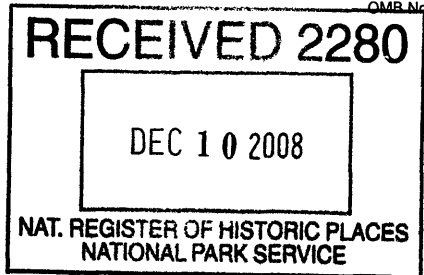


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1356



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lagassey Farm

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 786 Main Street N/A not for publication

city or town Saint Agatha N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Aroostook code 003 zip code 04772

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 11/25/08
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature] 1/26/09

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
5		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE / Agricultural outbuilding

AGRICULTURE / Storage

AGRICULTURE / Animal facility

AGRICULTURE / Agricultural field

DOMESTIC / Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE / Agricultural outbuilding

AGRICULTURE / Storage

AGRICULTURE / Agricultural field

DOMESTIC /Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER / Acadian Barn

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH C. AMERICAN MOVEMENTS

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

STONE

walls WOOD / Weatherboard

ASBESTOS

WOOD / Shingle

OTHER / Tar paper

roof ASPHALT

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance

1892 - 1958

Significant Dates

1916

1946

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Ouellette, Louis, builder

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 162 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>1</u> <u>9</u> Zone	<u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>3</u> <u>8</u> Easting	<u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>9</u> <u>2</u> <u>1</u> <u>4</u> Northing	3	<u>1</u> <u>9</u> Zone	<u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> Easting	<u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>8</u> <u>9</u> <u>8</u> <u>7</u> Northing
2	<u>1</u> <u>9</u> Zone	<u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> Easting	<u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>6</u> Northing	4	<u>1</u> <u>9</u> Zone	<u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> Easting	<u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>8</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>4</u> Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title CHRISTI A. MITCHELL, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

organization MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION date 24 July 2008

street & number 55 CAPITOL STREET, STATION 65 telephone (207) 287-2132

city or town AUGUSTA state ME zip code 04333 -0065

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

LAGASSEY FARM

AROOSTOOK COUNTY, MAINE

Section number 7 Page 2

DESCRIPTION

The Lagassey Farm faces northeast towards Route 162 (Main Street) and Long Lake in the Aroostook County town of Saint Agatha. The farm is located approximately three miles south of the Village of Saint Agatha, on the east side of the lake, along a rural stretch of road. A thin parcel of land, also in the possession of the Lagassey Family separates the road from the shores of the lake. The farm contains 162 acres, essentially oriented from northeast to southwest and stretching 1.35 miles long. (For ease of description in this nomination the farm will be described as if facing due east.) On the property are four contributing buildings, oriented roughly in a line along the road. At the north end of this line is the Lagassey House, (1946), and 140 feet to the south and slightly to the west is the Garage/Granary/Shop/Woodshed, (erected by 1916). Approximately 100 feet further south is the Barn (1916) and immediately to the west of the barn is the Shed, (built prior to 1892), which was moved to its present site in 1946. A dirt driveway approaches the south side of the house from the street, jogs south and then west, passes between the Garage/Granary/Shop/Woodshed and the Barn, and then heads southwest across the front fields, and eventually travels along the southern boundary of the property to the back fields. A farm pond is located approximately 200 feet to the west northwest of the Lagassey House.

Farm Fields and Woods. Contributing site.

The parcel tapers from an original width of approximately 1630 feet along the road to a width of approximately 900 feet at the southwestern end of the property near where it intersects the municipal boundary line between Saint Agatha and T17 R4 WELS. The 162 acre property includes a mixture of agricultural fields (approximately 91 acres) and wood lots (approximately 63.75 acres). A portion of the fields, containing approximately 47.3 acres, has been entered into a Federally sponsored crop land protection program. This program requires that these fields be bush-hogged (mowed) on a regular schedule, and although they have been protected from development, they have been removed from active agricultural production. (They are planted with a cover crop of grass.) Due to a rise in the grade (starting behind the buildings) and the visual boundary presented by the edge of the wood lots the entirety of the property cannot be viewed from one vantage point. Approximately 43 acres (including approximately 30.3 acres in crop protection) immediately surrounding the barns and house and stretching southwest from the road contains open space and form the immediate agricultural setting for the property. Two additional fields (upper field and middle field) are currently leased to local farmers. (Reference is made to the map "Lagassey Farm" for the specific locations of the fields, woodland and crop protection areas.)

Lagassey House. 1946. Contributing Building.

The Lagassey House is a rectangular, two story, stud frame building on a concrete foundation. The building measures twenty six feet long and twenty four feet wide, and has a seven foot wide porch wrapping around the south and east elevations. The ridge of the low-pitched gable roof parallels the road, and the eaves generously overhang the sidewalls of the house. Both the main roof and the hip NPS

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LAGASSEY FARM

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roof of the porch are covered in asphalt. On the gable ends at plate level is a low, narrow pent roof that extends from eave to eave - similar to a full cornice return - and is covered in asphalt shingles. The building is clad in asbestos shingles.

