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To celebrate Connecticut’s maple season, Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz joined Department of Agriculture Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt, and other officials for the 2022 ceremonial maple tapping at the Capitol in Hartford today. The event is a precursor to Maple Weekend, March 19-20. For details visit CTMaple.org.
Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Detected in Non-Commercial Backyard Flock in New London County

Poultry producers and hobbyists encouraged to practice biosecurity measures to prevent spread of the disease

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg) announced Wednesday, March 2, 2022, that it is working closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on a joint incident response after confirmation of highly pathogenic avian influenza in a non-commercial backyard flock (non-poultry) in New London County.

Avian influenza does not present an immediate public health concern. No human cases of this particular strain of avian influenza virus have been detected in the United States. As a reminder, the proper handling and cooking of poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165°F kills bacteria and viruses. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, recent detections of this strain of influenza in birds in Connecticut and several other states present a low risk to the public.

Connecticut State Veterinarian Dr. Jane Lewis said that samples were sent to the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Lab (CVMDL) for testing. The results from CVMDL were then confirmed by the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa.

CT DoAg animal health officials have quarantined the affected premises, and birds on the property have been depopulated to prevent further disease spread. Birds from the flock will not enter the food system. Per USDA guidance, CT DoAg has established a 10-kilometer surveillance zone around the detected property to monitor area flocks.

This announcement is a reminder for those involved in poultry production to increase biosecurity measures to prevent their flocks from becoming infected. All poultry producers, from small backyard to large commercial operations, should review their biosecurity plans and take precautions to protect their birds.
Poultry biosecurity materials and checklists can be found on the USDA’s “Defend the Flock” website. Best practices include:

- Discourage unnecessary visitors and use biosecurity signs to warn people not to enter buildings without permission.
- Ask all visitors if they have had any contact with any birds in the past five days.
- Forbid entry to employees and visitors who own any kind of fowl.
- Require all visitors to cover and disinfect all footwear.
- Lock all entrances to chicken houses after hours.
- Avoid non-essential vehicular traffic on-farm.
- After hauling birds to processors, clean and disinfect poultry transport coops and vehicles before they return to the farm.
- Report anything unusual, especially sick or dead birds, to CT DoAg at 860-713-2505 or ctstate.vet@ct.gov.

In addition to practicing good biosecurity, poultry owners should keep their birds away from wild ducks and geese and their droppings. Outdoor access for poultry should be limited at this time.

To report sick birds, unexplained high number of deaths, or sudden drop in egg production, please contact Connecticut State Veterinarian at 860-713-2505 or ctstate.vet@ct.gov, or the USDA at 866-536-7593.

Connecticut ranks first in New England for egg production and has a very diverse poultry industry.

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PROPOSED CENTER FOR FOOD INNOVATION SEEKS COMMUNITY INPUT

Agriculture is a $5 billion industry for Connecticut according to a study by Farm Credit East. Food-producing sectors of agriculture, which exclude industries...
and/or out-of-state, the total economic impact of all food manufacturing in Connecticut exceeds $8.3 billion.

Despite making up a hefty share of the state’s economy, at present, Connecticut’s food entrepreneurs do not have a resource to help them establish and innovate with their small businesses.

The University of Connecticut (UConn) is exploring the creation of a Center for Agriculture and Food Innovation to help businesses in this sector. This center will support startups and established food manufacturers, farm-based or otherwise, looking to expand and innovate with their products.

“UConn is a committed partner in the state’s goals – from economic development to preparing a workforce for the future,” says Interim President Radenka Maric. “This Center could serve as another opportunity for UConn to support growing Connecticut businesses.”

UConn’s College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources (CAHNR) is leading efforts related to the potential Center and this effort to gain feedback from the business community through this survey.

“In many ways, UConn already serves as a central resource on both agricultural science and business,” says Dean Indrajeet Chaubey from the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources. “We’re looking to expand our efforts to help food entrepreneurs succeed and support economic development in the state.”

This work is a collaboration between CAHNR, the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, and the UConn School of Business.

“This would be the next step in integrating key systems to accelerate business growth while engaging agricultural producers and food manufacturers,” says Agriculture Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt of Connecticut Department of Agriculture. “Providing the resources and training in this manner will not only beneficially impact the producers and manufacturers, but our food system and communities as a whole.”

