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# CONNECTICUT WEEKLY AGRICULTURAL REPORT

The latest news and updates in Connecticut agriculture

*Brought to you by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture*

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## COVID-19 Guidance

Dear Connecticut Agricultural Producers,

We are facing an unprecedented situation within our state and globally as the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to evolve. Last week Governor Lamont declared civil preparedness and public health emergencies as the state takes measures to mitigate the outbreak.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture is following guidance issued by the Governor's office, White House and other federal partners including: freeze on employee business travel outside of the state; utilizing teleconference and online collaboration with out-of-state colleagues when possible; and postponing and/or cancelling events.

Ag Day at the Capitol, scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2020, will not be

are looking into options to recognize the Outstanding Young Farmer, Century Farm and Ag Journalism award winners at a future date.

In addition, the agency has developed, implemented and maintained an Emergency Management Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) which complies with all applicable internal agency policies and state regulations. Staff has been briefed and is ready to follow procedures to ensure functions critical to the agency and industry needs are met and carried out in the interest of public safety and public health. Critical functions include investigating animal welfare complaints; caring for rescue animals under the agency's care, custody and control; sampling of water, meat, and milk; and licensing related to dairy, livestock, poultry, domestic pet-related operations, agricultural commodities, and seafood.

We are actively speaking with producers and various agricultural organizations across the state in order to minimize the negative impact on growers and address your concerns and issues. Please continue to communicate your questions and concerns to us. We will do our best to respond and share as much information as we can during this time.

Below we have compiled information from various sources on steps you can take to protect yourself, employees and consumers.

*Bryan P. Hurlburt*

Commissioner of Agriculture

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides clear guidance about preventing infection in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#). They also provide a number of [printable factsheets and posters](#) in English and Spanish suitable for use in the workplace. (Download at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html>)

## **Employer Actions Steps**

Your farm workforce is not immune to coronavirus, please begin taking steps to protect yourself and your employees.

1. Talk with your employees about coronavirus, how it spreads, and how to prevent getting infected.
2. Print the [CDC factsheets and posters](#), post in your workplace and employee housing facilities.
3. Provide guidance to help employees clean and disinfect employer-provided housing. Follow up with employees and manage the process to be sure that this happens. Set up a regular weekly and daily schedule for cleaning.
  - CDC guidance for cleaning homes: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>
4. Clean and disinfect your workplace. The employee breakroom and bathroom are great places for virus to be transmitted. Clean and disinfect any areas where employees congregate or routinely touch items such as

5. Provide cleaning supplies such as cleaning solutions, buckets, mops, brushes, etc for cleaning at work and for those living in employer-provided housing. (CDC list of approved antimicrobial cleaning products: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list\\_03-03-2020.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list_03-03-2020.pdf))
6. Review your sick leave policy. The first advice for people who are sick is to stay home except to get medical care. Do you provide paid sick leave for your employees? If you do not, will employees feel financially obligated to come to work even if they are sick?
7. Communicate with employees that they should stay home if they are sick. Employees sometimes come to work believing they will face punishment or firing if they miss work. Be sure your employees understand that their health and that of their co-workers' comes first. Communicate and make a plan to cover for sick employees. CDC provides posters in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) covering symptoms of novel coronavirus.
8. Prepare your disaster contingency plan. What will you do if 50% of your employees become sick and unable to work? Are there neighboring farms who might be able to share resources in an emergency? Who will manage for a few weeks if you or another key manager are unable to leave your house or are hospitalized?
  - Cornell provides the [Extension Disaster Education Network \(EDEN\)](#) to provide community education resources across the entire disaster cycle of preparedness, response, and recovery.
  - Penn State also provides farm [disaster preparedness resources](#).

For the most up-to-date information from the State of Connecticut on COVID-19, including guidance and other resources, visit [ct.gov/coronavirus](http://ct.gov/coronavirus). General questions can also be answered by calling 2-1-1 for assistance. The hotline is only intended to be used by individuals who are not experiencing symptoms. Anyone experiencing symptoms is strongly urged to contact their medical provider to seek treatment.

Additional resources are available at the following links:

- **COVID-19 Resources: General Information**
  - [CDC's COVID-19 website](#)
  - [USDA's COVID-19 website](#)
  - [FDA's COVID-19 website](#); [FDA Statement: FDA steps to ensure quality of foreign products](#)
  - [FSIS's COVID-19 website](#)
  - [DHS' COVID-19 website](#)
  - [State Department Travel Advisories](#)
- **Food Industry**
  - [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers \(CDC\)](#)
  - [COVID-19 Resources for the Food Industry \(The Acheson Group\)](#)
  - [Coronavirus: Fresh Produce Industry Resources \(United Fresh Produce Association\)](#)

[for the Food Industry](#) (includes recommendations for supporting consumers, associates, human resources, retail stores, distribution centers/transportation, product suppliers, and interacting with the media).

