



MAAF NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER
2024

Issue #5



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE BARRY W. NORRIS

Fair season is in full swing, and it seems that things are going quite well. If numbers are down, it's because of the weather. You are all doing a fantastic job! Many of you are having fun with the "Meet Our Farmers" contest, so please remember to take a few photos of your displays and activities. Contest deadline is October 20th.

The CARES Act has 66 out of the 100 Representatives needed to move it through, so PLEASE contact your representative and ask them to get on board. See more about this legislation below.

Again, as a reminder, if any of you are considering attending the IAFE conference in Phoenix, AZ this year, and you are a first time conference attendee, I urge you to check out the IAFE Foundation for scholarships that are available.

Reminder: The Zone 1 meeting scheduled for May 1-4, 2025 in Concord, NH, should be a great time. Darcy and her team are working hard as they put together an event full of timely information and programs that all fairs will benefit from.

Please mark your calendars for January 24-26, the dates for our 2025 MAAF Conference to be held at the Sable Oaks in South Portland. A more indepth listing of events and all the information that you need will be included in our November-December newsletter.

I have seen many of you this summer as I have traveled across Maine and I thank you for supporting our great agricultural fairs. There are over ten fairs remaining to showcase their prize winning animals, diverse agriculture, great food and entertainment. Check your fall calendars and go out and support our fall Maine fairs. - **Barry**



THESE SHOES WILL BE HARD TO FILL: FFA IN MAINE

Emily Doughty is the CTE Natural Resource Specialist and FFA Liaison for the state of Maine. A proud alumni of the FFA and a graduate of CTE, Emily is eager to support students and work closely with advocates of agriculture. In



this new role, Emily supports the Maine FFA Association, which comprises of over 350 student members. This student-led organization is driven by a motto to develop student potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. This spring, the Maine FFA will be holding its' 92nd annual State Convention, which provides students with opportunities to showcase their experiences, engage in workshops, demonstrate skills through Career and Leadership Development Events and much more.

Emily earned undergraduate degrees Agriculture and Natural Resources and Agricultural Education from the University of Delaware and holds a Master's in Educational Leadership from Thomas College. Emily began her career as an Agricultural Education and Technology Education instructor at Southern High School in Davidsonville, Maryland. Following this experience, she served as an Agriculture Specialist

through AmeriCorps' Great Strides Rural Education Program. Her most recent classroom experience was as a science instructor at the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences in Hinckley where she integrated aquaponics, gardening, and environmental sciences into the classroom. To learn more about Maine FFA or to connect with Emily please Contact Emily.doughty@maine.gov or call at 207-592-0314.

FROM EMILY DOUGHTY NATURAL RESOURCE SPECIALIST & FFA LIAISON

The **Maine FFA** (formerly Future Farmers of America) has provided thousands of students with opportunities to develop as leaders, explore their interests in agriculture and natural resources, and make meaningful impact in their schools and communities. The organization is driven by the National FFA mission and strives to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. Maine FFA is led by student officers who play key roles in leading workshops, communicating with stakeholders, planning state conventions and more. Maine FFA has over 300 members with chapters located throughout the state in middle and high schools including Career and Technical Education. The Maine FFA Association, Maine FFA Alumni, and Officer Team are gearing up for this year's State Convention on May 9-10, 2024 at University of Maine in Orono. This year's theme is Home Grown which celebrates years of community engagement and honors our state's agricultural heritage.

Connect with Us: We are eager to partner with organizations, industry professionals, and individuals to expand opportunities in agriculture. Contact us: [Maine FFA Association](#), [Facebook](#), [Maine FFA Alumni](#), email Emily.



MEET OUR FARMERS - FARMSTANDS



“A farm stand, or produce stand is a temporary structure where agricultural products such as raw vegetables, fruits, herbs, flowers, plants, nuts, honey and eggs are sold. Farm stands may also offer a gathering space for consumers to engage directly with farm and food business vendors that grow, prepare, and sell their food and agricultural products.” If you are interested in meeting a local farmer or visiting a farm stand close to where you live, search mainefarmersmarkets.org - specifically farms and farm stands. Many stands are listed by county, alphabetically, with a brief description of their produce for sale. Some Maine farm stands are small and homemade. Some stands started with one product - pumpkins or potatoes - but have branched out to other items such as dried beans, squash and corn stalks. Some stands are generational where customers have come to know and count on the excellent quality of what is offered - like honey, donuts or apples - where others are

newcomers offering homemade bath salts and sugar scrubs next to their duck eggs and flowers. A unique aspect of many of these farm stands is the trust the farmers have in their consumer. Money boxes can be found attached to the wall anticipating that shoppers are honest and will pay as they should. The farm stands pictured here are from Turner (Ricker Hill Orchard), Durham (Old Crow Ranch) Warren (Beth’s Farm Market), Mapleton (James’ Pumpkin Stand), Bridgewater (Ethan Bradstreet), Mercer (Carly Cooper) and Fryeburg (Weston’s Farm Market).

