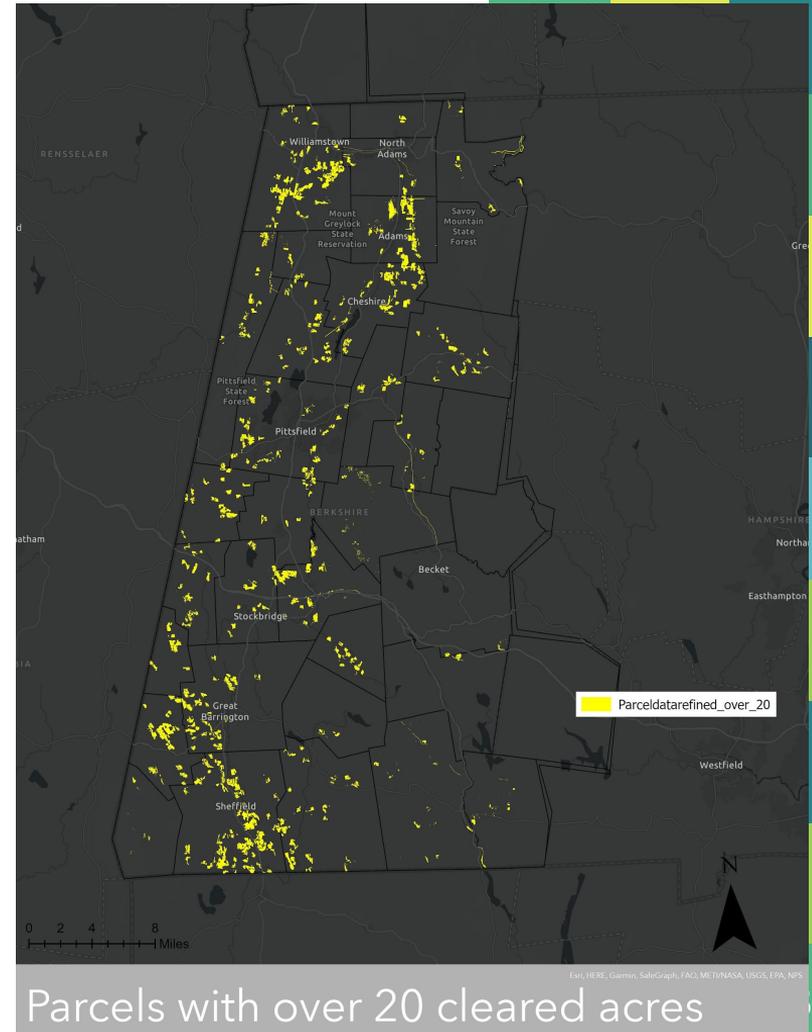
- Consider APR-land that may be soon or is transitioning out of active agricultural use
- Establish farmer-land match programs with Farm Service Organizations
- Buy-Protect-Sell Program



Green River Farm

GIS Mapping

- Map potential farmland sites not currently on the market
- Filter data set to find all available parcels with >20 acres of cleared land or continuous farmland
- Requires further exploration



Conclusion