The east elevation is three bays wide and asymmetrically composed. Off center to the south is the wood and glass front door. The bay to the south contains a one-over-one wooden double-hung sash covered with two-over-two storm windows, while the wider bay to the north contains a pair of these windows joined within one frame. On the second floor two one-over-one double-hung sash are evenly spaced across the facade. Each of the windows on this elevation, as well as on the north and the south sides of the building, are ornamented with wooden louvered shutters. The sense of asymmetry is further emphasized by the porch, which extends seven feet past the south edge of the house, and the north end of the porch roof, which angles back at a hip to intersect the front wall under the northern second floor window. The porch has a solid balustrade clad in asbestos shingles, and topped with stout, rectangular posts set on narrow plinths and capped with trim that suggests a capital. Three steps in front of the door lead to the wooden deck of the porch; under the deck the front of the porch is enclosed with wood skirting.

The north elevation of the building has two, symmetrically distributed one-over-one windows on each floor. A metal bulkhead is positioned against the middle of the foundation and is flanked by two elongated cellar windows. The fenestration on the south elevation is arranged the same, with the addition of a four-panel and glass door positioned at the center of the wall. Another set of steps breach the porch in front of this door, and a second set is positioned at the west end of the porch. The west wall of the house contains three one-over-one windows clustered near the center of the house on the second floor. An external block chimney is attached to the exterior wall, rising from the ground and piercing the roof between the two northernmost windows. On the ground floor a one-over-one window with a two-over-two storm window is located north of the chimney, and a shorter one-over-one window is located closer to the south corner of the house.

It is difficult to ascribe any common style to this structure; the solid balusters and columns on the porch are elements found in many early twentieth century styles including Craftsman and Colonial Revival. The massing of the building mimics that of a 'four-square,' but with the low pitched roof, asymmetrical facade, and widely overhanging eaves the verticality of the house is minimized visually, and overall the house hints at a Prairie School heritage. Neither the designer nor builder of the house is known, and it is also possible that the building's form and style reflects contemporary trends in nearby Canada.

The interior of the Lagassey House contains four rooms on each floor, and an upstairs bathroom surrounding a central staircase. The glass and wood front door opens directly into the southeast parlor. Along the north wall of this room is an open staircase with square newel post and rectangular balusters, and a French door leading into the larger, northwest parlor. In the southwest corner of the house is a small dining room, and the kitchen occupies the southwest corner. The placement of the bedrooms on the second floor essentially corresponds with the locations of the downstairs rooms, however a

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LAGASSEY FARM

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bathroom is positioned between the western set of rooms. Each of the rooms have gypsum wallboards, acoustic tile ceilings and tile floors, except for the parlors and dining room, which are carpeted. The kitchen retains a long wall of cupboards, cabinets and counters that were installed when the house was built, although most of the appliances have been updated. A staircase to the full cellar is located on the east wall of the kitchen.

According to the son of Rosaire Lagassey, for whom the house was built in 1946, all of the lumber for the building was harvested from the farm's wood lot, and the walls are insulated with sawdust.

Garage/Granary/Shop/Woodshed. By 1916. Contributing Building.

According to family members, this small but complex Acadian style structure predates the erection of the barn (1916), and some form of it was probably on the property by the turn of the 20th century, if not earlier. The wood frame building consists of a core that is one and one-half story high and measures approximately twelve feet wide and eighteen feet deep with a east-west oriented gable roof. Appended to the north and south elevations of this core (Granary) are twelve feet wide and eighteen foot long sheds with single pitch roofs. The roof of each of these side sheds intersects the side walls of the core just below its eaves. The southern shed is a Garage, and the northern shed is a Shop. On the west elevation is another shed roof structure which spans the width of the tripartite front section. Measuring twelve feet wide and thirty-six feet long, this portion of the building is a woodshed/lumber shed. It too has a single pitch roof, which slopes down to the west, and the top plate of this roof is even with the core of the building's plate back plate. (Thus, the eastern wall of this woodshed rises above the height of the side sheds.) The final element on the building is a very low, single pitch box, measuring approximately eight by six feet in dimension that is attached to the north side of the woodshed. This box has a low door in its east wall, but otherwise its side walls are unbroken. All of the roofs of the building are covered with asphalt shingles, and the sills are supported on low piles of fieldstones. The east, south and north elevations of this building have painted wood shingle siding, and narrow corner boards mark the boundaries between the sections of the building. The east and side walls of the woodshed and the north and east sides of the small box are clad with novelty siding. The west wall of the box is covered with weathered boards, and the western elevation of the woodshed is open to the weather. Three log posts, which appear to rest directly on the ground, support the front edge of the woodshed roof; two of these posts are no longer vertical and the front edge of the roof is exhibiting a substantial sag.

