Lt. Governor Bysiewicz held a virtual news conference on Friday, February 5 with Agriculture Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt and Mayor Joe Ganim to announce a Farm Viability Grant awarded to the City of Bridgeport to establish a shipping container urban farm (pictured). The creation of the shipping container urban farm using the $49,999 grant will allow for year-round access to micro greens and leafy vegetables for Bridgeport residents. Watch the recording here.

COVID-19 VACCINE RESOURCES (information on Connecticut's phased rollout)
Farmer Certification Meetings for Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture is hosting virtual certification meetings for producers to participate in the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) at Certified Connecticut Grown Farmers' Markets during the 2021-2023 seasons.

All fruit, vegetable, cut herb, and honey producers selling at Certified Connecticut Grown Farmers' Markets must attend a certification meeting to meet eligibility requirements to participate in the FMNP program.

The certification allows farms to accept the FMNP checks as payment for fresh fruits, vegetables, cut herbs, and honey from Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clients and income-eligible seniors over the age of 60. Join us to get your certification, learn more about available grant funding for your farm, and accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to expand your sales.

Below is the current list of meeting dates which will all be held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

- Tuesday, February 9, 2021, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.
- Wednesday, February 17, 2021, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.
- Monday, February 22, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Thursday, February 25, 2021, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.


Additional meetings may be added. Please check the agency website at [www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov) throughout February and March for updates.

About FMNP

WIC FMNP is a congressionally authorized program administered by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture and jointly funded by the State of Connecticut and the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (USDA FNS).

The program provides a $15 check booklet consisting of five (5) $3 checks to participants of Women, Infants and Children (WIC) who are identified as “nutritionally at risk,” to buy fresh fruits, vegetables, and cut herbs at FMNP authorized locations. WIC FMNP check booklets are distributed to local WIC agencies.
Producer Certifications for Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

statewide by the agency through a partnership with the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) is a supplemental food program for individuals over the age of 60 or those who are disabled living in housing where congregate nutrition services are provided and meet income eligibility. Participants must be enrolled in another program with proper means testing (ex: Renter Rebate) to verify income. Each eligible participant receives one (1) $18 check booklet annually containing six (6) three dollar ($3) checks. SFMNP checks can be redeemed at FMNP authorized locations throughout Connecticut for fruits, vegetables, fresh cut herbs, and honey.

CONNECTICUTSEEKS OUTSTANDING YOUNG FARMER NOMINATIONS

The Connecticut Agricultural Information Council (CAIC) is seeking nominations for the 2021 Outstanding Young Farmer. Awarded annually during Ag Day at the Capitol, the Connecticut Outstanding Young Farmer Award recognizes the winner’s progress in their agricultural career, their soil and water conservation practices, and their contributions to the well-being of the community, the state, and the nation.

Nomination applications must be submitted electronically via email by February 26, 2021. Self-nominations are allowed. Details and application here.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Ag Day at the Capitol celebration will take place virtually on Tuesday, March 23, 2021. Details on the program will be posted at www.ctaginfocouncil.org. CAIC is also accepting nominations for the Century Farm and Ag Journalism awards.

COVID-19 Resources for Agricultural Producers

COVID-19 CONSUMER RESOURCES
Connecticut Grown Farm Map: online, interactive listing of open farm stands, farm stores and farmers’ markets to access Connecticut Grown produce, dairy, meat, shellfish, greenhouse and nursery stock.
COVID-19 PRODUCER RESOURCES
Find the latest guidance on best practices, resources and updates related to COVID-19 visit: https://portal.ct.gov/doag-covid

List your farm, farmers' market or farm stand on CTGrownMap.com by clicking here.

ALERT: Rollback to Phase 2.1 effective November 6, 2020
Find all updated guidance documents here.

Equine Guidance
Equine Competition Guidance
Farmers' Markets
Farm Stores/Stands and CSAs
Food Safety
Pick-Your-Own/Cut-Your-Own

CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURE IN THE NEWS
Environmental Priorities — Solar Energy and Land Conservation — Compete in the Legislature, 1/29, CT Examiner
CT Sea Grant leads project designed to spur the seaweed industry, 1/31, Greenwich Times
Federal grant could help to quadruple US seaweed aquaculture volumes, 2/2, The Fish Site
OP-ED | Buying Wine Where Food Is Purchased Is Worth It, 2/4, CT News Junkie

USDA FORUM ON BUILDING RESILIENCE IN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS
You’re invited to USDA’s forum Building Resilience in Agricultural & Food Systems through Innovative and Strategic Partnerships on Wednesday, February 17, 2021 from 1:00-4:30 p.m. EST. Presenters include leaders from USDA, ag industry and
community organizations followed by open Q&A discussion. This forum discussion will highlight how innovative and strategic partnerships between federal, state, local and private partners support the building of resilience in agricultural and food systems, with a focus on food systems and disaster recovery. Held in conjunction with USDA’s Ag Outlook Forum, this Microsoft Teams Live Event is hosted by USDA’s Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) and Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) Mission Area. The event takes place in conjunction with the Agricultural Outlook Forum, the USDA’s largest annual gathering, bringing together more than 1,500 sector leaders to connect and discuss current and key emerging issues in agriculture.

