

ARTICLE 89

**URBAN AGRICULTURE**  
(Article inserted on Month Day, Year)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 89-1	Statement of Purpose	1
Section 89-2	Definitions	1
Section 89-3	Applicability	5
Section 89-4	Urban Farm, Ground Level	6
Section 89-5	Urban Farm, Roof Level	9
Section 89-6	Comprehensive Farm Review	11
Section 89-7	Soil Safety	18
Section 89-8	Composting	18
Section 89-9	Accessory Keeping of Hens	20
Section 89-10	Accessory Keeping of Honey Bees	23
Section 89-11	Aquaculture, Aquaponics, Hydroponics, and Freight Containers	26
Section 89-12	Farmers Markets and Farm Stands	29
Section 89-13	Abandonment	30
Section 89-14	Regulations	30
Section 89-15	Severability	30
Appendix A	Zoning Districts and Subdistricts Corresponding to General Zoning Categories Referred to in Article 89	31

SECTION 89-1. **Statement of Purpose.** The purpose of this Article is to establish zoning regulations for the operation of Urban Agriculture activities and to provide standards for the siting, design, maintenance and modification of Urban Agriculture activities that address public safety, and minimize impacts on residents and historic resources in the City of Boston.

SECTION 89-2. **Definitions.** The words and phrases used in this Article, whether or not capitalized, shall have the meanings set forth in Article 2A, except as set forth in this Section 89-2 or as otherwise specified in this Article. For the purposes of this Article, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings indicated:

1. “Aquaculture,” means the cultivation of aquatic animals in a recirculating environment to produce whole fish that are distributed to retailers, restaurants and consumers.
2. “Aquaponics,” means the cultivation of fish and plants together in a constructed, re-circulating system utilizing natural bacterial cycles to convert fish wastes to plant nutrients, for distribution to retailers, restaurants and consumers.
3. “Beekeeper,” means a person or persons managing and maintaining Honey Bees in a Hive or Hives.
4. “Chick,” means a chicken under the age of fourteen (14) weeks.
5. “Coldframe,” means a temporary, unheated outdoor structure, no higher than thirty-six (36”) inches, used for protecting seedlings and plants from the cold. Coldframes may be erected for up to 6 months during any given calendar year.
6. “Colony,” means a natural group of Honey Bees having a queen or queens.
7. “Composting,” means a process of accelerated biodegradation and stabilization of organic material under controlled conditions yielding a product which can safely be used as fertilizer.
8. “Comprehensive Farm Review,” means an evaluation by the Urban Design staff of the Boston Redevelopment Authority for the overall design and siting of an Urban Farm and Farm Structures. Activities defined as Urban Agriculture must conform to the Zoning Code, specifically this Article 89, in all other respects, and must be processed and approved by the Inspectional Services Department for the City of Boston.

9. “Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA),” means any agricultural technology that enables the grower to manipulate the environment to desired growing and /or cultivation conditions.
10. “Coop,” means an enclosed shelter in which a chicken lives.
11. “Farm Area,” means the area of a Lot designated for activities and uses defined as Urban Agriculture.
12. “Farmers’ Market,” means a public market administered by a market manager and held multiple times per year to connect and mutually benefit Local farmers, communities and shoppers. Vendors may include Local farmers, farmers’ cooperatives and producers selling any of the following: whole produce; value-added agricultural products such as jams, jellies, and pickles; prepared food; all agricultural, horticultural and aquacultural products including but not limited to whole produce; plants; flowers; meats; dairy products; shellfish and finfish; and other food-related products.
13. “Farm Stand,” means a Farm Structure such as a table, stall or tent, in use during that Urban Farm’s growing season, and operated by a sole vendor for the sale of agricultural or horticultural products.
14. “Farm Structures,” means those structures that may include but are not limited to sheds (tool and packing), compost bins, shade pavilions, Farm Stands, trellises or other vertical supports for growing crops, and structures used to extend the growing season such as Greenhouses, Hoophouses, Coldframes, Freight Containers, and similar structures.
15. “Freight Container,” means a standardized reusable steel box previously used for the storage and movement of materials and products within an intermodal freight transport system and repurposed for a Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) use, such as Hydroponics and/or Aquaponics.
16. “Greenhouse,” means a permanent structure made of glass, plastic, or fiberglass in which plants are cultivated year round under controlled temperature and humidity settings.
17. “Ground Level Urban Farm,” means the use of a Lot on the ground plane for Urban Agriculture for commercial purposes, whether for profit or non profit.
18. “Hen,” means a mature egg-laying female chicken.

19. “Hive,” means a manufactured receptacle or container prepared for the use of Honey Bees that includes movable frames, combs and substances deposited into the Hives by Honey Bees.
20. “Honey Bee,” means a subset of bees in the genus Apis, primarily distinguished by the production and storage of honey and the construction of perennial, colonial nests out of wax.
21. “Hoophouse,” means an outdoor structure made of flexible PVC piping or other material covered with translucent plastic, constructed in a “half-round” or “hoop” shape, generally tall enough for a person to enter standing up.
22. “Hydroponics,” means the propagation of plants using a mechanical system designed to circulate a solution of minerals in water, for distribution to retailers, restaurants and consumers.
23. “Local”, means from Massachusetts, New England States and New York State.
24. “Open Air Rooftop Farm,” means an unenclosed area of a rooftop that is used for Urban Agriculture for commercial purposes, whether for profit or non profit.
25. “Pullet,” means a Hen under the age of one (1) year.
26. “Raised Bed,” means a method of cultivation in which soil is placed over a geotextile barrier, and raised and formed into three (3) to four (4) foot wide mounds. The soil may be enclosed by a frame generally made of untreated wood. Raised beds are not considered a Structure.
27. “Roof Level Urban Farm,” means the use of a roof for Urban Agriculture for commercial purposes, whether for profit or non profit.
28. “Rooftop Greenhouse,” means a permanent structure located on a roof made of glass, plastic, or fiberglass in which plants are cultivated year round.
29. “Run,” means an outdoor enclosure generally made of wire mesh.
30. “Urban Agriculture,” means the use of a Lot for the cultivation of food and/or horticultural crops, Composting, Aquaponics, Aquaculture and/or Hydroponics. Such use may include the Accessory Keeping of Animals or Bees where Allowed by Underlying Zoning.