The team behind this effort has developed a survey for food manufacturers, including pet food companies, wineries, and breweries to assess their needs and help inform the development of a potential innovation center.

The survey will take approximately five to 10 minutes and can be completed on a smart phone, computer, or other device with internet access.

UConn seeks to expand support for food-focused businesses in product development, quality control, entrepreneurship training, navigating regulatory requirements, and other R&D needs, says Chaubey.

“CAHNR is committed to the development of a vibrant and sustainable agricultural industry and food system. These efforts are an extension of our ongoing mission to serve residents and businesses in our state,” says Chaubey.

Click here to complete the survey.
2022 AGRICULTURE APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN TO EXHIBIT AT THE CONNECTICUT BUILDING AT BIG E

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg) is now accepting vendor applications for the agriculture booth spaces in the Connecticut Building at The Big E, September 16-October 2, 2022, with the purpose of providing Connecticut farms, small agricultural businesses, and agricultural non-profit organizations the opportunity to market and promote their products and/or service.

This is a unique opportunity for agricultural businesses, non-profits, and other entities with an agricultural mission to showcase the diversity of Connecticut agriculture to over one million attendees who come through the Connecticut Building. Connecticut Day will take place on Wednesday, September 21, 2022, and Harvest New England Day will be held on Friday, September 30, 2022.

Interested applicants are encouraged to review the exhibitor guidelines, and submit a completed application by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 25, 2022. Licensed Connecticut farm wineries interested in having their wines available by the glass will be receiving a separate application to participate.

Guidelines and Application here.

For more information, please contact Rebecca Eddy at Rebecca.Eddy@ct.gov, or 860-573-0323.

USDA VALUE-ADDED PRODUCER GRANTS PROGRAM

The Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and marketing of new...
You may receive priority if you are a beginning farmer or rancher, a socially-disadvantaged farmer or rancher, a small or medium-sized farm or ranch structured as a family farm, a farmer or rancher cooperative, or are proposing a mid-tier value chain.

Grants are awarded through a national competition. Each fiscal year, applications are requested through a notice published in the Federal Register and through an announcement posted on Grants.gov. Program Period varies for **paper applications which must be postmarked by May 2, 2022. Applications are permitted via Grants.gov and must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern time on April 25, 2022.**

For more information follow the link below.

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**CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURE DAY RETURNS IN PERSON**

The Connecticut Agricultural Information Council (CAIC) announces that Connecticut Agriculture Day will be held on Friday, March 25, 2022, in-person at a new location due to current restrictions still activated in the Capitol. Ag Day will be held at the Governor William A. O’Neill State Armory, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Agricultural non-profits, agricultural producer associations, agricultural cooperatives, federal and state agricultural agencies, and Connecticut municipalities are invited to register for a tabling space and encouraged to offer product samples that showcase Connecticut agriculture to state and legislative officials. **Register online by March 4, 2022.**

For more information on participating in Ag Day, contact Rebecca Eddy at Rebecca.Eddy@ct.gov or 860-573-0323.

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**BEER, WINE, AND SPIRITS BUYERS MISSION**

Are you seeking new growth opportunities for your business? The Connecticut Department of Agriculture partners with Food Export USA–Northeast (Food Export–Northeast), a non-profit organization that assists U.S. companies looking to start or expand export sales. Through this partnership, we aim to maximize your success through programs and services in Export Education, Market Entry, and Market Promotion.

Food Export Northeast provides market intelligence, education, assistance, tools, and financial support for novice to seasoned U.S. food companies that
Currently, we are seeking Connecticut companies for participation in the **Beer, Wine, and Spirits Buyers Mission at the National Restaurant Association Show taking place in Chicago on May 22, 2022.** Hosted by Food Export Midwest in partnership with the National Restaurant Association the show attracts over 4,000 exhibitors and 40,000 attendees and is your opportunity to develop and expand your business with international buyers who have expressed interest in a variety of U.S. products, including wine, beer, spirits, and cocktail ingredients.

You’ll have the opportunity to meet with up to eleven (11) pre-qualified buyers from around the world in pre-arranged, one-on-one meetings right here in the U.S., generate new sales leads, and build relationships with key industry players! It’s the perfect low-cost opportunity to meet qualified buyers from around the world in one place!

The early registration fee is $300.00 and you must have a National Restaurant Association Show badge to participate in this Buyers Mission.