This event will be conducted virtually using Microsoft Teams Live Event. Click here to register! The link to the event will be provided upon registration. Please note that registration to this event does not register you for the USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum. For more information, please click here.

If you have any questions, please contact OPPE’s Alex Cordova at alex.cordova@usda.gov or FPAC’s Jessica Carlton at Jessica.carlton@usda.gov.

WEBINAR: PFAS IN AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS

Join USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NCRS) and the Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Community (LPELC) for a webinar on PFAS and its potential effects on agricultural production on February 19, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. EST.

Even though we may not realize it, use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a part of our everyday lives. These “forever” chemicals make up a family of over 4,000 human made compounds which have many beneficial properties such as repelling water, resisting heat and reducing friction. Since these chemicals are so persistent in the environment, they tend to accumulate over time. They can be found virtually everywhere from drinking water to plants and animals. The first PFAS webinar focused on its impacts on water and provided an overview of a few of the treatment options. This session will address PFAS in biosolids, soils, and manures. Biosolids have been land applied for decades and manures for centuries. Both have provided valuable nutrients for crop production and organics to help build soil tilth. Discussion will be centered around the potential impacts PFAS can have on agricultural production. For more information and to register, click here.

UPCOMING COURSES FROM THE FARMER’S OFFICE

Spring will be here soon before we know it! As we enter the last few weeks of winter, we are gearing up with all sorts of recordkeeping webinars and workshops to help you grow your business profitably. I hope you can join us! Feel free to reach out with questions.

- **QuickBooks Intensive** | 4-week course starts February 22, 2021* | With our QuickBooks Intensive course, you will learn how to create a bookkeeping system. In this 4-week course, I’ll show you step-by-step how to make the most out of QB, get your specific business needs accounted for, and get the information you need to improve profits.
• Easy Crop Budgets for Farm Profitability (LIVE Webinar) | February 18, 2021 at 2PM ET | In this live webinar, we'll show you how to find all the data you need—from harvest yields to direct costs to labor expenses; QuickBooks to Excel—and how to put it all together so that you know what is profitable and what isn't.

• We just added a new course to the self-paced “The Farmer’s Office – Online." QuickBooks QuickTips takes you deeper into how to enter in all the nuances of the different types of transactions and how to get them into QuickBooks. It builds Basic QuickBooks and Advanced QuickBooks modules. In this course, we go step-by-step through all of the different transactions in a live QuickBooks file.

• The Farmer’s Office is approved by FSA for its borrower training requirement. Check our website for more details.

Save the Date
Tuesday February 16
6:30-8:30

Join farmers, landowners, and service providers as we talk about opportunities to lease and own farmland in Connecticut.

Sign up at:
bit.ly/farmmixersignup
If you are a farmer in Connecticut looking for land to lease or buy, join the virtual Farmland Mixer on February 18, 2021 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. This is a great opportunity for you to talk to landowners and get other resources from service providers about how to prepare to lease or buy land. To make sure this event has the most impact possible, we are limiting the amount of attendees, so be sure to sign up early. Sign up here: https://bit.ly/farmmixersignup

Some attendees will be asked to give a three minute pitch for the day of the mixer. Keep in mind that pitch slots are limited, so some attendees will only be permitted to listen. Service providers will also be present on the day of the mixer to answer questions that come up in conversations between farmers and landowners, and to direct you towards resources for taking the next steps. If you have any questions about the event, feel free to reach out to Will O’Meara at will@landforgood.org.

WEBINAR SERIES: IMPROVING PASTURE MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Tri-State SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education) Project is offering a webinar series on improving pasture management for sustainable livestock production, starting on Friday, February 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This project is a professional development opportunity for agricultural service providers and farmers provided by the Northeast SARE state programs in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Webinars are open to service providers and farmers. By attending all webinars, participants will have a sound understanding of how to develop a personalized grazing plan.

For more information, visit http://meatsystems.uconn.edu/ or contact Rachel Bespuda, Project Director, at rachel.bespuda@uconn.edu. To register, click here.

NEW ENGLAND FARMERS’ MARKET MANAGERS SEMINAR

Harvest New England Association is pleased to announce the New England Farmers’ Market Managers Seminar. Five virtual workshops, focused on issues related to managing farmers’ markets, will be held over two days on February 22 and 23. The seminar will precede the Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show to be held February 24 and 25. Registration is now open! There is no cost to attend.

