

Connecticut Weekly AGRICULTURAL REPORT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor
Steven K. Revczky, Commissioner



Connecticut Department of Agriculture
February 28, 2018



Harbor ice



Early growth of Sugar Kelp



Kale soup

All pictures provided by J.P. Vellotti

THE STATE OF KELP

A New Sea Vegetable Industry Is Poised for Growth, if These New Farmers Can Develop a Market

The Bureau of Aquaculture

From Norwalk to Branford to Stonington, it's been a waiting game for a new class of Connecticut farmers. Now that an unseasonably cold winter looks to have passed and water temperatures in Long Island Sound have rebounded to nearly the seasonal average, that wait is just about over.

At stake is a new crop of Sugar Kelp (*Saccharina latissima*), a type of marine algae that thrives in cold, local waters from Connecticut to Maine. While the value of the kelp is yet to be determined, these farmers are racing to establish buyers before growers in neighboring states, including Maine and Rhode Island, get to the market first.

Unlike land-based plants, Sugar Kelp is a "winter crop" that is traditionally planted in late-November and December. A first spurt of growth happens into January until water temperatures drop to near-freezing levels. By March, when more sunlight is available and the water reaches around 40-degrees F, the plants experience their second spurt of growth, which continues until harvest in late-April and throughout May.

Across the shoreline, five new farms have been permitted to grow kelp this season—quite a remarkable achievement given the complicated regulatory process and the number of federal, state, and local agencies that require review, all of which take the better part of a year. Still, this round of permitting was streamlined since the initial four kelp farms began their permit applications approximately five years ago, when kelp farming was still in the research and development phase.

JP Vellotti, general manager of East Coast Kelp Farms—one of the five new farms this year—said that while the permitting process seemed like it would never end, it was also

very understandable.

"You have to realize that we are not just tilling a field that nobody really ever sees or visits. We are trying to grow a sea vegetable in the water column that has a lot of shared interests. So the public eye is on you, wondering what you are doing out there and if the gear you put into the water to grow your crop is going to take away from the way they experience using the water," he said.

With permits now in place for farm sites in Norwalk and Groton, Vellotti also embraced the opportunity to obtain a license to grow kelp in these new waters.

"What Connecticut has done is really remarkable and I'm really proud of our state. Just as we were leaders in the very early years of oyster farming, I think in five years, people will look back to see that Connecticut will also be known as the kelp state, because we worked hard and laid the groundwork early," said Vellotti.

Accolades for that framework fall squarely on the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's (DoAg) Bureau of Aquaculture, which identified the potential of seaweed as an opportunity for growth and worked with the state legislature to create a seaweed-licensing program.

Concurrently, with the creation of the program in 2014, agency staff have identified hazards and risks associated with harvesting, processing, and storage and developed Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) standards for fresh and frozen kelp. An additional HACCP plan for dehydrated kelp is under development.

The agency has also worked with the Connecticut Depart-

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NORTHEAST EGGS/USDA

Per doz. Grade A and Grade A white in cartons to retailers (volume buyers)

XTRA LARGE	1.50	1.64
LARGE	1.44	1.58
MEDIUM	1.10	1.23

NEW ENGLAND SHELL EGGS

Per doz. Grade A brown in carton delivered store door. (Range)

XTRA LARGE	2.53	2.64
LARGE	2.52	2.59
MEDIUM	1.39	1.65
SMALL	.77	.87

LANCASTER, PA LIVESTOCK

Avg. Dressing. Per cwt. Unless noted

	LOW	HIGH
SLAUGHTER COWS Avg. Dressing		
breakers 75-80% lean	60.00	64.50
boners 80-85% lean	58.00	63.50
lean 88-90% lean	50.00	56.00