Each section of this building has its own access doors. The front elevation of the Granary contains a two-over-two sash window on both the first and second floors (both are slightly off center to the north), and a pedestrian door along the southern edge of the wall. This is a board door with applied external battens. The door is painted white (as is the rest of the building except the west elevation), and the battens are painted blue; giving the door an unusual vertical pattern. This paint scheme is repeated on all the doors on this structure, as well as most of those on the Barn and the Shed. Another, slightly shorter pedestrian door is located at the center of the Shop's front wall. On the Garage is a batten

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equipment door hung on an external track. Due to the pitch of the shed roof, this track extends to the north, and when the door is opened it blocks access to the Granary door. On the south side of the building there are no windows. A low opening in the south side wall of the woodshed has been boarded over from the inside. This opening was used both for the storage of lumber and equipment prior the removal of the west wall of this shed. The north wall of the Shop contains a pair of two-light fixed windows, and a plain white batten door leading into the woodshed.

The inside of the Granary was used to store oats and other grains. The stud walls retain most of their board wall covering, although sections are missing on the south wall. The floor is covered in wood. A wooden ladder leads to a hatch in the floor above, at the west end of the room. The upper room also has boarding on the walls, and a wooden bin built against the northwest corner of the room. Various pieces of old tack are mounted on the west gable wall just above the hatch. To the north, the shop has exposed stud walls and rafters, and a wooden floor. An old, hand cranked sharpening wheel is positioned in one corner, and work spaces are arranged under the windows. On the south, the garage has a cement floor, and partially covered stud walls. Both of the sheds appear to have been built after the core of the building, as the rafters are supported on a ledger boards nailed to the sides of the Granary. While the sequence and dates of alterations are unknown, according to family members the Garage/Granary/Shop/Woodshed obtained its current configuration by the early 1940s.

Barn. 1916. Contributing Building.

The Lagassey Barn is a good example of a 20th century Acadian style barn. Viewed from the east, the building bears a similarity to the Garage/Granary/Shop: it is comprised of a higher center section and lower shed roof sides. The roof line also runs from east to west, but the middle section of the barn, which stands two stories in height, has a gambrel roof rather than a gable roof. The footprint of the Barn measures fifty-eight feet wide (north to south) and 49 feet deep; each of the two side sections of the barn occupy sixteen feet of the width. Set onto a slight grade, the fieldstone foundation is visible on the east elevation and portions of the north and south sides. As with the other buildings on the property the Barn has an asphalt roof. The north, east and south sides are clad with novelty wood siding, but the west elevation has a mixture of unpainted wood shingles and tar paper, fastened with battens, over sheathing boards. The corners of the building are marked with vertical boards. The roof overhangs the sidewalls of the barn somewhat, but this is not as pronounced as on the Lagassey House.

Neither the east nor west elevations have any doors or windows. The north elevation, which faces towards the house and the dooryard, has two openings. In the middle of the wall is a large, two-leaf external slide batten door. West of this opening is an overhead garage door which was installed in the 1980s. A single-pane fixed window is positioned between the garage door and the northwest corner of the building. The south side of the Barn also has two large entrances. At the center is a two leaf, exterior sliding batten door. It is positioned directly opposite the north center door, and matches it in construction and ornamentation (both display the distinctive blue and white paint scheme). West of this is a hinged two-leaf equipment door. This door is clad with novelty siding, and appears to have been cut into the previously solid south wall. This simple opening is held closed with a turnbuckle on the

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LAGASSEY FARM

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exterior.

The three bay Lagassey Barn is essentially a stud-framed structure with some heavier pieces of lumber used for internal supports. Viewed from the east or west, the frame consists of four bents made up of two-story interior posts, braced to a tie beam. The common rafters of the gambrel roof rest on short outriggers that extend north and south from the top of the posts and are braced at this joint by short jack posts. A queen-post style truss system set upon the tie beams adds extra support to the gambrel roof. The rafters of the two side sheds rest upon the lower ends of the gambrel rafters, just above the jack posts, which in turn help distribute the weight of the shed rafters down through the central posts. Each bent also has lateral posts connecting the side walls of the sheds to the interior posts. The floors of the Barn are poured concrete.

The functional orientation of the Barn runs from north to south. A central drive in the middle bay connects the two exterior sliding doors. In the northwest corner of the Barn, under the northern shed roof, is the structure's only room. This roughly square space now houses a workshop and stores an automobile, but previously it was used to house livestock, (four windows cut out of the interior board walls show the original location of the horse stalls). Another work bench has been installed along the south side of the shop wall, opposite from the hinged exterior doors on the south elevation of the Barn. Originally this space, along with the eastern bay and the space over the stalls, was used to store hay up to the rafters. As the farm shifted from horse power to mechanized power the southwestern section of the Barn was opened up to allow the storage and maintenance of farm equipment.

According to Rosaire Lagassey, who grew up on the farm and has owned it since 1945, the Barn was originally clad only with sheathing. In 1948 he had wood from the farm made into the novelty clapboards that are presently on the Barn.

Shed. By 1892. Contributing Building.

