

2024 Annual Report



Introduction

Dear Friends of Community Harvest Project,

As we reflect on 2024, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible community that makes our mission possible. Thanks to our volunteers, partners, and donors, this past year was one of growth, resilience, and impact. Together, we have continued to strengthen our efforts to provide local produce to those experiencing food insecurity across Massachusetts.

In our 22nd year of farming, we built upon the strong foundation laid in previous years. With our newly acquired Grafton headquarters and the preservation of our orchard in Harvard, we secured the future of our agricultural nonprofit. Additionally, we have made significant infrastructure upgrades to extend our growing season. These milestones ensure that Community Harvest Project will continue to serve our community for generations to come.

In 2024, we were honored to welcome 6,339 volunteers, who contributed 17,711 hours of their time to plant, tend, and harvest. Thanks to their hard work, we distributed 188,501 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables—equivalent to 1,131,613 servings—through our 26 partner agencies to individuals and families experiencing hunger. These numbers are a testament to the power of collaboration and the unwavering commitment of our supporters.

We also took important steps to address the growing need for nutritious food in our region. By extending our growing season and implementing sustainable farming practices, we increased both the variety and consistency of our harvests. At the same time, we deepened our engagement efforts, ensuring that every volunteer experience provided not only an opportunity to serve but also to learn about food insecurity in Massachusetts and ways to take action.

The challenges of food insecurity remain significant, but so does our resolve. As we look to the future, we are committed to expanding our impact and strengthening our partnerships. Going forward, we will continue to innovate so that no one in our community goes without access to fresh, local food.

To our donors, volunteers, and community members—thank you. Your generosity and dedication are the roots that sustain our mission. We look forward to growing together in 2025 and beyond.

With gratitude,

Tori Buerschaper Kristin Bafaro Executive Director Board President

Board of Directors

Kristin Bafaro, President
Laura Coughlin, Vice President
Jeannie Hebert, 2nd Vice President
Bob Paulsen, Treasurer
Neil Petersen, Clerk
Melanie Gnazzo
Jodi Koeman
Kate LaChapelle
Fatima Oseida
Bob Paulsen
Scott Rogers

Staff

Tori Buerschaper, Executive Director
Alicia Cianciola, Grant Writer
Douglas Connolly, Communications VISTA
Dave Johnson, Manager of Farm Operations
Kelly Johnson, Community Engagement Assistant
Edith Marie Gillespie, Farm Coordinator
Michael Graves, Orchard Coordinator
Wayne McAuliffe, Manager of Volunteer Programs
Bradford Millar, Volunteer Coordinator
Evan Owen, Equipment Operator
Meghan Person, Development Manager
Sandi Wilichowski, Office Adminstrator

Mission and Vision

Vision: CHP envisions connected communities ensuring access to healthy food for all. **Mission:** CHP engages and educates volunteers to grow fruits and vegetables for local hunger relief.

Values

Respect: We believe in the inherent value of all people and will be respectful, honest, and open.

Healthy Nutrition: People should have access to healthy food, and ensuring access is a community responsibility.

Inclusivity: We provide a welcoming and engaging environment for all to work together.

Environmental Sustainability: We use sustainable practices to protect our natural resources.

Education and Advocacy: Awareness of hunger and its impact on health is critical to achieving the change we seek.

Community: We invest locally and invite the community to invest in CHP as volunteers, funders, and partners in our work.



Food Security Infrastructure Grants

In 2023, we received a Food Security Infrastructure Grant from the state to complete two season extension projects: a high tunnel in Grafton and permanent cold storage in Harvard, both of which were completed in 2024. The high tunnel provides a more controlled environment for growing crops in all weather and the cold storage units, combined with in-box atmospheric controls, give us a permanent space to store harvested crops.

These projects have successfully extended the seasonal availability of our produce beyond October 31. In November 2024 we offered nine varieties of produce—apples, beets, bok choy, carrots, collard greens, garlic, onions, acorn squash, and butternut squash. This compares to just four varieties in each of our two previous seasons. Additionally, our new cold storage units in Harvard enabled us to hold and distribute apples through December 10! This date was nearly a month later than our final distribution date in 2023.