The final focus on our Maine farmers will be in our November-December issue. Farmers are busy year round, and when it is holiday time, many farmers diversify to sell cider, Christmas trees, homemade fudge, maple syrup and so much more. We will be highlighting Meet Our Holiday Farmers.









 OLD CROW RANCH
FARM STORE →
Local Meats.
Maine Products & Other Shenanigans

CROW'S NEST
TINY HOUSE

OLD CROW RANCH

FARM STORE
BEEF
CHICKEN
PORK
oldcrowranch.com

FARM STORE HOURS
Wednesday 2-5
Thursday 12-4
Friday 2-6
Saturday 12-4
Or By Appointment
oldcrowranch.com

DAYBREAK GROWERS ALLIANCE
FARM BOX
Pick Up Here Year Round
www.DaybreakGrowersAlliance.com
MAINE GROWN LOCAL & ORGANIC FOODS DELIVERED YEAR ROUND



KAYLA'S KORNER

Hello from the road! I have successfully tackled my first two months on the job, two moves, and eleven of the fifteen fairs that have taken place! I want to say thank you. Every person my family and I have encountered over the last two months has been kind, welcoming, and helpful. We are settling into our lives here nicely! By the time you read this, our son Johnny will have started pre-K4, and we will be just two months away from Lucille turning two!

Now for a fair update. As you all know, I am from



Ohio, and Maine fairs work very differently from Ohio fairs, but it has been so exciting to see how each fair works and the value each brings to the agriculture industry. You will hear me use this quote often, but E.M. Tiffany wrote the FFA Creed; the opening line is, “I believe in the future of agriculture...”. If you have never read this creed, google it! I believe in the future of agriculture in Maine and across the U.S. I would not have packed up my family and moved 1000 miles if I didn't; I believe that I have been brought in to help each of the individual organizations with that.

2024 will be the year for me to just take in the fairs. I don't want to make massive changes, but I can tell you some will come down the pike. Fair presidents, secretaries, and treasurers, please watch your emails.

As I said in my introduction in July, I am incredibly honored and excited to be in this position, and I look forward to working closely with each of you. My proverbial door is open: feedback, heartburn, questions, and concerns; as I have said many times, I know I can't fix all the problems, but I will try to help in any way possible.

I have a few goals as I move forward in this position, and I look forward to sharing them with you over the next few months.

1. Operating within statute—It has come to my attention that statute has been adjusted, veered off from, or outdated itself...however you want to look at it. Because these things have happened over time, we are, in some cases, outside of statute, so we want to bring those up to date and get everyone on the same page over the next couple of years.

2. Youth – however you look at youth, whether it is 4-H/FFA youth livestock exhibition or other organizations. My goal is to make them more front-facing within the realm of agriculture. I want to see more livestock exhibitions allowing youth to compete more within their general age group as a youth show/4H show (again, I don't care how you define it) and then allowing for “open” or “senior” fair events that are open to anyone no matter the age. I want to see more youth exhibits. I want to know how to get them more involved in each fair. I know there are some challenges with working with the organizations mentioned above, but there are ways that we can work together.

I will continue to wrap up these notes with my contact information so that it is always out there. Please use it! Good luck to those of you who have fairs yet to come. Kayla Jones, Agriculture Promotional Coordinator, Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, kayla.jones@maine.gov, Direct Line 207.592.2126

IMPORTANT DATES

IAFE NATIONAL CONVENTION - Phoenix, Arizona! December 1-4, 2024

IAFE ZONE 1 CONFERENCE - Concord, NH, May 1-4, 2025. Cohosted by Maine and New Hampshire



2024 FAIR DATES THE REST OF THE SEASON

Windsor Fair - August 24th-September 2nd
 Blue Hill Fair - August 29th- September 2nd
 Harmony Free Fair - August 30th- September 2nd
 Clinton Lions Agricultural Fair - September 5th-8th
 Litchfield Fair - September 6th-8th
 Oxford Fair - September 11th-14th
 New Portland Lions Fair - September 13th-15th
 Farmington Fair - September 15th-21st
 Common Ground Country Fair - September 20th-22nd
 Cumberland Fair - September 22nd-28th
 Fryeburg Fair - September 29th-October 6th

MEET OUR FARMERS CONTEST

For 2024, “Meet Our Farmers” will introduce your fairgoers to the next step in our Ag Education Challenge. We have brought the agriculture of Maine with “Maine GROWS” - sharing both familiar and unfamiliar produce across our state. In 2023, through "Maine On My Plate," we expanded what is grown and where to find it, how to use it and how many options are available year round, for more ag information - cookbooks, 4-H, Internet, UMO.