Seminar topics will include discussion on market planning and promotion, community engagement and partnerships, conflict resolution, creating welcoming and inclusive markets, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and SNAP incentive programs. The seminar will kick-off with a workshop entitled, So Long 2020! It’s a New Year, a New Day, a New Marketplace in 2021, which will look at how farmers’ market managers can navigate the upcoming season given the uncertainties related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Workshops will include
presentations and discussion with farmers market managers from across the New England region. The complete agenda, including workshop descriptions and speakers can be found here or at www.harvestnewengland.org.

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**USDA TEMPORARILY SUSPENDS DEBT COLLECTIONS, FORECLOSURES, AND OTHER ACTIVITIES ON FARM LOANS**

Due to the national public health emergency caused by coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), the U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced the temporary suspension of past-due debt collections and foreclosures for distressed borrowers under the Farm Storage Facility Loan and the Direct Farm Loan programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). USDA will temporarily suspend non-judicial foreclosures, debt offsets or wage garnishments, and referring foreclosures to the Department of Justice; and USDA will work with the U.S. Attorney’s Office to stop judicial foreclosures and evictions on accounts that were previously referred to the Department of Justice. Additionally, USDA has extended deadlines for producers to respond to loan servicing actions, including loan deferral consideration for financially distressed and delinquent borrowers. In addition, for the Guaranteed Loan program, flexibilities have been made available to lenders to assist in servicing their customers.

For the full press release and more information, click here.

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**NOMINATIONS DEADLINE EXTENDED FOR LIPINSKI RURAL INITIATIVES AWARD**

Last fall, Farm Credit East announced the opening of nominations for its newly created Lipinski Rural Initiatives Award. In honor of former CEO Bill Lipinski, the Lipinski Rural Initiatives Award aims to recognize innovative and transformational efforts to revitalize Northeast rural communities. The nomination deadline for this inaugural award has been extended to February 15, 2021.

The Lipinski Rural Initiatives Award will reward programs, projects, individuals, businesses, organizations and/or institutions that create jobs in rural areas of the Northeast; contribute to the quality of life in rural communities; or enhance rural infrastructure, such as community facilities and broadband, necessary for strong rural economies.

In the program’s first year, Farm Credit East has designated $25,000 and the association’s strategic partner CoBank has agreed to match those funds, making $50,000 available to distribute to innovative initiatives. Nominations must be received by February 15, 2021. Visit FarmCreditEast.com/Rural to learn more or to submit a nomination.

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**BRASS CITY HARVEST REGIONAL FOOD HUB SEEKS PARTNERS**

The Brass City Harvest Regional Food Hub located in Waterbury, CT, is working to deliver fresh, local food to Connecticut consumers – especially seniors, the disabled,
and low-income families.

They are seeking to forge new partnerships with the region’s farmers, orchards, as well as producers and processors of meat, poultry, and dairy, to ensure access to fresh, local foods to increase food security.

Produce partners must meet Produce Safety Rule requirements, including one responsible person on the farm having completed the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training available through University of Connecticut Extension.

Brass City Harvest can also offer light processing and value-added food production for Connecticut farmers. To complement those efforts, they are also seeking a culinary professional to make prepared meals available for delivery or pickup.

Interested parties should visit www.BrassCityHarvestWaterbury.com or contact Susan Pronovost, Executive Director, at 203-982-2272.

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**$284 BILLION IN PPP FUNDS AVAILABLE**

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) re-opened for small businesses and nonprofits impacted by the pandemic. This new round of federal funding includes $284 billion in forgivable loans for new borrowers and certain existing PPP borrowers.

For additional information on terms, participating lenders, eligibility, and applications, check the U.S. SBA PPP website.
DISTRIBUTION NETWORK CAPACITY STUDY FOR VALUE-ADDED DAIRY

The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center seeks a contractor to conduct research of New England’s distribution network capacity for value-added dairy products. This report shall include an in-depth discussion regarding New England’s current distribution system, capacity, and geographic considerations to determine opportunities to get products to further and more robust markets.

View the RFP: Distribution Network Capacity Study for New England Value-Added Dairy Products RFP


Click here to learn more and sign up for the Northeast DBIC newsletter.

Looking to save jobs? CT DOL Shared Work Program offers a solution. The Shared Work program is an economic relief program available to Connecticut employers who are experiencing business downturns. It is a great alternative to laying off employees. For more information, please visit us at SharedWorkCt.com and chat with our Virtual Assistant, Sherry.

Ag Market Pricing

Middlesex Livestock Auction - CT
*Prices last provided on January 28, 2021*

Northeast Regional Eggs

New England Shell Eggs

Pennsylvania Weekly Cattle Auction Summary

Pennsylvania Livestock Auction - Eighty Four, PA

New Holland Dairy Auction - New Holland, PA

New Holland, PA Hay Report

USDA Mexico Canada Weekly Update (New!)