The Shed is located immediately west of the Barn, and is separated from that larger structure by only a few feet. The one-story, wood frame building measures approximately 14 by 18 feet, sits on a fieldstone foundation and has an asphalt gable roof. The ridge runs north to south, and the southern elevation of the Shed is sited flush with the southern elevation of the Barn. The Shed is covered with weathered clapboards, and has narrow corner boards and overhanging, boxed eaves. The south elevation is dominated by a pair of large, hinged batten doors, painted with the same blue and white color scheme as is found on the other outbuildings. In the north gable end a batten door is positioned against the northeast corner, and a two-over-two wooden sash is situated near the center of the building. The west elevation contains another doorway in the center of the wall, flanked by two adjacent window openings, all of which have been covered with boards or tar paper. The interior has exposed stud framing, widely spaced common rafters with collar ties running between the plates, and a wooden floor.

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The Shed is all that remains of the original farmhouse that stood on the property when it was deeded to Joseph Lagasse in 1892. According to family tradition, it formed an ell on the house, but its precise function is unknown. When the original farmhouse was dismantled in 1946 the ell was moved to its present location and fitted with the hinged doors. It is currently used to store lumber, but also housed farm machinery in the past.

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LAGASSEY FARM

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lagassey Farm is a 162 acre property in Saint Agatha. The land was homesteaded by the Lagassey family starting in the mid-19th century, and has been in their possession ever since. The long lot property contains approximately 91 acres of fields which have been historically sown to potatoes, hay, oats, and canola, 64 acres of wood lots, and the home site.¹ The buildings within this small district include the 1946 Lagassey House, the 1916 Acadian-style Barn, a pre-1916 Acadian-style outbuilding, and a Shed that was once part of the 19th century farm house. The entire farm, which still is under cultivation and owned by the Lagassey family, is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A for the manner in which it reflects broad patterns of agriculture within the Saint John Valley. The Lagassey Farm is also significant under Criterion C for the Acadian-style agricultural buildings, which are good examples of a regionally distinct style or type of architecture.

The town of St. Agatha was incorporated in 1899. Located about 8 miles south of Madawaska and the Saint John River the town had been known as Township 18 Range 4/5, had been a part of Madawaska, and then in 1859 was annexed to Frenchville (then known as Dickeyville). Although settlers had been homesteading, and in some cases owning property on the west side of Long Lake since approximately 1850, it was not until after a Catholic parish was established at the head of the lake in 1889 that the community began to develop its own identity. When the town incorporated it chose the name Saint Agatha after the local parish².

The population of St. Agatha is now, and has been since settlement, overwhelmingly French Canadian. Although some of the residents or their ancestors came from Quebec, others trace their roots to the deportation of French Nova Scotian settlers, known as Acadians, by the British in 1755. In the years following Acadians settled in Quebec and New Brunswick, Louisiana, France, and along both sides of the Saint John River in lands still controlled by France. After the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 established the northern boundary between what is now Canada and the United States as the St. John River many of the regions Acadians found themselves living in Maine. Today, the Acadian influence still clearly influences the culture, language, and traditions of the region.

Recognizing the importance of preserving the legacy of this distinct and regionally specific culture, in 1992 the United States Congress passed the Maine Acadian Culture Preservation Act (Public Law 101-543), and a study of the region's culture was undertaken by the North Atlantic Regional Office of the National Park Service. Context for understanding the Lagassey Farm is drawn in part from the resulting publication Acadian Culture in Maine. As defined by the National Park Service, a "Maine

¹The number of acres cited represent the current breakdown of fields to woods. The historic proportions of these two aspects of the farm are not precisely known.

²Among the French speaking residents of the community the name of the town is known as Ste. Agathe.

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Acadian” is considered to be “an American of French descent connected by heritage to the Upper St. John Valley, including but not limited to genealogical descendants of early Acadian settlers of the Valley.” (National Park Service, *Acadian Culture in Maine*, p. iv). Maine Acadians comprise a regionally-based but distinctive culture:

Contemporary Maine Acadians constitute a regionally-based ethnic group with a distinctive heritage in Maine, and the United States more generally. Maine Acadian identity has developed over several hundred years in response to changing political, economic, and social circumstances. Like the cultural identity of many other rural Americans, Maine Acadians’ identity is directly tied to retaining connections to family, land and religion. Association with the French language, in particular *Valley French*, is another prominent feature. (National Park Service, *Implementing the Maine Acadian Culture Preservation Act*, p. 3)

It is difficult to pinpoint precisely when the Lagassey family obtained the farm on Long Lake. The earliest deed to the property, from the State of Maine to Joseph Lagasse, was for lots number 209 and 210, containing 169.24 acres, and was recorded on August 19, 1892.³ Seven years later Joseph Lagasse deed the property to his son Eloi. However, it is likely that Joseph Lagasse, or perhaps his father had obtained the land years earlier. After the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 the U.S. government sought to encourage settlement in the Saint John Valley. As summarized in *Acadian Culture in Maine*:

Under the terms of the Homestead Act of the State of Maine, homesites could be secured fairly cheaply, but the new owners were required to settle duties and perform road labor before land certificates were issued. Each certificate or grant was called *une concession* by local French-speakers. These grants became known as *les concessions*, and the neighborhoods associated with them became known as “back settlement.” Though the land parcels in the back settlements are shaped differently from the initial tiers [long lots oriented towards the St. John River, and distributed by the British Crown prior to the treaty], neighborhoods continued to develop in the dispersed linear form. Their orientation may have been toward the shore of one of several large lakes or toward a road. (National Park Service, *Acadian Culture in Maine*, p. 28-29.)