SLAUGHTER STEERS

Hi Ch/Prime 3-4	127.00	129.00
Choice 2-3	122.00	126.00
Select 1-2	120.00	136.00

SLAUGHTER HOLSTEINS

Hi Ch/Prime 3-4	88.00	90.00
Choice 2-3	84.00	87.00
Select 1-2	75.50	83.00

SLAUGHTER HEIFERS

Hi Ch/Prime 3-4	125.00	126.00
Choice 2-3	121.50	125.00
Select 1-2	115.00	122.00

CALVES - Graded bull

No 120-130 lbs	105.00	105.00
No.1 88-118 lbs	120.00	137.00

SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Woolled & Shorn

Markets: Choice and Prime 2-3

90-110 lbs	270.00	285.00
130-150 lbs	185.00	210.00

SLAUGHTER EWES: Good 2-3

160-200 lbs	80.00	80.00
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SLAUGHTER KIDS: Sel 1

20-40 lbs	130.00	155.00
40-60 lbs	145.00	185.00
60-80 lbs	187.00	210.00
80-100 lbs	210.00	240.00

SLAUGHTER NANNIES/DOES: Sel 1

80-130 lbs	220.00	220.00
130-180 lbs	220.00	255.00

SLAUGHTER BUCKS/BILLIES: Sel 1

100-150 lbs	235.00	260.00
150-250 lbs	275.00	320.00

USDA RETAIL GOAT

February 2018. \$/lb.

STEAKS		
LOIN	14.50	19.95
RIB	14.00	18.00
SHANK	5.95	13.99
SIRLOIN	14.98	20.19
LEG, BONE-IN	10.95	16.00
GROUND GOAT	9.00	15.00
STEW MEAT	10.00	15.00

NOAA ANNUAL GROUPED LANDINGS

Historic N. England figures. February 2016. Price/lb.

CRAB, GREEN	.30	.44
CRAB, HORSESHOE	1.02	1.09
LOBSTER, AMERICAN	4.08	5.25
MUSSEL, BLUE	.89	1.38
OYSTER, EASTERN	26.40	36.90
SCALLOP, SEA	11.09	12.81
SHRIMP, MARINE, OTHER	4.00	7.30

WHOLESALE FRUITS & VEGETABLESBoston Terminal and Wholesale Grower Prices
CONNECTICUT AND NEW ENGLAND GROWN

	LOW	HIGH
ALFALFA SPROUTS, 5 LBS	14.00	15.00
ALFALFA SPROUTS, 12-4 OZ	16.00	18.00
APPLE, CORTLAND, XFCY, 72	28.00	29.00
APPLE, CORTLAND, XFCY, 80	30.00	30.00
APPLE, CORTLAND, XFCY, 88	30.00	30.00
APPL, CRTLAND, FCY, 12-3LB	22.00	22.00
APPLE, FUJI, US FANCY, 56	24.00	24.00
APPLE, FUJI, US FANCY, 125	20.00	20.00
APPLE, GALA, US FANCY, 88	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GALA, US FANCY, 100	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GALA, #1, 12-3LB, 2-1/2"	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GOLD DEL, FCY, 64	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GOLD DEL, FCY, 72	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GOLD DEL, FCY, 80	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GOLD DEL, FCY, 88	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GOLD DEL, #1, 12-3LB	20.00	20.00
APPLE, HNYCRSP, XFY, TRAY100	56.00	58.00
APPLE, MAC, XFCY, TRYPK 72	30.00	31.00
APPLE, MAC, XFCY, TRYPK 80	29.00	31.00
APPLE, MAC, XFCY, TRYPK 88	28.00	31.00
APPLE, MAC, XFCY, TRYPK 100	24.00	24.00
APPLE, MAC, USFCY, TRYPK 80	21.00	21.00
APPLE, MAC, USFCY, TRYPK 88	21.00	21.00
APPLE, RED DEL, FCY, 64	24.00	24.00
APPLE, RED DEL, FCY, 72	24.00	24.00
APPLE, RED DEL, FCY, 80	24.00	24.00
APPLE, RED DEL, FCY, 125	20.00	21.00
APPLE, RED DEL, #1, 12-3LB	20.00	20.00
BEAN SPROUTS, 10 LBS	6.00	7.00
BEAN SPROUTS, 12-12 OZ	12.00	15.00
BEET, CHIOGGA, 25 LB, M-L, LSE	14.00	14.00
BEETS, GOLD, 25 LB, M, LOOSE	14.00	14.00
BEETS, RED, 25 LB, M, LOOSE	8.00	8.00
CARROTS, S-M, 25 LB, LOOSE	11.00	11.00
CIDER, 4- 1 GALLON	22.00	22.00
CIDER, 9-1/2 GALLON	26.00	26.00
PARSNIPS, M, 20 LBS, LOOSE	25.00	25.00
POTATO, RNDRED, #1, SZA, 50LB	12.00	13.00
POTATO, RNDRED, #1, SZB, 50LB	14.00	14.00
POTATO, RDWT, #1, NONSZA, 50#	14.00	15.00
PTATO, RDWHT, NONSZA, 10-5LB	14.00	15.00
POTATO, YLLW, #1, CHEF, 50LB	15.00	16.00