Wholesale Fruits & Vegetables - Boston

Wholesale Ornamental Flowers - Boston

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

2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or www.bludon.com

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

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

24-R. Seven foot International 3-point hitch cultivator. $300. 860-779-2107.


39-R. Honeybees: 5-frame NUCS, DEEPS only, available 1st week May. Jones Apiaries LLC, 860-677-9391


41-R. Straw - small square bales, 45-50 lbs. 860-675-9252, please leave message.

43-R. 24’ Aluminum Body with rail gate, 16’ Aluminum beverage body, tractor tires and rims 15.5R38. 203-623-2694

Wanted

42-R. EZTRAIL kicker bale wagons, any condition. Cash paid. Call or text George, 860-918-5442.

Job Opportunities

Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders (SAFSF) seeks a full-time Communications Director to manage and execute all SAFSF internal and external communications in our core areas of work, in collaboration with the entire SAFSF staff. This is a newly created position that requires an individual who has experience working with a broad range of communications tools and channels and who can work effectively across a wide range of communications activities. The individual hired will also help clarify the role, the relationships, and the responsibilities of the position within the SAFSF staff as they learn on the job.

Read the full job description here. All interested applicants must apply online
at tfaforms.com/4879050 no later than 11:59 pm PT on Monday, February 22, 2021. All SAFSF employees work remotely; candidates may live anywhere within the United States.

The State of Connecticut, University of Connecticut, Animal Care Services Department has an opening for a permanent, full-time Animal Care Technician position. The work schedule is Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. which may include holidays and rotating mandatory weekend overtime. The hourly salary is $21.12 and offers a full benefits package including medical and dental insurance.

Application deadline is February 16, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. For more information, or to apply online, click here.

UConn Extension is actively seeking to contract with an expert to coordinate and lead learning events over 3 years (2021-2024) for urban farmers in Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven. By deepening skills through knowledge sharing and immersive day-long events, our vision is to build a network of urban farmers and urban agriculture service providers within and between Connecticut’s urban centers. This is an exciting opportunity for the right person who is passionate about the interconnected issues of food, health, land, equity, and justice, dependable, enjoys connecting and working with people with diverse backgrounds, and demonstrates an array of skills and knowledge related to both urban farming and event organization.

This is a grant-funded opportunity. UConn will contract an individual/entity for urban farming training services for one year, with opportunity for renewal in 2022 and 2023 based on performance. Proposals accepted until February 26, 2021. For more information, including the full RFP, please contact Jiff Martin at jiff.martin@uconn.edu.

Interested in Advertising? Click here for details on rates and submission.

Upcoming Events
(click the image to be redirected to the event website)
PRODUCER CERTIFICATIONS FOR FARMERS’ MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

WEBINAR SERIES
LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS RESPONSE TO COVID-19
BUILDING BETTER BEYOND

MARKETING INNOVATIONS
WHEN COMMUNITIES EAT AT HOME
October 19 | 1 PM EST
FORMAL AND INFORMAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS
February 15 | 1 PM EST
RETAINING & ENGAGING NEW LOCAL CUSTOMERS:
TENSIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES
November 18 | 1 PM EST
ONLINE PLATFORMS: FOOD AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE
March 15 | 1 PM EST
EMERGENCY FOOD, CHARITY, AND THE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM
INTEGRATING NATIONAL CONSUMER SURVEY RESULTS INTO FUTURE PLANNING
April 18 | 1 PM EST
INNOVATIONS IN STATE POLICIES AND IMPACTS FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SECTORS
NEXT STEP TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM IN TIMES OF UNCERTAIN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR
May 17 | 1 PM EST

https://conilr.localfoodeconomics.com/

AG SERVICE PROVIDER WORKSHOPS WINTER 2021
register at: bit.ly/NCTFAworkshops
Presented by the New CT Farmer Alliance

- AFFORDING FARMLAND
  W/ Land for Good
  January 18, 4:30pm
- NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR FARM TO SCHOOL
  W/ Put Local on Your Tray
  February 1, 4:30pm
- FARM LOANS 101
  W/ Farm Credit East and the USDA’s Farm Service Agency
  February 15, 4:30pm
- POLICY 101: BEING A FARMER ADVOCATE
  W/ Working Lands Alliance, CT Farm Bureau, and the CT Food & Ag Resiliency Coalition
  February 21, 4:30pm
- CHOOSING A BUSINESS STRUCTURE: ENTITY FORMATION FOR FARMERS
  W/ Legal Food Lab
  March 1, 4:30pm
- UCONN EXTENSION: SERVICES & SUPPORT FOR FARMERS
  W/ The UConn Soil Lab, Fruit Crops Specialist, and Solid Ground
  March 8, 5:30pm

Questions? Reach out to newctfarmers@gmail.com