31. “Urban Farm, Ground Level, Large,” means a Ground Level Urban Farm with a Farm Area greater than one (1) acre that is used for Urban Agriculture for commercial purposes, whether for profit or non profit.
32. “Urban Farm, Ground Level, Medium,” means a Ground Level Urban Farm with a Farm Area greater than or equal to ten-thousand (10,000) square feet but no greater than one (1) acre that is used for Urban Agriculture for commercial purposes, whether for profit or non profit.
33. “Urban Farm, Ground Level, Small,” means a Ground Level Urban Farm with a Farm Area less than ten-thousand (10,000) square feet that is used for Urban Agriculture for commercial purposes, whether for profit or non profit.
34. “Urban Farm, Roof Level, Large,” means a Roof Level Urban Farm with a Farm Area greater than one (1) acre that is used for Urban Agriculture for commercial purposes, whether for profit or non profit.
35. “Urban Farm, Roof Level, Medium,” means a Roof Level Urban Farm with a Farm Area greater than or equal to five-thousand (5,000) square feet but no greater than one (1) acre that is used for Urban Agriculture for commercial purposes, whether for profit or non profit.
36. “Urban Farm, Roof Level, Small,” means a Roof Level Urban Farm with a Farm Area less than five-thousand (5,000) square feet that is used for Urban Agriculture for commercial purposes, whether for profit or non profit.
37. “Vertical Agriculture,” means an exterior building wall or other vertical structure designed to support the growing of agricultural or horticultural crops.

SECTION 89-3. **Applicability.** No Urban Agriculture activity shall be conducted, or Farm Structure erected, except in compliance with the provisions of this Article. The provisions of this Article apply to all Urban Agriculture activities, whether such activity is a primary use or an Accessory Use or subuse; provided, however, that the provisions of this Article shall not apply to any of the following:

1. Any Urban Agriculture activity for which appeal to the Board of Appeal for any Zoning Relief has been made prior to the first notice of hearing before the Zoning Commission for adoption of this Article, and provided that such Zoning Relief has been or is thereafter granted by the Board of Appeal pursuant to such appeal; or
2. Any Urban Agriculture activity conducted or Farm Structure erected pursuant to a building permit issued prior to the first notice of hearing before the Zoning Commission for adoption of this Article.

Notwithstanding the above, any replacement of either such Urban Agriculture activity or Farm Structure described in Sections 89-3.1 and 89-3.2 with another Urban Agriculture activity or Farm Structure must comply with all the requirements of this Article.

Exceptions to the provisions of this Article, pursuant to Article 6A, shall not be available except to the extent expressly provided in this Article or Article 6A.

**SECTION 89-4. Urban Farm, Ground Level.**

1. Urban Farm, Ground Level.

ZONING	USE REGULATIONS: URBAN FARM, GROUND LEVEL		
	Small (less than 10,000 sf)	Medium (10,000 sf - 1 acre)	Large (greater than 1 acre)
<b>Residential</b> (i.e., 1F, 2F, MFR)	Allowed	Allowed	Conditional Use
<b>Commercial</b> (i.e., L, LC, NS, B, CC, EDA)	Allowed	Allowed	Conditional Use
<b>Industrial</b> (i.e., I, M, LI)	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Institutional</b> (i.e., IS, NI, CF)	Allowed	Allowed	Conditional Use

\*See Appendix A for all Zoning Districts and Subdistricts corresponding to these generalized zoning categories

(a) Use Regulations. The primary activity to be performed on an Urban Farm shall be the cultivation of plants and horticultural crops; other activities may be subject to permitting.

i. Urban Farm, Ground Level, Small.

Small Ground Level Urban Farms are Allowed in all Districts and Subdistricts.

ii. Urban Farm, Ground Level, Medium.

Medium Ground Level Urban Farms are Allowed in all Districts and Subdistricts.

iii. Urban Farm, Ground Level, Large.

Large Ground Level Urban Farms are Allowed in all Industrial Districts and Subdistricts. Large Ground Level Urban Farms are Conditional in all other Districts and Subdistricts.

(b) Maximum Height of Farm Structures. Farm Structures, including but not limited to Hoophouses, sheds and shade pavilions, shall be subject to the applicable height limits in the Underlying Zoning.

- (c) Setbacks for Farm Structures.
  - i. Subject to Article 10 (Accessory Uses), all Farm Structures shall be set back five (5) feet from all property lines in all Districts and Subdistricts.
  