Unfortunately, through the middle decades of the 19th century the State also sold uncleared land to large landowners for lumbering operations. Because a homesteader had to satisfy several requirements before he or she could obtain title to their land often they occupied a parcel for a considerable amount of time before securing a coveted deed, and conflicting claims arose for the same land. In the southern portion of St. Agatha, along Long Lake a serious conflict arose:

In an attempt to encourage railroad development, the Maine State government issued a land grant of one million acres to the European & North American Railway in 1869. This grant

³The family name was spelled without a ‘y’ throughout the early 20th century.

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LAGASSEY FARM

AROOSTOOK COUNTY, MAINE

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created conflicting claims, and the Commission on Claims of Settlers on Proprietors' Lands in the County of Aroostook was established in 1873. The Commission issued a report in 1874. Among the claims listed in the report is one made by Andre Pelletier of Township 18, range 4 [later St. Agatha]. The report indicates that Pelletier "took up" the property in two pieces in 1853 and 1871. In the year of the report, the first parcel was improved with a house barn, and stable....In 1875, Andre Pelletier received an eviction notice from bond holders for the European & North American Railway who sought to recover their losses by attaching the railroad's property when the railroad defaulted on its notes. Because the railroad's claims conflicted with the settlers' claims, Pelletier and 127 rear-lot farmers received eviction notices. Documentary evidence indicates that Pelletier continued to occupy his homestead despite the challenge to his ownership. (National Park Service, Acadian Culture in Maine, p. 33.)

According to the Ste. Agathe Historical Society, the case went to court, and was found in favor of the homesteaders, who received deeds to their property starting in the 1880s. A list of the affected homesteaders, as identified by the Commission on Claims of Settlers in the 1874 report and published in Centenaire de St. Agatha, Maine, reveals that Joseph Lagasse and his wife Victoria Lagasse were among those who received an eviction notice. (Ste. Agathe Historical Society, p. 31). As of 1874 Lagasse had improved only 12 acres, but he claimed that he had 'taken up' the land in 1851. Considering that according to census records he was born c. 1843, either the date of his occupation of the land was incorrect, or more likely it was obtained by his father or another family member. (Both the 1870 and 1880 Federal population census indicate that Joseph was living next door to other families with the same surname.) If the 1851 date is correct, the deed from the State was finally issued 41 years after the family had started to work the land that they still own.

In 1899 Joseph Lagasse deeded his 169 plus acres to his son Eloi, who had married a few years earlier. The 1900 census indicates that Joseph and Eloi lived in adjacent houses - probably the same set of buildings that Joseph and his extended family had occupied two decades earlier - and that both were farmers. However, by 1909 Eloi moved the family three miles north into the town of St. Agatha. According to his son Rosaire, who was interviewed for a volume on the history of the St. Agatha convent, "He used to sell meat house to house, and moved to town, across the street from the convent, for two reasons. Number one, he wanted to get closer to Frenchville to make it easier to sell his meat - the railroad was being built in Frenchville and there were a lot of new workers there. The second reason, is that he realized the importance of a good education. We lived right across from the convent and I was the first one in the family to be born in that house in 1909." (Chassé, p. 2). Eloi continued to farm however, working on the property on the weekends and in the evening.

Over the generations the built components of the Lagassey Farm have evolved - new buildings have been erected and others lost. The original farmhouse stood on the property until 1946, although it was occupied only sporadically by Eloi and his family. The only segment of this building that exists is the ell, which now serves as a storage shed. According to family members, the building that now houses the Garage/Granary/Shop/Woodshed is quite old - it was in existence before the current barn was built, but no one knows when it was erected. It is quite likely that an earlier barn was also on the

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property, but all memory of this structure has been lost. Thus, although the property has a history that appears to commence in the mid-nineteenth century, it has lost integrity from this period, with one exception: the property lines. Except for the sale of a small number of house lots at the southeastern end of the road, (totaling about seven acres), the lot lines of the property reflect those the family had homesteaded, and finally obtained, in 1892.