Growing the Rainbow

We cultivate a diverse range of crops that align with our climate, farming methods, and distribution model. Each season, our distribution partners provide survey feedback on the most and least popular produce among their clients, along with ongoing input throughout the distribution period. Our farm team carefully evaluates this information to shape a farm plan that ensures steady production, nutritional diversity, and culturally relevant offerings. We prioritize crop varieties that thrive under our growing practices and hold up well during transport, maintaining quality from our fields to the communities we serve.



2024 Crops

Apples Cabbage
Asparagus Carrots
Beans Cauliflower
Beets Celery
Blueberries Collards
Bok Choi Cucumbers
Broccoli Eggplant

Garlic Herbs Kale Leeks Lettuce Onions Peas Peaches
Peppers
Summer Squash
Swiss Chard
Tomatoes
Winter Squash
Zucchini

Our 2024 Impact

188,501 Pounds Distributed
1,131,613 Servings
60,089 Individuals Served
26 Distribution Partners

Why Fresh Produce?

"Vegetables and fruit are luxuries." - Worcester Community Food Assessment Participant We are committed to supplying fresh fruits and vegetables to the hunger relief network. Food insecurity is recognized as a key social determinant of health [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services] and has been linked to higher rates of obesity, chronic illnesses, developmental challenges in children, and negative impacts on mental health. While fresh produce is essential to a nutritious diet, it is often costly and inaccessible to many. Relying on emergency food services shouldn't mean compromising on the quality of your diet.

Working Together

We operate using a business-to-business food distribution model, collaborating with 26 hunger-relief agencies across central and eastern Massachusetts. Our goal is to ensure that the fresh fruits and vegetables we grow reach our neighbors facing food insecurity. We work closely with the listed nonprofit organizations to distribute our produce.

Partner Highlight – Jeremiah's Inn



Jeremiah's Inn is a residential rehabilitation center, recovery home, nutrition center, and food pantry in Worcester. Jeremiah's Inn serves over 22,000 individuals through their nutrition center annually, and has a 25% higher residential program completion rate than the statewide average. Residents of Jeremiah's Inn volunteer with us as part of their treatment plan, helping to pick, wash, and sort the produce which is then donated to the rest of their community.

"My goal was to ensure that I always had some sort of fresh produce to offer to my pantry guests ... in the last year, with the help of CHP and with the help of a couple other partners, we've been able to increase our intake and distribution by about 530% of produce and fresh fruits and veggies."

- Erin Quaiel, Jeremiah's Inn Nutrition Center Coordinator

"It is hard to have a plant based diet, nevermind as someone who doesn't have a lot of money. When I first visited Jeremiah's Inn I was welcomed with a table overflowing with fresh produce and some of the most beautiful cherry tomatoes I have ever seen....I'm not sure I can ever eat a cherry tomato from the grocery store after eating the delicious ones from CHP!"

- Deb, Jeremiah's Inn Pantry Client

Food Banks/

Distribution Partners

Large aggregators and distributors of food that supply our produce to smaller agencies.

- Boston Area Gleaners (Acton)
- Greater Boston Food Bank (Boston)
- Worcester County Food Bank (Shrewsbury)
- Spoonfuls (Worcester route)

Pantries and Community Meals

Local emergency food services that are open to the public.

- Acton Community Supper and Food Pantry (Acton)
- Stone Soup Community Kitchen (Ayer)
- Sharing is Caring (Clinton)
- Clear Path for Veterans (Devens)
- Loaves and Fishes (Devens)
- Grafton Food Bank (Grafton)
- Vineyard Church of Hopkinton Mobile Pantry (Hopkinton)
- Catholic Charities* (Leominster)
- Brigid's* (Millbury)
- Townsend Ecumenical Outreach (Townsend)
- United Parish Upton (Upton)
- CENTRO* (Worcester)
- Jeremiah's Inn* (Worcester)
- Revival Church Fountain of Life* (Worcester)
- Woo Fridge (Worcester)

Residential Programs

Supported housing programs that are closed to the public.

- Hector Reyes House (Worcester)
- Visitation House (Worcester)
- YOU Inc. Teen Parent Supported Living Program – (Worcester)

Food as Medicine

Partnerships with health centers and medically tailored meal programs.