- (d) Design Review. The following Farm Structures on an existing and/or expanded Ground Level Urban Farm are subject to the Design Component of Small Project Review pursuant to subsection (b) (iv) of Section 80E-2.1 of the Boston Zoning Code (Design Review Required by Underlying Zoning):
  - i. Any proposed Freight Container in any District or Subdistrict except Industrial; and
  - ii. Any proposed Farm Structure greater than 300 square feet located on an existing Ground Level Urban Farm or proposed Ground Level Urban Farm not undergoing Comprehensive Farm Review (See Section 89-6), and located in a Neighborhood Design Overlay District; and
  - iii. For all other Districts and Subdistricts not within a Neighborhood Design Overlay District, any proposed Farm Structure greater than 750 square feet located on an existing Ground Level Urban Farm or proposed Ground Level Urban Farm not undergoing Comprehensive Farm Review (See Section 89-6).
  
- (e) Signage. The following regulations shall apply to signage used for Urban Farms:
  - i. Types of Signage:
    - a. All Ground Level Urban Farms shall be required to post one (1) identification sign, not exceeding six (6) square feet in total area, attached at a height of no more than four (4) feet high to a structure or fence stating only the name of the Ground Level Urban Farm and contact information.



- b. One (1) temporary sign shall be Allowed for a Farm Stand and may be displayed during sales hours but must be removed from the premises and stored inside a structure when the Farm Stand is not in operation. Temporary Farm Stand signs shall not encroach upon sidewalks, driveways and / or other rights of way, and shall be displayed so as not to create a nuisance or hazard.
- ii. Sign Design Review.
- a. Urban Farms subject to Comprehensive Farm Review (See Section 89-6) shall provide, as part of their CFR submittal, a signage plan showing proposed signage and related architectural features on the sign frontage (See Section 89-6.5(a)v).
  - b. Urban Farms not subject to Comprehensive Farm Review (See Section 89-6) and exceeding the requirements of Section 89-4.1(e)i.a shall be subject to Article 11 of the Boston Zoning Code, or, alternatively, shall submit plans for signs under the Comprehensive Sign Design provisions of Article 80, Section III-80E-2 of the Boston Zoning Code.

**SECTION 89-5. Urban Farm, Roof Level.**

USE REGULATIONS: URBAN FARM, ROOF LEVEL AND ROOFTOP GREENHOUSE				
ZONING	Open Air			Rooftop Greenhouse
	Small (less than 5,000 sf)	Medium (5,000 sf - 1 acre)	Large (greater than 1 acre)	Any Size
<b>Residential</b> (i.e., 1F, 2F, MFR)	Allowed	Conditional Use	Conditional Use	Conditional Use
<b>Small-scale Commercial</b> (i.e., L, LC, MFR/LS)	Allowed	Conditional Use	Conditional Use	Conditional Use
<b>Large-scale Commercial</b> (i.e., NS, B, CC, EDA)	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Industrial</b> (i.e., I, M, LI)	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Institutional</b> (i.e., IS, NI, CF)	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed

\*See Appendix A for all Zoning Districts and Subdistricts corresponding to these generalized zoning categories

1. Rooftop Greenhouse.
  - (a) Use Regulations. The primary activity to be performed on an Urban Farm shall be the cultivation of plants; other activities may be subject to permitting.
    - i. Rooftop Greenhouses are Allowed in all Large-scale Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional Districts and Subdistricts.
    - ii. Rooftop Greenhouses are Conditional in all other Districts and Subdistricts.
  - (b) Maximum Height. Rooftop Greenhouses shall be no higher than twenty-five (25) feet from the roof surface.
2. Urban Farm, Roof Level.
  - (a) Use Regulations. The primary activity to be performed on an Urban Farm, or within a Farm Structure, shall be the cultivation of plants; other activities may be subject to permitting.
    - i. Urban Farm, Roof Level, Small.  
  
Small Roof Level Urban Farms are Allowed in all Districts and Subdistricts.

ii. Urban Farm, Roof Level, Medium.

Medium Roof Level Urban Farms are Allowed in Large-scale Commercial, Industrial and Institutional Districts and Subdistricts. Medium Roof Level Urban Farms are Conditional in all other Districts and Subdistricts.

iii. Urban Farm, Roof Level, Large.

Large Roof Level Urban Farms are Allowed in Large-scale Commercial, Industrial and Institutional Districts and Subdistricts. Large Roof Level Urban Farms are Conditional in all other Districts and Subdistricts.

- (b) Maximum Height of Farm Structures. Farm Structures, including but not limited to Hoophouses, sheds and shade pavilions, shall be subject to the applicable height limits in the Underlying Zoning except for Rooftop Greenhouses (See Section 89-5.1(b)).
- (c) Design Review. The following Farm Structures on an existing and/or expanded Roof Level Urban Farm are subject to the Design Component of Small Project Review pursuant to subsection (b) (iv) of Section 80E-2.1 of the Boston Zoning Code (Design Review Required by Underlying Zoning):
- i. Any proposed Farm Structure that is visible from a public street or public open space in any District or Subdistrict, other than Industrial which does not abut a Residential District or Subdistrict.

**SECTION 89-6. Comprehensive Farm Review.**

1. Purpose of Comprehensive Farm Review. The purpose of the Comprehensive Farm Review (“CFR”) requirement of this Section 89-6 is to ensure that Urban Farms, subject to Comprehensive Farm Review, and Farm Structures are sited and designed in a manner that is sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood. In addition, any Urban Agriculture activities that are designed as part of a new building, including but not limited to Rooftop Agriculture, should be integrated into the overall design and architecture of the new building through Comprehensive Farm Review.
  