BOSTON & BALTIMORE MARKET ORGANIC

Price Range, Per unit.

APPLE, FUJI, WAXFANCY, 100	49.00	49.00
APPLE, GALA, WAXFANCY, 100	45.00	45.00
APPLE, HNYCRSP, WAXFY, 64	63.00	63.00
APPLE, RED DEL, WAXFCY, 80	34.00	34.00
CABBAGE, GREEN, 45 LBS	24.00	24.00
CARROTS, CA, 24-2 LB, M-L	48.00	48.00
CARROTS, CA, 25 LBS LOOSE	36.00	36.00
LETTUCE, GRNLF, CA, 24	30.00	30.00
LETTUCE, RDLF, CA, 24	30.00	30.00
LETT, RMAINE, CA/AZ, 12-18OZ	30.00	30.00
MESCLIN MIX, CA, 3 LBS	9.00	9.00
MUSHROOMS, PA, 12- 8 OZ	16.50	16.50
SPINACH, BABY, CA, 4 LBS	16.00	16.00
SQUASH, ACORN, M, 1-1/9	34.00	34.00
SQUASH, BUTTERCUP, M, 1-1/9	30.00	30.00
SQUASH, BUTTERNUT, M, 1-1/9	32.00	32.00
SQUASH, DELICATA, M, 1-1/9	36.00	36.00
SQUASH, SPAGHETTI, M, 1-1/9	30.00	30.00
STRAWBERRIES, FL, 8-1 LB	21.00	21.00
SWEET POTATO, RD, CA, 40 LBS	52.00	52.00
TOMATOES, GRAPE, FL, 12-1PT	15.00	16.00

MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION

Middlefield, CT - February 26, 2018

Bob Calves:	LOW	HIGH
45-60 lbs.	25.00	30.00
61-75 lbs.	45.00	48.00
76-90 lbs.	54.00	57.50
91-105 lbs.	60.00	65.00
106 lbs. & up	67.50	70.00
Farm Calves	72.50	230.00
Starter Calves	20.00	24.00
Veal Calves	65.00	120.00
Feeder Heifers	77.50	80.00
Beef Heifers	64.50	77.50
Feeder Steers	120.00	130.00
Beef Steers	67.00	82.50
Feeder Bulls	72.00	95.00
Beef Bulls	76.00	92.50
Replacement Cows	n/a	n/a
Replacement Heifers	n/a	n/a
Boars	n/a	n/a
Sows	n/a	n/a
Butcher Hogs	n/a	n/a
Feeder Pigs each	n/a	n/a
Sheep each	47.50	200.00
Lambs each	140.00	280.00
Goats each	100.00	220.00
Kid Goats each	40.00	245.00
Canners	up to	57.00
Cutters	58.00	61.00
Utility Grade Cows	62.00	66.00
Rabbits each	8.00	20.00
Chickens each	5.00	17.00
Ducks each	5.00	12.00

NEW HOLLAND, PA. HOG AUCTION

Per cwt.

52-56	200-300 lbs	62.00	68.00
	300-350 lbs	61.00	75.00
	350-400 lbs	61.00	63.00
48-52	200-300 lbs	52.00	63.00
	300-350 lbs	50.00	58.00
	350-400 lbs	50.00	58.00
Sows, US 1-3			
	300-500 lbs	46.00	55.00
	500-700 lbs	54.00	58.00
Boars	500-650 lbs	5.00	5.00

**USDA- NEGOTIATED
WHOLESALE GRASS FED LAMB**

February 2018. \$/lb.

