

## **Agricultural Burning in Holden**

A recent enthusiastic intervention by a Holden farmer with the Holden Fire Department has resulted in a significant policy change with regard to the process of obtaining an agricultural burning permits in the Town of Holden.

The new process involves no permits, fees, or time of year restrictions and is now in compliance with Massachusetts General Laws. The process is simple and requires only completion of a quick on-line form to notify the Fire Department when a qualifying farm intends to burn. Approval of the burn (which remains in the Fire Department's sole purview) is via an automated reply system that generally happens in a couple of minutes. For more information, see the following links:

Holden Fire Department general WWW page:

<https://www.holdenma.gov/fire-department>

Agricultural Burning General Information and Guidelines:

<https://www.holdenma.gov/fire-department/files/agricultural-burning>

Agricultural Burning Notification form:

<https://www.mapsonline.net/holdenma/forms/tablet.html.php?id=411686268>

Please note that this process is not for use by general residents and homeowners. To use it, the farm operation must meet the definitions in MGL Chapter 128, Section 1A:

*Section 1A. "Farming" or "agriculture" shall include farming in all of its branches and the cultivation and tillage of the soil, dairying, the production, cultivation, growing and harvesting of any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural or horticultural commodities, the growing and harvesting of forest products upon forest land, the raising of livestock including horses, the keeping of horses as a commercial enterprise, the keeping and raising of poultry, swine, cattle and other domesticated animals used for food purposes, bees, fur-bearing animals, and any forestry or lumbering operations, performed by a farmer, who is hereby defined as one engaged in agriculture or farming as herein defined, or on a farm as an incident to or in conjunction with such farming operations, including preparations for market, delivery to storage or to market or to carriers for transportation to market.*

The Holden Agricultural Commission sincerely thanks Chief Hall and the Holden Fire department for their flexibility regarding this policy change and support of agriculture in general.