2. Applicability of Comprehensive Farm Review. Comprehensive Farm Review shall be required for the following:
  - (a) Any Proposed Ground Level or Roof Level Urban Farm, or Rooftop Greenhouse, as set forth in the following tables:

USE REGULATIONS AND CFR REQUIREMENT			
URBAN FARM, GROUND LEVEL			
ZONING	Small (less than 10,000 sf)	Medium (10,000 sf - 1 acre)	Large (greater than 1 acre)
<b>Residential</b> (i.e., 1F, 2F, MFR)	Allowed/ No CFR <sup>2</sup>	Allowed / CFR	Conditional Use
<b>Commercial</b> (i.e., L, LC, NS, B, CC, EDA)	Allowed/ No CFR <sup>2</sup>	Allowed / CFR	Conditional Use
<b>Industrial</b> (i.e., I, M, LI)	Allowed/ No CFR <sup>1,2</sup>	Allowed/ No CFR <sup>1,2</sup>	Allowed / CFR
<b>Institutional</b> (i.e., IS, NI, CF)	Allowed/ No CFR <sup>2</sup>	Allowed / CFR	Conditional Use

<sup>1</sup> Exception: Any Ground Level Urban Farm in any Industrial (without residential uses) Subdistrict where the property abuts a Residential Subdistrict

<sup>2</sup> Exception: Any Ground Level Urban Farm in a Neighborhood Design Overlay District (NDOD) or Greenbelt Protection Overlay District (GPOD)

USE REGULATIONS AND CFR REQUIREMENT				
ZONING	URBAN FARM, ROOF LEVEL			Rooftop Greenhouse
	Small (less than 5,000 sf)	Medium (5,000 sf - 1 acre)	Large (greater than 1 acre)	Any Size
<b>Residential</b> (i.e., 1F, 2F, MFR)	Allowed / No CFR <sup>2,3</sup>	Conditional Use	Conditional Use	Conditional Use
<b>Small-scale Commercial</b> (i.e., L, LC, MFR/LS)	Allowed / No CFR <sup>2,3</sup>	Conditional Use	Conditional Use	Conditional Use
<b>Large-scale Commercial</b> (i.e., NS, B, CC, EDA)	Allowed / No CFR <sup>2,3</sup>	Allowed / CFR	Allowed / CFR	Allowed / CFR
<b>Industrial</b> (i.e., I, M, LI)	Allowed / No CFR <sup>1,2,3</sup>	Allowed / No CFR <sup>1,2,3</sup>	Allowed / CFR	Allowed / CFR
<b>Institutional</b> (i.e., IS, NI, CF)	Allowed / No CFR <sup>2,3</sup>	Allowed / No CFR <sup>2,3</sup>	Allowed / CFR	Allowed / CFR

<sup>1</sup> Exception: Any Roof Level Urban Farm in any Industrial (without residential uses) Subdistrict where the property abuts a Residential Subdistrict

<sup>2</sup> Exception: Any Roof Level Urban Farm in any Subdistrict that contains a Farm Structure visible from a public street or public open space

<sup>3</sup> Exception: Any Roof Level Urban Farm in a Neighborhood Design Overlay District (NDOD) or Greenbelt Protection Overlay District (GPOD)

(b) Any existing Ground Level Urban Farm greater than 10,000 sf that proposes to expand the land area devoted to Urban Agriculture by thirty (30%) percent or more; and

(c) Any existing Roof Level Urban Farm greater 5,000 sf that proposes to expand the roof area used for Urban Agriculture activities by thirty (30%) percent or more.

3. Abutter Notification. In connection with Comprehensive Farm Review, the Boston Redevelopment Authority shall notify Abutters, the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services, the relevant neighborhood group or association (if applicable), and the relevant District City Councilor within five (5) days of its receipt of all final materials required under such review for all Ground Level and Roof Level Urban Farms and Rooftop Greenhouses listed in Section 89-6.2. A fourteen (14) day public comment period concerning the Ground Level Urban Farm, Roof Level Urban Farm and/or Rooftop Greenhouse shall commence upon the issuance of this notice. As long as all information required for a Complete Application is received, Boston Redevelopment Authority approval of Comprehensive Farm Review shall take no longer than forty five days (45) days. Upon completion and approval of Comprehensive Farm Review, the Boston Redevelopment Authority shall submit its approval to the Inspectional Services Department.

4. Boston Landmarks Commission Review. Any proposed Ground Level or Roof Level Urban Farm or Rooftop Greenhouse in a Neighborhood Design Overlay District is subject to review by the Boston Landmarks Commission, as set forth in this Section 89-6.4. Within five (5) days of its receipt of the application, the Boston Redevelopment Authority shall transmit a copy of the application to the Boston Landmarks Commission for its review. The Boston Landmarks Commission may, within thirty (30) days after its receipt of the application, file with the Boston Redevelopment Authority a report with recommendations, together with maps, plans, and other materials to aid the Boston Redevelopment Authority in determining consistency with the design requirements and guidelines set forth in Section 89-6.6 (Design Guidelines) and Section 89-6.7 (Design Requirements) of this article. The Boston Redevelopment Authority shall not transmit its findings to the Inspectional Services Department until the Boston Redevelopment Authority has received and considered the Boston Landmarks Commission report with recommendations, provided that if the Boston Redevelopment Authority has not received such report within thirty (30) days, it may transmit the Director's certification to the Inspectional Services Department without such report.
  