- Community Servings (Boston)
- The Virginia Thurston Healing Garden Cancer Support Center (Harvard)
- Family Health Center of Worcester (Worcester)
- UMASS Memorial Health Benedict Family Medicine (Worcester)

*Starred organizations represent Worcester County Food Bank partner agencies who receive direct produce distributions from CHP.

Volunteers & Team Leaders

Our volunteer program has the benefit of having long roots on our farms now that we have permanency with the recent purchase of our Grafton farm and the protection of our Harvard orchard. This is a transformative time for Community Harvest Project as the legacy of our founding families continues to guide our mission and work. Continuing with the simple act of volunteering to benefit others is a welcome addition within our communities and a great way to invest time in the people around you. Planting tiny seeds ultimately results in hundreds of thousands of pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables that are donated from our farms annually to those seeking hunger relief services throughout central and eastern Massachusetts. Each hour invested by our volunteers is an example of the power of coming together and investing in individuals who need our support more than ever.

Volunteerism guides our work and we strive to provide an exceptional experience for anyone visiting our farms. We offer a unique model of volunteerism, where some individuals visit one day a year while others contribute hundreds of hours annually. The level of commitment is left up to the individual, so as to allow them complete flexibility. Our farms are a great place to get outside, actively volunteer and engage with a diverse community attracted to our work. People of all ages and abilities are invited to participate in our operation. Our well trained and inspiring group of Volunteer Team Leaders, Special Pruning Crew, Tuesday Crews and Drop In Volunteers contribute their time to assist in running our farms. All of this effort shows the power of community supporting community. Thus, volunteering on our farms gives one an experience that benefits a broader community through our donations of fresh fruits and vegetables.





We are always interested in speaking with new groups and individuals about getting involved in our work. Know of an organization that could benefit from a volunteer experience on our farms? Thinking of getting involved but want to learn more? Visit our website to learn more!

2024 Crater Award for Service Leadership Honoree Scott Rogers

In honor of Ken Crater, our founder, we award an annual Award for Service Leadership to one volunteer who exemplifies our key values and has made a significant contribution to our work. The recipient for our 2024 Season is **Team Leader and Board Member**, **Scott Rogers**. Scott has been involved with CHP for 13 seasons and has guided us with his IT expertise, served on committees, is a current board member and continues to lead groups on our farms. He is an inspiring leader, great contributor, passionate about our mission and is a booster of all that CHP undertakes - regularly speaking about our work and inviting others to get involved.

"In the Summer of 2012, my dedication to community volunteerism was cemented by a random match to Community Harvest Project. Looking back, I recognize the genius in the name, for the guiding principle is indeed community. CHP provides the place, the time and the motivation for anyone and everyone to give what they can towards a fundamental human need. My awareness has expanded from underground to the treetops, from local town to Federal programs, from a single drop-in one day to organizations that volunteer year after year. I am proud to be part of this community and look forward for many years to come."





6,339 Volunteers
17,711 volunteer hours
31 Team Leaders
10 Interns
Specialty crews - pruning,
greenhouse, Tuesday
(Grafton/Harvard), Wash station

Interns

Each year we host interns both in the office and on the farm to support our operations. They assist with critical functions like fundraising and communications, as well as our volunteer and agriculture programs. We aim to expose students to all aspects of our non-profit operations, as well as other organizations in the food security and farming sectors to prepare them for future work and volunteer opportunities.

Board and Committee members

CHP is grateful to have dedicated volunteers who serve on our board and committees. These positions guide and support our staff in governance, finance, fundraising, operations, and programs. They also ensure the organization has the resources it needs to fulfill its mission. If you would like to contribute your time and talents outside the fields, please contact Executive Director Tori Buerschaper (tori@community-harvest.org).

Development

Here at Community Harvest Project, we believe that connected communities can transform lives by ensuring that all people have access to healthy, locally grown food. In 2024, our partnerships with individuals, foundations, corporations, schools, and civic groups have been more than just collaborations—they've been a powerful force driving change.

Whether through financial contributions, volunteering, or advocating for our mission, donors allow us to grow, harvest, and distribute thousands of pounds of produce to our neighbors in need.