“Meet Our Farmer” brings the “stars” of the Maine ag scene. Who grows our food, who markets it and who knows the most about Maine agriculture? Our Maine farmers. Seasonally, our maple farmers are front and center in the spring, while the pumpkins are

harvested and displayed at our fall farm stands. Invite your local farmers to visit your fairgrounds and share their history, their successes and struggles - consider designing a Meet Our Farmers logo for your fair to direct fairgoers to all the farmers who will answer questions and share information. Use the MDACF donated video monitors from the past to show commodity videos of Maine farmers - potatoes, blueberries, Gulf of Maine fisheries, etc. Don't have them? I can direct you to where to get these! Collaborate with local schools to create a "Foxfire" type project and interview farmers. Have fun with this year's Ag Challenge - **MEET OUR FARMERS CONTEST 2024!**

Category 1 – Agricultural experiences designed for children. These experiences will include information, demonstrations, and appropriate hands on activities which introduce children to Maine foods on their plates.

Category 2 - Agricultural experiences for ALL fairgoers that educate fairgoers about Maine's vibrant and diverse food scene. This can be a one day program or ongoing throughout your fair.

Division 1: Fairs operating for four concurrent days or less.

Division 2: Fairs operating for five concurrent days or more.

FMI - **Junia Norris**

MAINE 2024 FAIR PHOTOGRAPHY & FAIR POSTER CONTEST

Introducing two new opportunities for Maine fairs to share the uniqueness of their programs.

Category #1: Promotional/Advertising Poster

Description: Annual campaign/theme poster, entertainment line-up poster, promotional poster. Maximum of two posters per fair



Judging criteria:

Overall achievement - left to judges' discretion (50 points)

Representation of the fair (25 points)

Indicative of Creative Excellence (25 points)

Posters may be submitted at any time during the summer fair season; Deadline for acceptance: October 12, 2024; Send posters to: MAAF, Box 3, Union, Maine 04862 or hand carry to Erik Fitch or Junia Norris.

Category #2: Best Fair Photo - Single Photo

Description: A photo that shows an informative, interesting or unique scene from your fair.

Captions are required (limit of 30 words per photo).

Maximum of 3 photos per fair.

Judging criteria:

Originality and creativity (50 points)

General appearance (30 points)

Caption (20 points)

Entries may be submitted in black and white or color. All photos must be submitted in a digital format. There will be one (1) color winner and one (1) black and white winner.

Photographs may be submitted at any time during the summer fair season; deadline for submitting: October 12, 2024; Email photographs to: **junianorris@gmail.com**

FMI: Contact **Erik Fitch**

A BIT OF FAIR HISTORY DOVER-FOXCROFT FIRE DEPARTMENT MUSEUM

As you visit Maine's many agricultural fairs, there are a wide variety of museums tucked away on their fairgrounds. Some reflect the history of the fair while others are focused on the history of the community. Some are focused on a single theme - like blueberries or fire apparatus. Some remind us about our history as a farming community with horse and ox drawn machinery while others are set up with small buildings to visit that focus on one aspect of rural life.

Piscataquis-Valley Agricultural Fair
Dover - Foxcroft Fire Department Museum

In 1848 the townspeople of Foxcroft Village chartered the Foxcroft Village Fire Company. And shortly thereafter met at the Court house for the "purpose of considering the expediency of procuring a FIRE ENGINE " and voted that they are "willing that our property shall be taxed in an equitable manner to procure a Fire Engine". Time passed, Dover citizens were asked to join and the fire department expanded to become the Dover-Foxcroft Fire Department. In 1850 it was voted" to purchase an engine from Hanneman & Company Fire Engines at the cost of \$903. This included 4 sections of suction and three hundred feet of leading hose, and the other usual apparatus.' Step into the fire museum and step back into the history of firefighting in this rural Maine community. 5 retired engines were donated/purchased from departments in the surrounding area, and using privately donated funds from local donors the fire museum was built in 2006. Many fundraising activities/drives have helped to keep this museum growing with the times, and it proudly houses the first fire truck in Piscataquis County. The museum is open by appointment by contacting: **Joe Guyotte**, 207-343-2267.