CHOPS		
LOIN	15.80	18.89
RIB	15.80	20.49
ROASTS		
RACK	18.89	18.89
SHOULDER	10.89	10.89
LEG, BONE-IN	6.89	12.59
LEG, BONELESS	10.50	11.89
SHANK	7.89	14.25
GROUND LAMB	8.29	12.50
STEW MEAT	8.29	12.50

**USDA- NEGOTIATED
RETAIL GRASS FED LAMB**

February 2018. \$/lb.

CHOPS, LOIN	12.00	20.00
RIB CHOPS	12.00	19.75
ROAST, RACK	14.99	25.00
ROAST, SIRLOIN	12.00	18.00
ROAST, SHOULDER	8.00	15.49
ROAST, LEG, BONE-IN	9.00	15.00
ROAST, LEG, BNLS	9.99	16.99
SHANK	5.00	14.00
GROUND LAMB	5.00	16.00
STEW MEAT	5.99	5.99

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ment of Consumer Protection, which requires that individual processors of seaweed first obtain a food manufacturing license. There currently are three approved processing facilities in the state with an additional facility planned before this year's harvest season.

Adding to the complexity of the oversight is the importation of kelp grown out of state for processing and the exporting of Connecticut Grown kelp for processing in neighboring states.

In the DoAg aquaculture laboratory, work has been performed to assess potential human health impacts from the plants. This was accomplished by taking sample material from each of the existing four farm sites (Norwalk, Fairfield, and two locations in Branford).

DoAg partnered with Connecticut Sea Grant, the Connecticut Department of Public Health and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station to sample the seaweed for bacterial and chemical contaminants in order to ensure that these new seaweed products are safe for consumers.

It also turns out that kelp has other potential benefits beyond adding another product into the food stream.

"Nutrient-enriched systems can contribute to harmful algal blooms, which deplete oxygen in the water," said Dr. Charles Yarish, a leading expert and advocate of marine algae and a professor at UConn's Department of Marine Sciences. "Shellfish and seaweeds can provide good ecosystem services by extracting organic and inorganic nutrients from seawater."

In a report issued this past fall, Dr. Yarish and colleagues from UConn and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Woods Hole facility, looked at how to develop an environmentally and ecologically sound sustainable Sugar Kelp industry in Southern New England. Beyond the economic factors, the team also looked at plant material to identify the amount of nitrogen and carbon kelp extracts from the water.

Using that analysis, they estimate an average farm site of 2 ½ acres could remove up to five thousand kilograms of carbon dioxide and an average of 50 kilograms of nitrogen, depending on crop spacing and management. Seasonal factors including loss of crop from ice and water temperatures also affect plant absorption of these nutrients.

And for other marine life, the addition of seaweed farms has been a boon for small fish that have found safe haven and nutrition among the newly planted kelp forests.

Simona Augyte, a UConn graduate student who works alongside Dr. Yarish, and Dave Hudson, a research scientist at the Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk, are planning to use a series of underwater video cameras to record the interactions of these fish and the plants. Findings will be presented in research form as well as a visual display for visitors at the Maritime Center next year.

In April, the Maritime Center and UConn will host the first

ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE

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16-R. Farm stand for rent May and June. 30x30 building with attached greenhouse. Established customer base for annuals, bedding plants and perennials. Contact Alex Arisco @ 203-217-0549.

21-R. Round hay bales – 52" X 48" – Triple plastic wrapped, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, dry, haylage, grass, alfalfa. \$40.00 and up. 860-884-2889.

22. 2002 Dodge 360 cu. In. V-8 motor. 41,000 original miles. Motor is fogged and indoors. \$850.00 or best offer. 203-283-4472 leave message. E-mail: cider-mill5@yahoo.com

24-R. Hay for sale from fertilized fields. \$4.50 per bale. 203-453-9865.

WANTED

7-R. Livestock wanted: Dairy cattle, heifers of any age, beef cows, bulls, steers, feeder cattle, veal, groups of sheep and goats. RyanM01@comcast.net or 860-655-0958. If no answer, leave message. All calls returned.