The farm that Eloi, and later his son Rosaire worked was a diversified operation typical of farms in the Saint John Valley: buckwheat and potatoes were staple crops for Eloi, and when Rosaire took over in 1945 he added oats, hay and canola to the crop rotation. The family worked the fields. Horses were used for mechanical power until Rosaire purchased a tractor in the 1940s, and the family also kept a few cows, pigs and chickens. Additions were made as needed to the Granary - to facilitate the storage and never-ending mechanical tinkering that motorized farm equipment demanded. During the lean years of the Great Depression Eloi Lagassey lost possession of the farm, but Rosaire Lagassey was able to repurchase the property from the Federal Land Bank in 1945. Shortly thereafter he had the original farmhouse dismantled, built the current house and moved his family to the farm. To facilitate the storage of potatoes Rosaire erected a potato house south of the barn, and a portion of his potato crop he sold as seed.⁴ And in order to build on his property he harvested wood from his wood lots.

Both the Garage/Granary/Shop/Woodshed and the Barn are built in a traditional Acadian style: the difference between them is that the former was built in stages and the latter as a single unit. The following passage from Acadian Culture in Maine summarizes the history of Acadian barns.

The typical Upper St. John Valley barn of the 19th century, the *grange acadienne* or "Acadian barn," was a three-bay, side opening, gable roof barn with a central passageway through the middle called a *batterie*. The central passage with large opposed doors was named for its former function as a threshing and winnowing area. It also allowed the transfer of hay from wagons to the upper-level hay mow on either side of the *batterie*. Grain storage was provided by one or more ground-level chambers. One portion of the ground level was typically divided into stalls for a few head of stock, the draft animals, a milk cow or two, or a sow and her litter. The barn was generally sided with vertical planks (*planches debout*), though the sections where farm animals were stabled during the cold seasons were covered with an additional sheathing of shingles. The barns of Acadian farmers who owned more stock have shed additions which often contain stalls for milk cows or other animals. Several *granges acadiennes* have been razed during recent years.

The arrival of railroads at the turn of the 20th century altered farming and the structures needed to support its practice. More land was put to potato production, and in the pre-mechanized days of the early 20th century, the need for more tilled acreage was met with an increase in draft horses. The added feed requirements of these animals encouraged the construction of huge

The potato shed, a long, flared gambrel roof structure with a sheltered equipment entrance was dismantled by 1998.

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hay and grain barns. Some surviving examples of these two- and three-level barns are gabled structures (*pignons simples*) like earlier *granges acadiennes*, while others feature a gambrel (*combe-cassé*) roof. (National Park Service, Acadian Culture in Maine, p. 58.)

The barn that Eloi Lagassey had built in 1916 fits into this later category: it provided the hay storage needed to supply the horses that worked his fields. Only a small section of the barn was actually dedicated to livestock however; the main intention was the storage of hay, as attested to by the presence of almost no windows.

A reconnaissance level survey of barns, potato sheds and other agricultural structures in Aroostook County was conducted between 1998 and 2002. Sixty one barns were identified that could be classified as Acadian barns - each had at least one low pitched shed attached to the central structure. Of these, the vast majority were in the immediate St. John Valley: fourteen in St. Agatha, eight in Fort Kent, six in Grand Isle, eleven in Madawaska, six in New Canada. These figures correspond with those areas of land that were either deeded outright to settlers in the first half of the nineteenth century, or earned by homesteaders a few decades later - the same areas of northern Aroostook County that were inhabited by Acadians or their descendants. The number of 19th and early 20th century Acadian barns are finite and decreasing, as larger and larger farm operations dominate the agricultural economy of the region and these old structures are deemed obsolete. While it is unfortunate that the potato house is no longer extant, the presence of the two Acadian style structures on the long-lot Lagassey Farm, as well as the newer home, and re-cycled ell speak to a relationship with this land that has lasted for generations, and reflects many aspects of this region's agricultural and cultural history.

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UTM's, continued

- 5). 19//554358/5227817
- 6). 19//554049/5227455
- 7). 19//553859/5227452
- 8). 19//553856/5227651

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of this nomination are depicted on the attached boundary map, entitled "Lagassey Farm," and are also depicted on the Town of Saint Agatha tax map 8, lot 50.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary has been drawn to reflect the original long lot deeded to Joseph Lagasse by the State of Maine in 1892, exclusive of several small house lots that have been sold at the northeast corner of the property. The 162 acre property includes a mixture of agricultural fields (approximately 91 acres) and wood lots (approximately 63.75 acres). A portion of the fields, containing approximately 47.4 acres, has been entered into a Federally sponsored crop land protection program and although it is protected from development, has been removed from active agricultural production for the time being. A rise in the grade and the edge of the wood lots prevent the entirety of the property from being viewed at once. Approximately 43 acres immediately surrounding the barns and house and stretching southwest from the road contains open space (either currently or formerly in agricultural production) and contribute most immediately to the visual setting of the farm.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

ME_AROOSTOOK COUNTY_LAGASSEY

FARM_001.TIF

Photograph 1 of 6

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

12 June 2008

House, main facade; facing west.

ME_AROOSTOOK COUNTY_LAGASSEY

FARM_005.TIF

Photograph 5 of 6

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

12 June 2008

Garage/Granary/Shop/Woodshed; facing southwest.

ME_AROOSTOOK COUNTY_LAGASSEY

FARM_002.TIF

Photograph 2 of 6

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

12 June 2008

Barn (on left) and side view of
Garage/Granary/Shop/Woodshed; facing south.