As we look back on a year of growth and impact, we're reminded that it takes a community to create lasting change. Thanks to our dedicated donors, we are not just addressing hunger—we are cultivating a healthier future, one harvest at a time.



Harvest Home Festival & 5K

Our annual Harvest Home Festival & 5K once again brought the community together to celebrate the end of a bountiful season. Families and friends gathered to enjoy a lively 5K and kids fun run, delicious food, live music, pumpkin trebuchets, apple cannons, hay rides, and a variety of family-friendly activities—all in support of our mission. Thanks to the enthusiasm and generosity of our attendees and sponsors, we raised over \$54,000 to continue providing healthy produce to those facing food insecurity.

The spirit of community thrives at our Grafton farm and Harvard orchard, where local businesses and supporters play a vital role in sustaining our hunger relief efforts.



Adopt a Row & Adopt a Tree In 2024, 123 generous donors came together to raise \$21,725 for our Adopt a Row and Adopt a Tree campaigns. Their contributions helped fund seeds, irrigation, pruning tools, and everything needed to cultivate thousands of pounds of healthy, local produce. Every year, this campaign is critical to the start of our farming operations and to ensure that we are able to have a bountiful harvest later in the season.



Plantapalooza

Our annual plant sale raised more than \$24,000 in 2024! We are grateful for the hundreds of community members who purchased a variety of heirloom vegetables, specialty hot peppers, berry bushes, and flowers to support our neighbors.

Harvest Home Festival and 5K Sponsors

Harvest Sponsor
Clinical Financial Resource
Squash Sponsors

Munroe Morrow Wealth Management

Planting Partners

Charles River Laboratories Coghlin Companies Country Bank for Savings J.J. Bafaro Mechanical Contractors Koopman Lumber & Hardware **Seed Supporters:**

All One Credit Union
bankHometown
Fidelity Bank
Gaudette Insurance Agency
Homefield Credit Union
Middlesex Savings Bank
Rafferty Wholesale
Savers Bank
Tufts University
Window Logic

Neighbors:

J.F. Cove Insurance Agency In-Kind Sponsors: Atlas Distributing, Inc. Blackstone Valley Tech Sunshine Sign

Sunshine Sign Worcester Business Journal Worcester Restaurant Group

Giving Tuesday: Transform the Grafton fields with a Spider Cultivator!

Managing weeds is one of the biggest challenges we face on our farm. Weeds can take away nutrients from crops, reduce airflow, and make it difficult for volunteers and staff to work efficiently in the fields. With the help of 55 donors, we were able to raise \$9,000 to purchase a Spider Cultivator, that will transform how we manage our fields, saving us time and resources.

Thank you to the anonymous couple who are longtime donors of CHP for offering an incredible \$3,000 match for the 2024 campaign! Their support is integral to ensuring we can now manage our fields more efficiently and support our crops better each farm season.



Climate Resilience: Year End Appeal

Our 2024 Year-End Giving Campaign was a remarkable success, thanks to the generosity of over 200 donors who came together to raise an impressive \$81,058 in support of Community Harvest Project's mission.

A special thank you goes to Martha Heller and Anthony Vaver, who inspired others by offering a \$5,000 matching gift to double the impact of every donation. Their commitment to building a stronger, more resilient food system motivated many to give, and their heartfelt words resonated with our community:



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In the absence of adequate food and shelter, people cannot realize their full potential. We also know that high quality, healthy produce has a significant impact on our overall well-being. Community Harvest Project is a unique, community-driven organization that directly supplies locally-grown produce to people who otherwise would not be able to afford it. We are proud to support this effort to stamp out hunger where we live and help people take one step closer towards becoming self-actualized human beings.

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The success of this campaign is helping us invest in climate-resilient farming techniques, extend our distribution season, and continue providing nutritious produce to thousands of families across Massachusetts. Together, we are creating a community where healthy food is accessible to all.