5. Information Required to be a Complete Application for Comprehensive Farm Review.
  - (a) The information required for Comprehensive Farm Review shall include:
    - i. At minimum, a sketch plan showing planted areas, footprints for all Farm Structures, driveways, parking areas, and landscape buffers; and
    - ii. At minimum, a sketch drawing for Farm Structures; and
    - iii. Photographs of existing site and adjacent properties to provide site context; and
    - iv. Proposed plans for irrigation, and controls for storm water runoff as required by Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC); and

- v. Proposed signage plan showing proposed signage and related architectural features on the sign frontage (See Section 89-4.1(e)).
  - (b) Such submission materials shall describe or illustrate the dimensions, location and appearance of:
    - i. All Proposed Urban Agriculture activities, materials used, screening, fencing, landscaping, and the like, in a manner that is sensitive to the surrounding area; and
    - ii. Any existing buildings which will remain along with the Proposed Urban Agriculture activities, if applicable, and any Farm Structures within the visible context of such activity.
- 6. Design Guidelines. This subsection establishes the following design guidelines for all Proposed Urban Farms subject to Comprehensive Farm Review.
  - (a) Site Plan.
    - i. Site planning, including location of Farm Structures, vehicular access, and parking areas, should be designed to enhance the street frontage and surrounding buildings and spaces. In addition, Placement of Farm Structures should respect significant landscape features on the site, such as rock outcroppings, drainage areas, and mature trees.
    - ii. Vehicular access and egress to and from an Urban Farm should minimize traffic impacts on the adjacent roadways and provide safe visual access for drivers and pedestrians.
    - iii. Composting, equipment storage, and disposal areas should not be located in the front setback, unless there are special circumstances that make it necessary. While a driveway may be Allowed in the front setback, the parking zone shall only be permitted within the side or rear setbacks of the property.

- a. Composting which is accessory to an Urban Farm shall be used primarily to support onsite operations, and shall comprise no more than seven and a half (7 ½) percent of the Lot area (See Section 89-8.1(e)).

(b) Structures.

- i. New Farm Structures should be compatible with the size, scale and material of the surrounding built and natural environment.

(c) Perimeter Fencing.

- i. Any perimeter fencing for Ground Level Urban Farms may be made of one or more materials, such as masonry (piers or walls), metal pickets, decorative metal, post and rail, wrought iron, shadow box, vinyl coated chain link, or board-type wood. The use of un-coated metal chain link fencing is discouraged. The use of plywood sheeting also is discouraged. Two or more materials may be used in combination with each other, and piers and walls may be used in combination with fences.

(d) Screening.

i. Walls and Fences.

Screening walls and fences may be made of one or more materials, such as masonry (piers or walls), decorative metal, shadow box, or board-type wood. The use of un-coated metal chain link fencing is discouraged. The use of plywood sheeting also is discouraged. Two or more materials may be used in combination with each other, and piers and walls may be used in combination with fences.

ii. Landscape Screening.

Street-facing landscape elements, such as fencing, street trees, plantings and signage, should be compatible with the surrounding



architecture and environment provided pursuant to this Section 89-6 may be all deciduous or all evergreen, or a mixture of both types. Shrubs shall be densely planted. Trees required by this Section 89-6 may be evergreen or a combination of deciduous and evergreen, and of a sufficient size to provide adequate screening. Existing mature trees and shrubs shall be maintained unless this is not possible.

(e) Lighting.

- i. Lighting for Ground Level Urban Farms, Roof Level Urban Farms, and Rooftop Greenhouses should be limited to that required for operational and safety purposes of any activity defined as Urban Agriculture so as not to create a nuisance through excessive brightness to abutting residential uses. For Ground Level Urban Farms, Roof Level Urban Farms and Rooftop Greenhouses abutting residential uses, Applicant shall supply a lighting schedule and plans to mitigate fugitive light.

(f) Materials.

- i. For Greenhouses, at least seventy percent (70%) of all roofs and walls should consist of transparent materials.
- ii. For Hoopouses, materials should consist of flexible PVC or metal tubing and transparent or translucent plastic covering. Hoopouses shall be secured to the ground.

7. Design Requirements. This subsection establishes the following design requirements for Proposed Urban Farms subject to Comprehensive Farm Review.

(a) Screening and Buffering.

- i. Any Composting, loading or disposal areas that abut (a) a public street, (b) a public park, (c) a Residential District or Subdistrict or Residential

Use shall be screened from view as provided. Such screening can include trees, shrubs [See Section 89-6.6(d)ii], and perennial borders and/or screening walls and fences [See Section 89-6.6(d)i]. Any fencing shall not be less than fifty (50%) percent opaque and shall be no less than three (3) feet and no more than six (6) feet high.

- ii. Any material or equipment stored outdoors shall be surrounded by a wall or fence or vegetative screen of such height, not less than six (6) feet high, as may be necessary to screen such material or equipment from view from any public street or public open space.

(b) Maintenance.

- i. All Urban Farms required to comply with this Article shall be maintained exclusively for the activities defined as Urban Agriculture so long as a use requiring them exists.
- ii. Urban Farms shall be used in such a manner in which at no time shall they constitute a nuisance or a hazard to the surrounding neighborhood. Urban Farms shall be maintained in a healthy growing condition, especially in the off-season.
- iii. There shall be no parking of vehicles or equipment between a fence, hedge or other landscape screening and the public way, such as the street or sidewalk. Inside storage of any materials, supplies, or products is preferred.

SECTION 89-7. **Soil Safety.**

- i. All new Urban Farms using soil will be required to comply with the Soil Safety Protocol issued by the Boston Public Health Commission.

