



PAUL R. LePAGE

GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
1 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0001

## A Message from Governor Paul R. LePage

Maine agriculture's importance to our heritage, identity and economy cannot be overstated. Maine farmers provide wholesome foods and generate thousands of jobs. Along with producers, processors and distributors, they have an even greater potential to help feed Maine, the region, and the growing world population. My administration, through the efforts of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and other state agencies, continues to work toward realizing Maine's full potential.

This is an exciting time for Maine-made products and Maine agriculture. Maine has over 8,174 farms, with over \$740 million in farm receipts. That figure does not even include direct sales at farms or farmers markets. Agricultural enterprises large and small are all part of this positive trend.

The dedicated professionals of our Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry are working every day to market, invest in and promote Maine agriculture at home and beyond our borders. That includes providing more support for a growing beef/livestock industry, the Farmer Veteran Coalition of Maine and Food Export USA - Northeast. Many of these initiatives will be on display at the Agricultural Trades Show along with the men and women ready to assist job creators with new ventures to capitalize on the growing interest and desire for Maine's agricultural products.

On this 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Maine Agricultural Trades Show, I thank all those associated with Maine agriculture for their many contributions and continued commitment toward a prosperous future.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage  
Governor

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## Commissioner's Welcome

STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY  
22 STATE HOUSE STATION

WALTER E. WHITCOMB

COMMISSIONER

The 75<sup>th</sup> Maine Agricultural Trade Show is as much a showcase for new Maine agricultural opportunities as it is multiple workshops that address the challenges faced by Maine farmers. This annual gathering of farmers, and friends who enjoy the many aspects of farming, is the midwinter morale booster, a little like poring through the latest seed catalog and planning next summer's crop in cold January.

Governor LePage notes in his message supporting agriculture that this 75th Maine Agricultural Trades Show has several new program highlights. Special events include an announcement of the expansion of the Farmer/Veteran Coalition efforts to provide farming skills for returning veterans, market access seminars for Maine food interests entering the world export markets, instructions for growing beef production and processing, pesticide safety classes geared toward protecting pollinators, a farmers market in the Augusta Civic Center for vendors to show their wares to food buyers and dozens of other meetings to advance the output of Maine farms and the return to Maine farmers.

Our rural community has long recognized agriculture's contribution to the Maine economy. Hopeful that the recent rediscovery of the significance of locally produced food is more than a fad in trendy suburban lifestyles, Maine agricultural producers small and large are rapidly learning to maximize consumer interest.

The Maine Agricultural Trades Show tradition of focusing on innovation is this year featuring methods to improve social and conventional media outreach as a critical piece in the toolbox needed to grow Maine farms. Documenting to customers the sustainability of Maine farming practices and agriculture's key role in the health and long term viability of the state's natural resources can further build markets and community support.

We invite anyone interested in agriculture to the Augusta Civic Center, January 12-14, 2016. There will be opportunities to meet friends in the farming community, make new connections, purchase Maine-grown products, and learn about Maine's thriving agriculture, all under one roof! Admission is free.

See you there,

Walter E. Whitcomb

Commissioner

Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry