

"NO SPRAY" AGREEMENTS

by Jacki Perkins, Organic Dairy Specialist, Ag Services

As the weather gets warmer and a farmer's busiest season approaches, MOFGA urges its producers not to neglect any last minute updates to their records. One important facet may be acquiring any contracts with the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) or Central Maine Power (CMP) to ensure that work crews maintain proper distances and buffers to organic operations in their management strategies.

Mr. Robert Moosman, Statewide Vegetation Manager, spoke at this past January's agricultural trade show about MDOT policy surrounding their management practices, and availability to contract Cooperative Vegetative Management Agreements and acquire appropriate signage. One common myth surrounding these agreements with MDOT is that once signed, they do not expire. **This is not the case – management agreements need to**

be renewed every three years! For more information on whether your property is at risk of being sprayed, and what your responsibilities are, contact Robert Moosman at robert.moosmann@maine.gov or contact a MOFGA Ag Services representative, who can guide you through the process.

MOFGA's Ag Services has also been in contact with Central Maine Power, as their herbicide application schedule and no-spray agreements differ from that of MDOT. As a policy, the crews that CMP contracts with do not spray **obvious** agricultural areas. Their main focus is any hardwood and softwood trees that will, in time, interfere with their power lines. Any agreements made with them require that the landowner cut and remove anything 10 feet tall or less within the power line right of way. **For CMP, once the agreement is made, it remains in place**

until terminated, unless the landowner is found delinquent. If a landowner fails to uphold their end of the "No-Spray" agreement, they have 90 days in which to rectify the situation before the agreement is canceled.

That being said, every situation is different, and an organic landowner with power lines on their property needs to be in contact with CMP to best determine what kind of agreement they need, and what their responsibilities are. For information, and to start the application process, contact **Nicholas Hahn** by email at Nicholas.Hahn@cmpco.com or by phone at (207) 621-3942.

We at MOFGA hope you have a stress free spring, and are here to help when you need us. Feel free to contact anyone at Ag Services with your questions.

Cooperative Vegetative Management Agreement aka "No-Spray" Agreement QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Ask...

Is your property:

Along a state roadway?
Along a railway?

.....

Under power lines?

.....

Any of the above, as well as
bordering a neighbor?

.....

Contact the appropriate entity:

State roadways and railways are maintained by the Department of Transportation (DOT)

Power lines are maintained by the service provider; i.e., Central Maine Power Co (CMP)

If any sprayed land adjoins a separate landowner, contact them for their information.

Be sure to understand and uphold your obligations as the landowner entering into this agreement

- Remember to renew your contracts on time
- Maintain the area in accordance with your agreement
- Make timely updates to any changes

Every entity has a different spray schedule and protocol. Keeping it straight can be a challenge, so be sure to contact MOFGA's Ag Services and/or MOFGA Certification Services with any questions or problems.



To enter into a Cooperative Vegetative Management Agreement with the Maine Department of Transportation, contact Robert Moosman by email at: robert.moosmann@maine.gov. To tailor an individual "No-Spray" agreement with Central Maine Power, contact Nicholas Hahn by email at Nicholas.Hahn@cmpco.com or by phone at (207)621-3942.