SECTION 89-8. **Composting.**

1. Accessory Composting.

- (a) Use Regulations. Accessory Composting shall be Allowed where any Ground Level Urban Farm, Roof Level Urban Farm is permitted.
- (b) State Requirements. Accessory Composting on an Urban Farm is subject to regulation by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) under 330 CMR 25.00, Agricultural Composting Program.
- (c) Maximum Height.
  - i. Maximum height of Composting structures or bins shall not exceed ten (10) feet for Ground Level and Roof Level Urban Farms in any District or Subdistrict.
  - ii. On a Roof Level Urban Farm, any Composting must be contained within an enclosed bin that does not have direct contact with flammable materials.
- (d) Setbacks.
  - i. Subject to Article 10 (Accessory Uses), compost bins, structures and windrows shall be set back five (5) feet from all property lines on Ground Level Urban Farms in all Districts and Subdistricts.
  - ii. Compost bins, structures and windrows shall not be located in the front yard or in a side yard that abuts a street in all residential and commercial Districts and Subdistricts.

- (e) Lot Coverage.
    - i. Composting which is accessory to an Urban Farm shall be used primarily to support onsite operations, and shall comprise no more than seven and a half (7 ½) percent of the Lot area (See Section 89-6.6(a)iii.a.
2. Composting as Primary Use.
- (a) Use Regulations.
    - i. When the primary use to be performed on a Lot is Composting, the activity shall be Conditional in all Industrial Districts and Subdistricts and Forbidden in all other Districts and Subdistricts.
  - (b) State Requirements.
    - i. Composting operations are subject to regulations administered by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) under 310 CMR 16.00.
  - (c) Setbacks.
    - i. Subject to Article 10 (Accessory Uses), compost bins, structures and windrows shall be set back five (5) feet from all property lines on Ground Level Urban Farms in all Districts and Subdistricts.
    - ii. Compost bins, structures and windrows shall not be located in the front yard or in a side yard that abuts a street in all residential and commercial Districts and Subdistricts.

## SECTION 89-9. **Accessory Keeping of Hens.**

1. Use Regulations. See Underlying Zoning for applicable use regulations.
  - (a) For all areas covered under the Base Code, see Article 8 – Use No. 76.
  - (b) For all other areas not covered under the Base Code, see Use Regulation Table in specific Article.
  - (c) Where the Accessory Keeping of Animals is a Conditional Use in the applicable Underlying Zoning, the Board of Appeal shall not grant a Conditional Use Permit for the Accessory Keeping of Hens unless the following conditions are met.
  - (d) The maximum number of adult Hens in all Districts and Subdistricts not covered under the Base Code shall be six (6) per Lot.
  - (e) The maximum number of non-egg-laying replacement Chicks or Pullets in all Districts and Subdistricts not covered under the Base Code shall be six (6) per Lot.
  - (f) Roosters are expressly Forbidden.
  - (g) The on-site slaughtering of Hens is prohibited.
2. Dimensional Regulations.
  - (a) Maximum Height.
    - i. Coop. Enclosed Coop space shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.
    - ii. Run. Runs shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.
  - (b) Size.
    - i. Coop. Coop space must allow a minimum of two (2) square feet per Hen and one (1) nest box per three (3) Hens within, and shall not exceed a maximum size of eight (8) feet by six (6) feet.

- ii. Run. Runs must allow a minimum of four (4) square feet per Hen, but in no case shall occupy more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the rear yard.

(c) Setbacks.

- i. Subject to Article 10 (Accessory Uses), Coops and Runs shall be set back five (5) feet from all property lines in all Districts and Subdistricts unless there is a solid, opaque barrier such as a wall of fence along the property line.
- ii. Coops and Runs shall not be located in the front yard or in a side yard that abuts a street in all residential and commercial Districts and Subdistricts.
- iii. Coops and Runs shall not be within a fifteen (15) foot buffer of habitable structures on adjacent properties in all residential Districts and Subdistricts unless prior permission is granted in writing by the neighboring property owner(s).

(d) Materials.

- i. All Coops shall be made of washable and sanitizable material such as fiberglass reinforced plastic.
- ii. All Runs shall have a securely built frame, preferably wooden; shall be covered in wire mesh material such as hardware cloth; and designed to be predator proof.

(e) Screening.

- i. Any portion of the Coop or Run directly visible from a street at any distance shall be screened by either a fence that is constructed to be at least sixty percent (60%) opaque or a landscaped buffer of at least four (4) feet in height.

(f) Free Ranging.

- i. Free-ranging of adult egg-laying Hens shall be supervised and is Allowed exclusively in fenced yards with consent of all residents and property owners who have legal access to the premises.

## SECTION 89-10. **Accessory Keeping of Honey Bees.**

1. Use Regulations. For proposed ground level or roof level Hives, see Underlying Zoning for applicable use regulations.
  - (a) For all areas covered under the Base Code, see Article 8 – Use No. 76.
  - (b) For all other areas not covered under the Base Code, see Use Regulation Table in specific Article.
  - (c) Where the Accessory Keeping of Animals is a Conditional Use in the applicable Underlying Zoning, the Board of Appeal shall not grant a Conditional Use Permit for the Accessory Keeping of Honey Bees unless the following conditions are met.
2. Maximum Number of Hives.
  - (a) The maximum number of Hives on any given Lot or roof for personal consumption of Honey Bee products shall be two (2).
3. Maximum Height and Size.
  - (a) No Hive shall exceed five (5) feet in height and twenty (20) cubic feet in size on any Lot or roof.
4. Specific Ground Level Beekeeping Requirements.
  - (a) Setbacks.
    - i. Where there is a wall, fence or similar barrier between the subject property and adjacent property, no setback from the property line is required. Where there is no wall, fence or similar barrier between subject property and adjacent property, Hives shall be set back five (5) feet from the property line.
    - ii. Hives shall not be located in the front yard or in a side yard that abuts a street in all residential and commercial Districts and Subdistricts.
    - iii. No Hive shall be located closer than ten (10) feet from a public sidewalk.