REMINDERS & DEADLINES

Please send the following info and photos to **Junia** to update the January MAAF conference displays - contact info and photos for Demo derby, Mud Runs, Rock Crawl and Woodsmen's Day/Lumberjack Roundup events.

Please contact **Liz Chaisson** ASAP if you are the contact for your fair for information on the Fair Queens and Princesses Sunday morning breakfast at the January conference.

We will be updating displays for the **2025 MAAF Conference**. Please email **Erik Fitch** three pictures representing your fair this season to be compiled for our annual "showcasing of fairs" held during the banquet.

January 24-26 - 2025 **MAAF** Annual Meeting - MAAF Conference deadline registration and hotel reservation info will be forthcoming.

Meet Our Farmers contest applications - deadline October 20th.

Photograph and Poster contests - deadline October 20th.

Rising Star application from fairs - deadline January 1st.

All of these applications can be found on the MAAF website.

HARNESS RACING RETURNS TO THE HISTORIC TRACK IN PEMBROKE

Under beautiful sunny skies, once again, the historic track in Pembroke felt the hoofbeats of Standardbred race horses. As a part of the Washington County fair schedule this year, horses and drivers made the trip Downeast to present a demonstration of Maine harness racing. Kori and Dan Deslandes, traveling east from Bangor, brought Fade To Gold and Mr. Fantasy to join the group. From the south came Jeffrey Ramsdell of Pine Bush, New York, and his brother Joshua Ramsdell from Bellingham, Massachusetts to showcase Downeast Spirit and Downeast Foxy Lady, the horses owned and trained by their father, James Ramsdell. Joining this group, from Sidney, Maine, was David Crochere who rounded out the group, and drove his own horse, Always A Gentleman. The fair served drivers and owners a delicious DownEast lunch to show their appreciation for their time and effort in sharing this

sport with the fairgoers from Washington County. Thank you to all involved in this special event!



CARE ACT SUPPORT GROWS TO 66 MEMBERS

CARNIVALS ARE REAL ENTERTAINMENT & RIDE ACTS
CARE ACT HR 1787
RIDE ACT S4040
CONTACT YOUR CONGRESSMAN
The CARE & Ride acts would help solve the labor crisis in the carnival industry. [Learn More](#)

The goal of 100 Members of Congress is within reach. HR 1787 is the labor salvation for our carnival and concessions industry. We must continue the outreach to our Congressional representatives to gather as much support as possible in the next month. If you have not made the call yet, please do so today. If you reached out and your congressmen have not signed on yet, follow up

with their office again. Many members of Congress are visiting fairs this time of year. Find out when they will be attending the event you are at and speak to them about HR 1787.

The political breakdown of our co-sponsors is Republicans-38 and Democrats-28. This is a good bi-partisan balance. Our top 5 states are: Michigan-8, Florida-5, Indiana-5, New Jersey-5 and California-3. To view the entire list, and to see if your Congressman is a co-sponsor, click [here](#).

CARE Act/RIDE Act Resources:
[Advocacy Guide](#)

If you do not know who your Member of Congress is, visit the “find your representative” website by clicking [here](#). This website will provide you with the name and contact information of your representative.

WE NEED EVERY CARNIVAL, FOOD & GAME CONCESSION, MANUFACTURER AND

SUPPLIER, TO REACH OUR GOAL! PLEASE MAKE YOUR CALL TO CONGRESS TODAY.
If you need any help, call Greg Chiecko at 407-848-8010.

General Membership Government Relations Update

Date: Wednesday, September 4, 2024

Time: 3PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 848 3551 9502 Passcode: 064965

One tap mobile:

+16468769923,,84835519502#,,,,*064965# US (New York)

+16469313860,,84835519502#,,,,*064965# US

OFFICERS & BOARD OF MAAF FOUNDATION

The MAAF Foundation board members met with the MAAF executive director on August 27, 2024 to share their recent progress and plans for the future. Among the agenda items were the creation of a new MAAF Foundation website and the expanded amounts available for high school scholarships. High school scholarships have been increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000, and, depending on funding revenues, there may be more than two scholarships awarded. Said revenues are also available for potential grants that would allow people to attend the Zone 1 Conference in May of 2025 and upcoming IAFE programs. Barry Norris explained the sports wagering legislation, the disbursement consideration to other Maine organizations, and how the funding for the MAAF will be dispersed. In the November-December MAAF Newsletter there will be more news from the Foundation board.



*Back row standing (l-r) Julie Smith-Board Member, Tom Foster-Treasurer,
Peter Connell-Board Member, Sadee Mehuren-Board Member.
Seated (l-r) Hope Ricker-President & Sarah Perkins-Secretary*

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