Funding Our Farms

Monthly Givers

Caroline and Eric Alper Lori Duggan Sreelochana Mitta

Victoria Amodio Robert and Patricia Ebbeling Douglas and Stephanie Muzzy

Marykate Aung Nathaniel Eckman Jennifer O'Connor Steven Backhaus and Jay Dee Beth Farwell Damase Olsson Elizabeth Bafaro Jonathan Flood Cynthia Orejola Kristin and Joseph Bafaro Frank and Caroline Gaetano Max Orejola

Kathleen Baker Jean-Marc Gauguet Ricardo Pacheco Edward and Julie Baldwin Rachel Gerstein and Karen Eisenhauer Gloria Paradiso

Annette Berry David Gillerin Meghan and Chris Pavasaris

Lillian Berry Ann Golub-Victor Melissa Peloquin

Krista and Matthew Blome Kathleen and Michael Grim Simone Pio Clinton and Dan and Liam

Pamela and Bill BohenMarybeth HansClintonRichard and Carol BoulangerErin HatleeJessica Pizzo BrixAlyssa Brito and RubenElizabeth HerbertKristin PliakasAlexanderEmily HerzfeldMargaret PruittErnie BrooksMarie HickeyNancy Riggs

Michael and Laura Burns Samuel James Jennifer and Timothee Rodrique

Elliott and Elizabeth Calamari Cordelia A Kaminski Manuel Rodriques

Jesse Chang Alexander Keeler Scott and Mary Rogers

Steve and Norma Chanis Paul Keohane Jennifer Rudolph and Brandon Boyle

Julia Rissmiller

Kalina Cloutier Pamela Kosiba Jochen Salfeld

Margaret Hurley

Vittoria Buerschaper

Elizabeth Colognesi Paula and Anthony Krumsiek Anna Scott and Steve Chwiecko

Justin and Jen ComptonKate LachapelleDiana ScottSharon CorazziniRussell, Christine and Gregory LaporteSheila ShuteMichael and Lisa CozzolinoPaul, Elissa and James LindsayElizabeth Steele

Ken Crater and Peg Ferraro Jeffrey and Lisa Lyon Christian and Paula Sulmasy

Renee Dean Kay Malloy Jonathan Toman Andrea Dever Jeremy Martin and Natalya Atlasevich Voon Seng Lai Jeremy DiTullio Cathleen and Sam McElligott Jennifer Weyler

Roxanne Donahue John Miller Olaug and David Wheat

Darlene Dube Rev. Holly and Jonathan MillerShank Christina Zarobe

Corporate and Foundation Donors

\$50,000 and Up \$25,000 - \$49,999 \$15,000 - \$24,999

Cecile H. Murphy Charitable Hermann Foundation Inc The Fletcher Foundation

Foundation TJX Foundation, Inc. George I. Alden Trust

Fred Harris Daniels Foundation The White Companies Charitable Trust Greater Worcester Community

Ludcke Foundation Yesod Foundation, Inc. Foundation

\$25,000 - \$49,999

\$15,000 - \$24,999

Ruth H. and Warren A. Ellsworth

State of Massachusetts

National Grid

Foundation

Funding Our Farms

Corporate and Foundation Donors

\$10,000 - \$14,999

Albert W. Rice Charitable Foundation

Charles River Laboratories

Ellis "Cappy" Bateman Charitable Trust AvalonBay Communities

George F. and Sybil H. Fuller

Foundation

Hanover Insurance Group Inc.

Reliant Foundation

UniBank

Wegmans

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Ametek, Inc.

Bank of America

DELL Technologies

Esler Family Foundation

Harvard Lions Club

Hoche-Scofield Foundation

M&T Bank

The Mildred H. McEvoy Foundation

Nutrien Ag Solutions

Sonesta International

Target

\$1.000 - \$4.999

Agnes M. Lindsay Trust

Amazon

Avidia Bank

Bemis Community Fund

BJ's Wholesale Club

Blue Cross Blue Shield of

Massachusetts

Bristol Myers Squibb

Central One Federal Credit Union

Community Foundation of North

Central Massachusetts

Cornerstone Bank

Fallon Health

WCFB Fund to End Hunger

Little Leaf Farms

Massachusetts Master Gardeners

Association

MathWorks

Schwartz Charitable Foundation

Tufts University

\$100 - \$999

BlueHive

Boston Scientific

Boston Society of Marketing

Professional Services (SMPS)

Doble Engineering

GeoEngineers, Inc.

Ideagen Inc.