(b) Hive Placement and Flyways.

- i. For any ground level Hive that is within twenty (20) feet of the doors and/or windows of the principal building on an abutting Lot, either of the following conditions must exist:
  - a. The Hive opening must face away from doors and/or windows; or
  - b. A flyway of at least six (6) feet in height comprising of a lattice fence, dense hedge or similar barrier must be established in front of the opening of the Hive such that the Honey Bees fly upward and away from neighboring properties. The flyway shall be located within three (3) feet of the entrance to the Hive and shall extend at least two (2) feet in width on either side of the Hive opening.

5. Specific Rooftop Beekeeping Requirements.

(a) Setbacks.

- i. Hives shall be set back six (6) feet from the edge of the roof.

(b) Hive Placement and Flyways.

- i. For any roof level Hive that is within twenty (20) feet of the doors and/or windows of the principal building on an abutting Lot, either of the following conditions must exist:
  - a. The Hive opening must face away from doors and/or windows; or
  - b. A flyway of at least six (6) feet in height comprising of a lattice fence, dense hedge or similar barrier must be established in front of the opening of the Hive such that the Honey Bees fly upward and away from neighboring properties. The flyway shall be located

within three (3) feet of the entrance to the Hive and shall extend at least two (2) feet in width on either side of the Hive opening.

6. Compliance with State and Local Laws.

- (a) All beekeeping shall comply with applicable State and local laws and regulations.

**SECTION 89-11. Aquaculture, Aquaponics, Hydroponics, and Freight Containers.**

**1. Aquaculture and Aquaponics.**

AQUACULTURE/ AQUAPONICS	Primary	Accessory (up to 750 sf)		Accessory (>750 sf)	
	Use Regulation	Use Regulation	Exception: Freight Containers	Use Regulation	Exception: Freight Containers
<b>Industrial</b>	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Institutional</b>	Conditional	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Large-scale Commercial</b>	Conditional <sup>1</sup>	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Small-scale Commercial</b>	Conditional	Allowed	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
<b>Residential</b>	Forbidden	Allowed	Forbidden	Conditional	Forbidden

<sup>1</sup>Allowed in Waterfront Commercial

(a) Aquaculture and Aquaponics Facilities as a Primary Use.

- i. Aquaculture and Aquaponics facilities as a primary use are Allowed in Industrial Districts and Subdistricts, as well as in the following Commercial Districts and Subdistricts:

WC -Waterfront Commercial

- ii. Aquaculture and Aquaponics facilities as a primary use are Conditional in Institutional, Large-scale Commercial (Exception: WC), and Small-scale Commercial Districts and Subdistricts.
- iii. Aquaculture and Aquaponics facilities as a primary use are Forbidden in Residential Districts and Subdistricts.

(b) Aquaculture and Aquaponics Facilities Up To 750 Square Feet.

- i. Aquaculture and Aquaponics facilities up to 750 square feet are Allowed in all Districts and Subdistricts with the following exceptions:
  - a. Freight Containers of any size are Conditional in Small-scale Commercial Districts and Subdistricts.

- b. Freight Containers of any size are Forbidden in Residential Districts and Subdistricts.
- (c) Aquaculture and Aquaponics Facilities Greater Than 750 Square Feet.
  - i. Aquaculture and Aquaponics facilities greater than 750 square feet are Allowed in Industrial, Institutional, and Large-scale Commercial Districts and Subdistricts.
  - ii. Aquaculture and Aquaponics facilities greater than 750 square feet are Conditional in Small-scale Commercial and Residential Districts and Subdistricts with the following exception:
    - a. Freight Containers of any size are Forbidden in Residential Districts and Subdistricts.

2. Hydroponics.

HYDROPONICS	Primary		Accessory	
	Use Regulation	Exception: Freight Containers	Use Regulation	Exception: Freight Containers
<b>Industrial</b>	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Institutional</b>	Allowed	Conditional	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Large-scale Commercial</b>	Allowed	Conditional	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Small-scale Commercial</b>	Allowed	Conditional	Allowed	Conditional
<b>Residential</b>	Conditional	Forbidden	Allowed	Forbidden

- (a) Hydroponics Facilities as a Primary Use.
  - i. Hydroponics facilities as a primary use are Allowed in all Industrial, Institutional, Large-scale Commercial, and Small-scale Commercial Districts and Subdistricts with the following exception:
    - a. Freight Containers of any size as a primary use are Conditional in Institutional, Large-Scale Commercial, and Small-scale Commercial Districts and Subdistricts.

- ii. Hydroponics facilities as a primary use are Conditional in Residential Districts and Subdistricts with the following exception:
      - a. Freight Containers of any size are Forbidden in all Residential Districts and Subdistricts.
  - (b) Hydroponics Facilities as an Accessory Use.
    - i. Hydroponics facilities as an Accessory use are Allowed in all Districts and Subdistricts with the following exceptions:
      - a. Freight Containers of any size are Conditional in Small-scale Commercial Districts and Subdistricts.
      - b. Freight Containers of any size are Forbidden in Residential Districts and Subdistricts.
- 3. Applicability with Federal and State Regulations. Applicant must comply with applicable federal and State regulations for water use and discharge, and for the possession, propagation, culture, sale and disposition of living marine organisms.
- 4. Design Review. Except when part of an Urban Farm subject to Comprehensive Farm Review as per Section 89-6.2, any of the following types of Aquaculture, Aquaponics or Hydroponics facilities shall be subject to the Design Component of Small Project Review pursuant to subsection (b) (iv) of Section 80E-2.1 of the Boston Zoning Code (Design Review Required by Underlying Zoning):
  - (a) Any proposed Freight Container of any size in any District or Subdistrict except Industrial; and
  - (b) Any proposed Aquaculture, Aquaponics or Hydroponics facility greater than 300 square feet, in a Neighborhood Design Overlay District; and
  - (c) Any proposed Aquaculture, Aquaponics or Hydroponics facility greater than 750 square feet in any District or Subdistrict that is not located in a Neighborhood Design Overlay District.