ME_AROOSTOOK COUNTY_LAGASSEY

FARM_006.TIF

Photograph 6 of 6

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

12 June 2008

Interior of Acadian barn showing framing; facing northeast.

ME_AROOSTOOK COUNTY_LAGASSEY

FARM_003.TIF

Photograph 3 of 6

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

12 June 2008

Barn (left), Garage/Granary/Shop/Woodshed
(middle), and House (right); facing southwest.

ME_AROOSTOOK COUNTY_LAGASSEY

FARM_004.TIF

Photograph 4 of 6

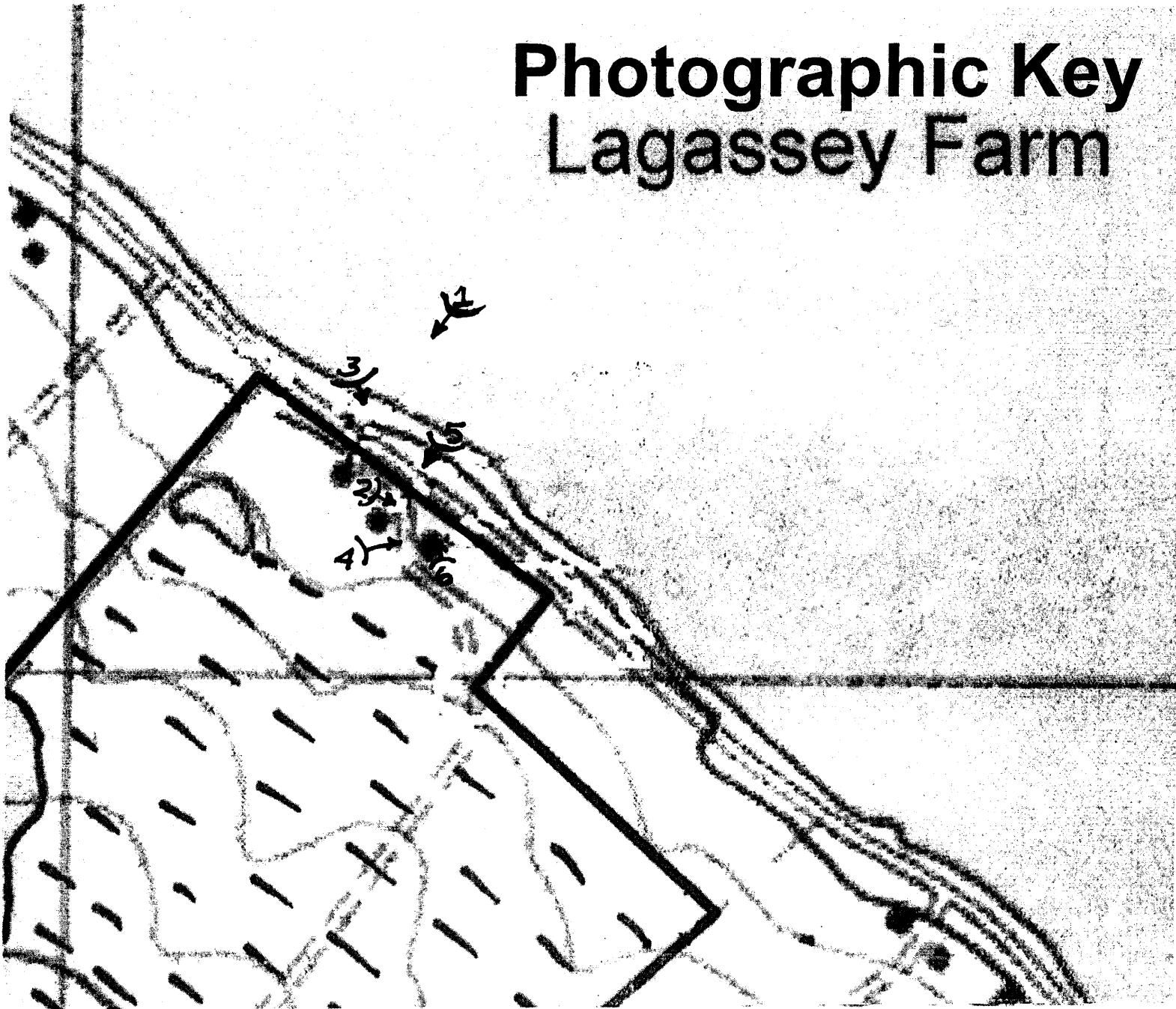
Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

12 June 2008

Acadian barn; facing southeast.