- **Food Safety**

- Food Safety Magazine: [Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) and Food Safety: A Time for Facts, Not Panic](#)
- Food and Environmental Virology (Journal): [Survival of Respiratory Viruses on Fresh Produce](#)
- [Food Safety Authority of Ireland's COVID-19 website](#): includes advice for food workers

- **Pets & Livestock**

- [CDC Guidance for People who Isolate in Home and Have Pets](#)
- [AVMA Disaster Preparedness for Pets](#)
- [AVMA Disaster Preparedness for Livestock & Large Animals](#)
- [USDA's Animal Care Emergency Programs](#)

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### **CLOSURE: Hartford Farmers' Market at Connecticut Regional Market**

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture and the Capital Region Development Authority announce that the Hartford Farmers' Market at the Connecticut Regional Market (101 Reserve Road, Hartford, CT) will be closed effective immediately through April 30, 2020. This closure is in accordance with Governor Lamont's executive order on Thursday, March 12, 2020, to prohibit all events in the state with more than 250 people, in an effort to contain and mitigate the spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

The health and safety of Connecticut's agricultural producers, their employees and consumers are of utmost concern at this time. Producers who submitted an application and payment to vend at the farmers' market starting April 1, 2020 will be advised that the full-season use agreement will be for eight (8) months use. At this time we anticipate starting the farmers' market season on May 1, 2020 but will continue to monitor the situation and make adjustments as needed to comply with state and federal guidance. All vendors who have already applied will receive additional information via email.

Questions or concerns should be directed to Capital Region Development Authority at 860-527-0100.

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### **Attention Farmers' Market Masters**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been emailed to farmers' markets interested in becoming a Certified CT Grown Farmers' Market and/or participating in the 2020 Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP).

Please provide information about your market and upload the signed MOU at the following link no later than April 1, 2020 to have your market listed in the FMNP check booklets.

[https://www.cognitofrms.com/CTDeptOfAgriculture/\\_2020farmersmarketinform](https://www.cognitofrms.com/CTDeptOfAgriculture/_2020farmersmarketinform)

Any questions should be directed to [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov).

*FMNP serves participants of Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) and seniors over the age of 60 and meet income eligibility guidelines by providing checks to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, cut herbs and honey at authorized locations throughout Connecticut.*



## **Exhibit at the 2020 Big E**

The Connecticut Building at the Big E offers a unique opportunity for agricultural businesses, non-profits, and other entities with an agricultural mission to showcase the diversity of Connecticut agriculture.

The 2020 Big E is scheduled to run from  
**September 18 - October 4, 2020.**

Online applications are available at  
<https://bit.ly/2wnPNXW> and  
are due by Friday, March 27, 2020.

Additional information is available at  
[www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov).

### **Ag Market Pricing**

[Northeast Regional Eggs](#)

[New Holland, PA Hay Report](#)

[New England Shell Eggs](#)

[Wholesale Fruits & Vegetables - Boston](#)

[Pennsylvania Weekly Cattle Auction Summary](#)

[Wholesale Ornamental Flowers - Boston](#)

[Pennsylvania Livestock Auction - Waynesburg, PA](#)

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### **Advertisements**

#### **For Sale**

1-R. Blumenthal & Donahue is now Connecticut's first independent NATIONWIDE Agri-Business Insurance Agency. Christmas tree growers, beekeepers, sheep breeders, organic farmers and all others, call us for all your insurance needs. 800-554-8049 or [www.bludon.com](http://www.bludon.com)

2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or [www.bludon.com](http://www.bludon.com)

3-R. Gallagher electric fencing for farms, horses, deer control, gardens, & beehives. Sonpal's Power Fence 860-491-2290

4-R. Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Program, endorsed by the CT Farm Bureau, save up to 23% on your farm insurance and get better protection. References available from satisfied farmers. Call Marci Zyskowski today at 203-444-6553

5-R. Pollination services for small scale farms. Call Hilltop Apiaries for information at 860-408-9039

14-R. Honeybees: 5-frame NUCS, DEEPS only available first week of May. Jones' Apiaries LLC 860-677-9391

15-R. Need Honey Bee Pollination? Call Heritage Apiaries, Canton, CT. 860-805-7191

16-R. 4x5 Round bales. 1st cutting dry bales, stored inside. 2nd cutting silage bales. Located in Woodbury. Delivery available. 203-266-4067.

#### **Wanted**

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

#### **Job Opportunities**

*Forge City Works Farmers Market Master; Part-Time Mid-April - End of October*

located on the grassy courtyard of a housing complex within Hartford's Frog Hollow neighborhood which brings local and healthy produce to community residents and creates a meeting space for the community and the surrounding workers from the State Capitol, insurance companies, and offices.

Job Duties: Attract, retain and manage an excellent and diverse mix of local vendors; Expand the customer base of the market using various PR strategies and creative, low-cost marketing; Oversee market site and market day activities, including local food events, cooking demonstrations, special events and market stage entertainment; Recruit, train, coordinate and acknowledge market employees and volunteers; Create and maintain effective administrative systems; Ensure sound financial management and sustainability of the market; Develop and maintain market policies and procedures; Maintain website / database; Measure success of market and communicate it to both our internal and external community

Email cover letter and resume to: Cary Wheaton, [cary@forgacityworks.org](mailto:cary@forgacityworks.org).

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