

## **Model Ordinance to Adopt an Agricultural Commission**

**Town of (Name of municipality)  
An Ordinance Establishing  
The (Name of Municipality) Agriculture Commission**

**ESTABLISHED:** By Ordinance adopted (date of adoption of ordinance).

**CHARGE/DUTIES:** The Agriculture Commission shall be an advisory board with the following charges and duties:

### **General**

- a. To foster sustainable agriculture in (name of municipality).
- b. To serve as a conduit between local farmers and non-profit agencies, civic organizations, municipal boards and commissions, elected officials, and non-farm residents.
- c. To advocate for agriculture before land use commissions.
- d. To act as a resource for agricultural information.

### **Education and Outreach**

- a. To increase awareness of agricultural enterprises in the community.
- b. To provide information to town government about agricultural laws and legal issues and to review regulatory language and practices among town agencies and, if appropriate, recommend changes to help assure a consistent definition and treatment of agriculture, farming and farms.
- c. To promote the value of agriculture viability in the areas of employment, property taxes, environment and open space preservation.
- d. To act as a sounding board and provide review to town departments, boards, commissions, and the town planner concerning the impact of proposed town policies on agricultural activities.
- e. To encourage young and new farmers by supporting local, regional, and state vocational agricultural education and 4-H programs.
- f. To recognize and support new farming operations and farms.
- g. To serve in an advisory capacity to residents, established town committees, commissions and departments, and boards related to agricultural issues.

### **Economic Opportunities**

- a. To identify opportunities to preserve and expand agriculture in (name of municipality).
- b. To promote opportunities for residents and local businesses to support farming.
- c. To provide information regarding available financial support related to agricultural viability and serve as a conduit between state and non-profit agencies, funders and local farmers.

*(Over)*

## 2 Agricultural Commissions – Model Ordinance *(continued)*

- d. To support efforts to secure the land base necessary for future agricultural uses.
- e. To foster, with the support of residents, boards, commissions, and the town planner, a climate that supports the economic viability of farming as a career in (name of municipality).

**MEMBERSHIP:** The Agriculture Commission will consist of 5 members, recommended to the Board of Selectmen by an ad hoc committee of groups and persons with interest and involvement in the viability, sustainability, and protection of agriculture as defined by Connecticut General Statutes 1-1(q) and 19a-341, including as available, a member of FFA. The failure of a voting member to attend four (4) consecutive meetings of the commission may constitute cause for the Agricultural Commission to recommend removal of the member and fill the position thus vacated from a list of residents recommended to the Board of Selectmen by the Agricultural Commission. The members of the Commission, at their first meeting and annually thereafter, shall elect from among themselves a chair, vice chair and a secretary. They shall establish and from time to time reestablish a regular schedule of meetings. They may adopt rules for the conduct of their business.

**LENGTH OF TERM:** Staggered 4-year terms, with initial appointments to be 2 members for 4 years and 3 members for 2 years. Members of the Commission shall serve without pay.

*Modeled from town of Oxford Agricultural Commission Ordinance*