

From MACC Advocacy Update **Drought Continues**

We reported last month that the drought has highlighted serious deficiencies in the state's Drought Management Plan and its implementation. We are one of many organizations asking the state to use the lessons learned from this drought to make necessary changes to the Plan.

Meanwhile, on September 2 the United States Department of Agriculture designated Cheshire and Strafford counties in New Hampshire as primary natural disaster areas due to losses caused by the drought. That designation includes all contiguous counties, including Franklin and Worcester Counties in Massachusetts, where qualified farm operators are now eligible for low interest emergency loans from USDA's Farm Service Agency.

Then, on September 7, the state announced its own drought emergency micro-loan fund for farmers and other small businesses affected by the drought. Municipalities and conservation commissions in Franklin and Worcester Counties may want to make sure their local farmers are aware of the federal designation and all municipalities and conservation commissions may want to make sure their local farmers are aware of the state program.