SECTION 89-12. **Farmers Markets and Farm Stands.**

1. Farmers Markets.
  - (a) Use Regulations. Farmers Markets shall be subject to the following use regulations:
    - i. Farmers Markets on a Lot or Lots are Allowed where Retail is Allowed by the applicable Underlying Zoning.
    - ii. Farmers Markets on a Lot or Lots are Conditional where Retail is not Allowed by the applicable Underlying Zoning.
  - (b) Permitting Requirements.
    - i. The operation of a Farmers Market requires a permit from the City of Boston's Inspectional Services Department – Division of Health Inspections.
2. Farm Stands. Up to one (1) Farm Stand may be constructed given the following regulations:
  - (a) Use Regulations.
    - i. Accessory Farm Stands selling and/or distributing only horticultural and agricultural products are Allowed where Urban Farms are Allowed [See Section 89-4.1(a)] provided that a single stand does not exceed two-hundred (200) square feet in total floor area.
    - ii. Accessory Farm Stands are Conditional in all other Districts and Subdistricts where Retail is not Allowed by the applicable Underlying Zoning.
  - (b) Placement and Safety.
    - i. Accessory Farm Stands shall not encroach upon sidewalks, driveways and / or other rights of way, and shall be erected so as not to create a nuisance or a hazard.

SECTION 89-13. **Abandonment.**

1. Removal Requirements. Any Small Urban Farm, Medium Urban Farm or Large Urban Farm which has been abandoned shall be cleared and restored to its original state. The owner/operator shall physically remove all Farm Structures no more than one hundred and eighty (180) days after the date of discontinued operations. More specifically, site clearing shall consist of:
  - (a) Physical removal of all Farm Structures, farm equipment and machinery;
  - (b) Disposal of all Composting and agricultural waste in accordance with local and state waste disposal regulations; and
  - (c) Stabilization of re-vegetation of the site as necessary to minimize erosion. The Inspectional Services Department may allow the owner to leave landscaping in order to minimize erosion and disruption to vegetation.
  
2. Abandonment. The former Small Ground Level or Roof Level Urban Farm, Medium Ground Level or Roof Level Urban Farm, Large Ground Level or Roof Level Urban Farm site shall be considered abandoned when it fails to operate for more than one year without the written consent of the Inspectional Services Department. The Inspectional Services Department shall determine what proportion of the site is inoperable for the facility to be considered abandoned. If the applicant fails to remove the Farm Structures, farm equipment and machinery in accordance with the requirements of this Section within one hundred and eight (180) days of abandonment, the Inspectional Services Department shall have the authority to enter the property and conduct all removal activities.

SECTION 89-14. **Regulations.** The Boston Redevelopment Authority may promulgate regulations to administer this Article.

SECTION 89-15. **Severability.** The provisions of this Article are severable, and if any provision of this Article shall be held invalid by any decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not impair or otherwise affect any other provision of this Article.

**Appendix A: Zoning Districts and Subdistricts Corresponding to General Zoning Categories Referred to in Article 89**

<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>		<b>COMMERCIAL</b>		<b>INDUSTRIAL</b>	<b>INSTITUTIONAL</b>
<b>53 districts</b>		<b>Large-scale 9 districts</b>	<b>Small-scale 22 districts</b>	<b>17 districts</b>	<b>5 districts</b>
1F - 3000	3F - G - 4000	CC	LC	IDA	CF
1F - 4000	3F - G - 5000	CC-1	LC-.5	LI	CUF
1F - 5000	3F - G - 6000	CC-2	LC-1	LI-1	IS
1F - 6000	3F - D - 2000	EP	NS	LI-1 (7)	NI
1F - 7000	3F - D - 3000	CE	NS-.5	LI-2	WCF
1F - 8000	3F - D - 4000	EDA	NS-1	LI-2 (1)	
1F - 9000	R-.5*	EDA (3)	NS-2	M-1*	
S-.3*	R-.8*	NDA	NS-3	M-2*	
S-.5*	MFR	WC	L-.5*	M-4*	
2F	MFR-1		L-1*	M-8*	
2F - 2000	MFR-2		L-2*	I-2*	
2F - 3000	MFR-3		B-1*	MER	
2F - 4000	MFR/LS		B-2*	MER-2*	
2F - 5000	MFR/LS-2		B-3-65*	WM	
2F - 5000(A)	MFR/LS-3		B-4*	W-2*	
2F - 6000	H-1-40*		B-6-90a*	LIA	
2F - 7000	H-1-50*		B-6-90b*	WS	
2F - 9000	H-1*		B-8-120a*		
3F - 2000	H-2*		B-8-120b*		
3F - 3000	H-3-65*		B-8-120c*		
3F - 4000	H-3*		B-8*		
3F - 5000	H-4*		B-10*		
3F - 6000	H-5*				
3F - 7000	RH				
3F - G - 2000	RH-1500				
3F - G - 3000	RH-2000				
CPS	WR				

\* indicates Base Code District