MISCELLANEOUS

6-R. Farm/Land specializing in land, farms, and all types of Real Estate. Established Broker with a lifetime of agricultural experience and 40 years of finance. Representing both Buyers and Sellers. Call Clint Charter of Wallace-Tetreault Realty (860) 644-5667.

AG JOB CONNECTION

20-R. Connecticut's two largest hop farms seek a full-time, salaried farm manager. If interested in learning about the qualifications, please send an email to info@ct-hops.com.

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ever Science Salon on the topic dubbed, Kelp Confidential: Secrets of Connecticut's Culinary Seaweed Scene. The event is open to the public and features a panel discussion while chefs will offer up sample appetizers made with locally grown kelp. For more information go to <https://sciencesalon.uconn.edu>.

Until then, the next two months will be a trying time for the kelp farmers in Connecticut. Because their crop went into a state of dormancy during the cold winter that saw frozen harbors statewide, there is a sense of uncertainty if the plants can rebound and finish strong. Early signs are positive, however, as the little kelp seedlings are visible and seem to be clinging on.

If a crop is successful and the farmers solve an even greater challenge—what to do with the massive amount of kelp that has yet to find a mainstream market—the outlook for Connecticut is even more positive.

Among the five new farms this year, none have planted to capacity, with most operating at thirty to 30- to 50- percent capacity. Along with the ability to double this number next year, the existing four farm sites are currently planting at 80-percent capacity.

If market sales are successful, across a range of products that extend beyond just culinary uses, the scalability of kelp growth in Connecticut could see an exponential expansion. With seven new farm sites proposed for the fall 2018, the number of Sugar Kelp farmers is expected to hit the Sweet 16 mark in just four years.

WHOLESALE READINESS TRAINING

Producers are invited to join the Connecticut Department of Agriculture to learn about risks and opportunities for wholesale producers, post-harvest handling, and FSMA/ Produce Safety updates, followed by one-on-one meetings with buyers from area retailers and distributors. The training will be held on Tuesday, March 6, 2018, 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., The Lyceum, 227 Lawrence St. Hartford, CT. The cost of the program is \$15.00 which includes lunch. Please contact Erin Windham at 860-713-2543 or Erin.Windham@ct.gov to register.



Kelp seeding lines in Groton



Cooking kelp

Pictures provided by J.P. Vellotti

FMNP FARMER RECERTIFICATION MEETINGS

All fruit, vegetable, and honey producers currently certified with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) must attend a recertification meeting to maintain the certification required to accept FMNP checks. Below is the list of meeting dates and locations.

- Monday, March 12, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. CT Ag Experiment Station, 123 Huntington Street, New Haven. Consumer Protection will be offering scale certifications before and during this meeting. Farmers are encouraged to bring their scales for the required annual inspection.
- Tuesday, March 20, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. CT Ag Experiment Station, 153 Cook Hill Road, Windsor.

Please RSVP no later than 24 hours in advance of the meeting to Mark Hood at 860-713-2503 or Mark.Hood@ct.gov.

AG DAY AT THE CAPITOL REGISTRATION OPEN

The Connecticut Agricultural Information Council (CAIC) invites agricultural non-profits, agricultural producer associations, agricultural cooperatives, federal and state agricultural agencies, and Connecticut municipalities to register for Ag Day at the Capitol. Ag Day will be held on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the North Lobby and Hall of Flags at the Capitol in Hartford, CT. Registration and payment to participate in Ag Day is due by Thursday, March 1, 2018.

Advertising Rates: Fifteen or fewer words: \$3.75 per insertion. More than 15 words: 25 cents per word per insertion. Ads must be related to agriculture in Connecticut and are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Payment must be received by noon on Friday before publication the following Wednesday. Make check or money order payable to the Connecticut Dept. of Agriculture, and mail copy and remittance to the department at 450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 701, Hartford, CT 06103. For more information contact Jane.Murdock@ct.gov or call 860-713-2588.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, 450 Columbus Blvd. Suite 701, Hartford CT 06103.

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