For questions or more information, please contact Erin Windham with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture at Erin.Windham@ct.gov or 860-519-6083.

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**Specialty Crop Block Grant Now Open**

**CONNECTICUT SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg) is now accepting applications for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) for the 2022 program year. Funding priorities include strengthening and improving food systems, improving food
Applications are due by March 10, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. to AGR.grants@ct.gov. Eligible applicants include commodity groups, agricultural organizations, colleges and universities, municipalities, state agencies, and agricultural nonprofits. Projects must benefit the industry as a whole and not a single organization, business, or commercial product. As a result, individual farms or businesses are encouraged to apply and partner with other eligible applicants rather than apply themselves. This is a reimbursement grant with awards up to $99,999.

The goal of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in domestic and foreign markets. Specialty crops are defined as any fruit or vegetable, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops, including floriculture. Also included is honey, maple syrup, Christmas trees and processed foods/food products which are made of at least 50% specialty crops (excluding added water). An eligible plant must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered a specialty crop.

For more information on the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, please visit the website, http://www.ctgrown.gov/grants and click on Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, or contact Rebecca Eddy at Rebecca.Eddy@ct.gov or 860-573-0323.

NEW VERSIONS OF MSPA CERTIFICATES OF REGISTRATION REQUIRED AFTER MARCH 31, 2022

On October 18, 2021, the Wage and Hour Division (WHD) published three new forms for Farm Labor Contractors (FLCs) and Farm Labor Contractor Employees (FLCEs) to use to apply for or update their Certificates of Registration. WHD developed these forms in order to provide applicants and their representatives with clarification on required fields and documents and feature expanded instructions to guide applicants through the registration process. There are now three different forms, each of which serves a different purpose and all of which can be found on this website:

- Form WH-530 should be used for FLCs to apply for initial or renewal Certificates of Registration;
- Form WH-535 should be used for FLCEs to apply for initial or renewal Certificates of Registration; and
- Form WH-540 should be used for both FLCs and FLCEs to amend a valid Certificate of Registration.

In addition, WHD launched a new website to assist applicants with Certificate Registration. This website includes brief webinars, frequently asked questions, and other resources. If you have any questions about the new forms, we encourage you to first review the resources on this website and the instructions on the form. If you continue to have questions, please contact us at (415) 241-3505 or MSPAFLC@dol.gov.
PURCHASE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LFPA)

The USDA recently announced the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA). The purpose of this program is to maintain and improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency by:

1. supporting local producers and socially disadvantaged producers* through building and expanding economic opportunity, and
2. establishing and broadening partnerships with producers, the food distribution community, and local food networks to ensure distribution of fresh and nutritious foods to underserved communities.**

More details on the program can be found on the USDA's website and through reading the complete request for applications (RFA).

The CT Department of Agriculture (DoAg) will administer $2.64 million of the total $4.4 million, while CT’s two federally recognized tribes will administer the remainder. Outlined below is DoAg’s preliminary plan for administration of the allocated funding. To ensure the agency is aware of the needs of those engaged in the program and for which the program serves, CT DoAg is soliciting comments, feedback, or suggestions for improvement to the proposed utilization of funds no later than Tuesday, March 15, 2022. We strongly value your opinion and will consider all feedback in the final plan.

Please review DoAg’s plan for program funds on DoAg’s LFPA page and submit your comments using this form FORM TO SUBMIT COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

*If you are a CT farmer of any size, years of experience, and/or produce value-added products using CT Grown ingredients interested in selling product through this program, please also complete THE PRODUCER INTEREST FORM.*

For any questions, please reach out to Cyrena.Thibodeau@ct.gov or 860-895-3094
2022 CONNECTICUT COMPOST WEBINAR SERIES

SESSION 1: Compost Webinar: Composting Basics and the Science of Compost
Register in advance for this meeting.
Mar 23, 2022 03:00 to 6:00 p.m.

SESSION 2: Compost Series: Farm Composting/BioChar in Compost
Register in advance for this meeting.
Mar 30, 2022 03:00 to 6:00 p.m.