Photographic Key Lagassey Farm

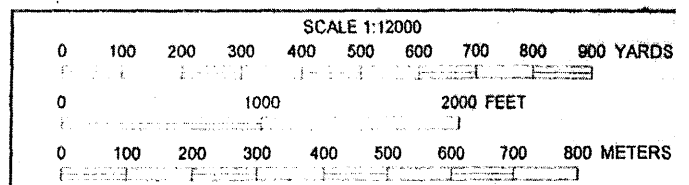
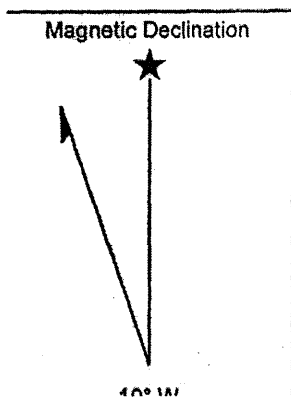


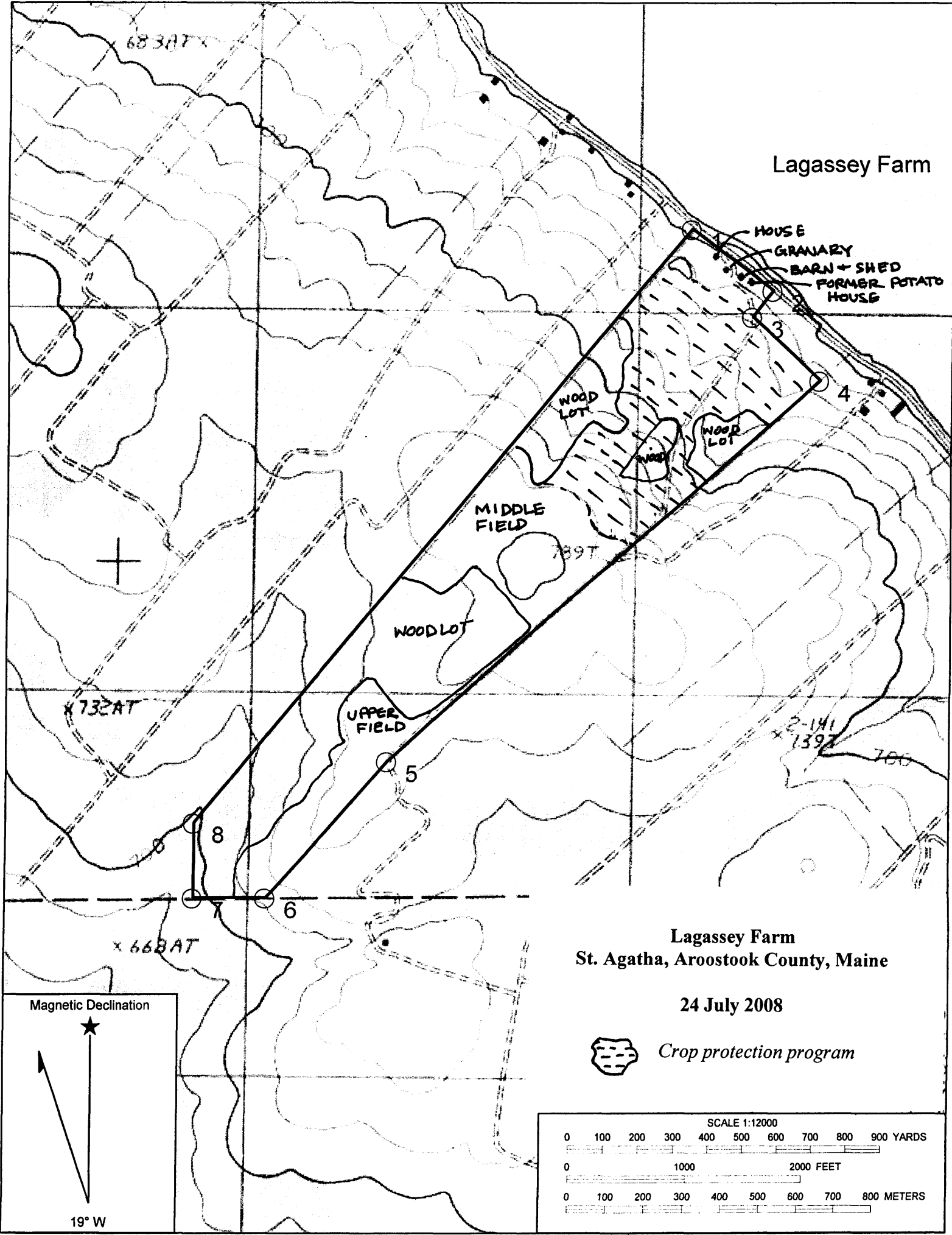
Lagassey Farm
St. Agatha, Aroostook County, Maine

24 July 2008



Crop protection program





Lagassey Farm

- HOUSE
- GRANARY
- BARN + SHED
- FORMER POTATO HOUSE

WOOD LOT
MIDDLE FIELD

UPPER FIELD

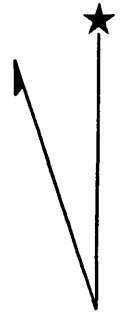
Lagassey Farm
St. Agatha, Aroostook County, Maine

24 July 2008



Crop protection program

Magnetic Declination



19° W

SCALE 1:12000

