

HOUSE No. 3551

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Nine

An Act establishing a special commission on community farming..

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. There is hereby established a special commission to consist of 15 members
2 to bring all stakeholders of the community farming system together to review the ways in which
3 aid and support can be provided to community farming initiatives within the Commonwealth.
4 The special commission shall consist of the following members; the commissioner of the
5 department of agricultural resources, or his designee, the commissioner of the department of
6 public health, or his designee, and 13 persons to be appointed by the governor, one of whom
7 shall be a representative from the Agriculture and Landscape program at the University of
8 Massachusetts extension, one of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Public
9 Health Association, one of whom shall be a representative of the Food Project, one of whom
10 shall be a representative of the Massachusetts chapter of the Northeast Organic Farming
11 Association, one of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Fruit and Vegetable
12 Nutrition Council, one of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Farm to School
13 Project, one of whom shall be a representative of Massachusetts 4-H, one of whom shall be a
14 representative of the New England Small Farm Institute, one of whom shall be a representative

15 of the Massachusetts Association of Dairy Farmers, one of whom shall be a representative of the
16 Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, and two of which shall be community farmers from the
17 Commonwealth. The special commission shall be chaired by the commissioner of the
18 department of agricultural resources, or his designee.

19 The purpose of this commission shall be to make recommendations regarding action steps
20 to promote community farming, enhance the state's agricultural economy, improve the health of
21 the citizens of Massachusetts by promoting fresh and locally-produced food and expanding their
22 availability through community farms, promote environmental sustainability in the food system,
23 help protect farmland and encourage the growth of community farming. In undertaking its
24 review, the special commission shall examine among such areas it deems necessary, the
25 following: informing and educating lawmakers and the public about the state food system,
26 coordinating and integrating the public agencies involved in food policy, such as agriculture,
27 public health, environment, transportation, and community development, linking farmers with
28 consumers, institutions and businesses, and identifying and supporting new approaches for
29 preserving farmland and supporting the next generation of farmers.

30 The special commission shall submit a report within 12 months of the passage of this act
31 to the joint committee on environment, natural resources and agriculture, and the house and
32 senate committees on way and means.