Insyde Software

Lake Life Yoga

Natural Resources Conservation

Services

PayPal Giving Fund

Renewal by Andersen

Robert Half

Rovi Homes

Souffle Therapeutics

Takeda Pharmaceuticals

Donations in Memory

In Memory of Phil Victor

Ann Golub-Victor

Jacquelin Grant

Sandra and Mark Mazur

Sara Jane Victor and Beth and Mike

Rabkin

Stephanie Golub-Simon

Susan Morris

In Memory of Braydan DuRee

GeoEngineering

In Memory of Bill Stuart

First Congregational Church of

Shrewsbury

In Memory of George Bender

The Daniel and Mary Reeves

In Memory of Jessica Simone

Mary Jane Simone

Foundation

In Memory of Joseph Edward "Ed" Tancrell

Cvr Lumber

Charles Paszkewicz

Conrad and Anne Ormsbee

Gail Randall

Jacqueline Stratton

Jean McMurray

Jodi Dromgoole

Mary Beth Rudd

Mary Ward

Melissa Marlin

Michael Joseph

Scott and Lois Rossiter

Susan Faneuff

In Memory of Joy and Nick Nicholson

Louisa Gebelein Jones and Jeremiah Jones



Funding our Farms

Donations in Honor

In Honor of 40th Anniversary of Meta Mitchel & Simon Fricker

Barbara Caluori Kimberly Waldbillig Ned Rich

In Honor of David Nicholson Sr.

David Nicholson Jr.

In Honor of Robb Ahlquist Margot Ahlquist

In Honor of Amandio Fernandes

Marie Pratt

In Honor of Rose Fazio's 100th bday

Martin Leroux and Sandra Trippi-Leroux

In Honor of Justyne MeyersBlue Hive

In Honor of Tori Buerschaper's 40 under 40

The Swanick Family

In Honor of Lisa Sulmasy Brynnydd Hamilton

In Honor of Donald Gregoire
Charles St. Pierre

In Honor of Louise Scott

In Honor of Jackson and Lisa Urie

Diane and David Libbey

In Honor of Mara Castello
Holly Campbell

In Honor of Bruce Tobey
Jana Droms

In Honor of Kathi and Tim Teixeira

Jennifer DeYoung

In Honor of Amos Henry Green
John Green

In Honor of Dick Dion Ken Crater and Peg Ferraro

In Honor of David and Diane Libbey

Laura Bradstreet

In Honor of Stephen Mongeau Matthew Moore

In Honor of Joseph DePalo Michael Depalo

In Honor of Nancy Hughes
John Collins

In Honor of Jantje Baker Shanell Vance

In Honor of Timothy McGovern Stephen and Maureen Snow

Community Harvest Project extends our heartfelt gratitude to the many donors who generously gave in 2024 and chose to remain anonymous. While your contributions may be quiet, their impact echoes throughout our fields and communities, helping us provide nutritious local produce to our neighbors facing hunger. Your support is felt in every harvest and seen in the lives of those we serve.



Financials

	2024
ASSETS:	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$313,379.76
Promises to give	\$37,500
Prepaid expenses	\$1,553.79
Beneficial interest in assets held by community foundation	\$1,736,261.65
Investments	\$2,689,436.84
Property and equipment, net	\$2,138,138.31
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$6,916,270.35</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$11,444.33
NET ASSETS:	
Without donor restrictions	
Undesignated	\$4,608,638.97
Designated by the Board for operating reserve	\$130,439.28
Invested in property and equipment	\$2,138,138.31
	\$6,877,213.56
With donor restrictions	\$19,358.47
Total net assets	\$6,896,575.03
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$6,885,130.70

These financials are unaudited at the time of publication in June 2025. 2023 audited financials are available at request anytime, and 2024 audited financials will be available after August 2025.



and ensures that it is able to get the most out of those who volunteer."

- CHP Volunteer

Join us for our annual events in 2025:

Plantapalooza Plant Sale - May 10 Pick Your Own Flowers - July-August Harvest Home Festival & 5K - Nov. 2 See our website for details.

Get In Touch 774-551-6544 community-harvest.org volunteer@community-harvest.org

Brigham Hill Community Farm 37 Wheeler Rd. North Grafton, MA 01536 **Prospect Hill Community Orchard** 115 Prospect Hill Rd. Harvard, MA 01451