SESSION 3: Compost Series: Large/Municipal and Commercial Scale Composting
Register in advance for this meeting.
Apr 6, 2022 03:00 PM to 6:00 p.m.
USDA, CORNELL HOST FIRST NATIONAL HEMP WEBINAR SERIES

Lectures will be given by various hemp research experts from academia, research laboratories, production facilities, and private industry:

- March 9 – Extraction Chemistry/Facility Design: Alisia Ratliff
- March 23 – The Endocannabinoid System: Ethan Russo M.D
- April 6 – Hemp Food Science: Hunter Friedland
- April 20 – Hemp Diversity/Genetics: Dr. Daniela Vergara
- May 4 – Economics of Hemp Production: Dr. Tyler Mark

The webinars will occur every other Wednesday from 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. EST and include an interactive Q&A session. Registration is required.

CONNECTICUT GROWN PRODUCER SURVEY

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture is seeking producer feedback on the 2021 CT Grown campaign. The short survey will take approximately three minutes to complete. We value and appreciate your input as we work together to strengthen CT Grown.

Respond Now
Take the survey.

If you are looking for more information on adding events, downloading the new CT Grown logo, adding your farm to the interactive map please visit www.CTGrown.org.

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ASK AN EXPERT

A Webinar Series from
Connecticut Farmland Trust and Friends

WEBINAR SERIES FROM CONNECTICUT FARMLAND TRUST AND FRIENDS

Join CFT staff and their guests from the comfort of your home or office for information and education. The series will catch you up on what we’ve been up to, and you’ll hear from outside experts too, farmers and scientists, regarding current events in agriculture. Ask them your burning questions. We'll have good conversations. For you, there is no charge to attend, but you must pre-register to receive the live webinar link. Each webinar has a unique Zoom link you will receive when you sign up.

While We Were Still Working From Our Dining Rooms: 2021 Accomplishments

We may have been working from our dining rooms, but you helped us preserve seven farms and help farmers connect to farmland. Come hear about the farms you helped CFT protect in 2021.

**Monday, March 7, 12-1 p.m. or Tuesday, March 8, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

**Future of CT Food: Two Farmers' Perspectives**

What happens when you bring together two engaging, inspirational yet down-to-earth farmers to talk about CT food and farming trends in CT? You learn something new.

**Thursday, March 10, 12-1 p.m.**

**Farmlink: The Future of Finding Farmland**

A 2017 survey done by The National Young Farmers Coalition found land access to be the number one challenge that young farmers and ranchers face.

**Tuesday, March 15, 12-1 p.m.**

**Climate Change means Farming (and Food) Will Change**
Climate is changing. But what does that mean for CT agriculture? Here's your chance to hear from a farmer and a conservation scientist.

Thursday, March 17, 12-1 p.m.

ACCESS 2 AG BUS TOUR

Come see how the interactive screens work.

ACCESS TO AGRICULTURE

Access to Agriculture is an on-board information system to help transit riders easily locate nourishing food locally grown in Connecticut’s Windham and Estuary Shoreline Transit regions.

The cell phone app brings a person to a map with information in each region on how they can more readily access local food.

The map highlights points of access to farm products or produce such as a farmstand, a local grocer or Big Y Your Family Market.

Come see how it works!

LOCATION:

Estuary Transit District, 17 Industrial Park Rd, Suite 8, Centerbrook, CT

RSVP: Outreach@ctcd.org

2022 FARM TRANSITION GRANT AVAILABLE

The 2022 Farm Transition Grant (FTG) is now available at www.CTGrown.gov/grants. Applications will be accepted until March 8, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.

The 2022 program will again provide matching funds to Connecticut farmers and agricultural cooperatives for the diversification of existing farm operations,
Grant guidelines and forms can be found at www.CTGrown.gov/grants. Additional detail on match requirements and eligible expenses can be found in the guidance. All applications will be submitted electronically via the new DoAg Grants Portal. Questions regarding the Farm Transition Grant can be directed to Alison Grabarz at Alison.Grabarz@ct.gov.

NRCS ANNOUNCES URBAN AGRICULTURE INITIATIVE IN CONNECTICUT

Thomas L. Morgart, State Conservationist for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, has announced the agency is rolling out its Urban Agriculture Initiative in Connecticut and will be accepting applications for FY2022 funding through March 18, 2022.

Urban agriculture pioneers are taking action in their communities growing not only fresh, healthy produce, but increasing opportunity and knowledge and improving the beauty of their neighborhoods. Through this initiative, NRCS will help urban farmers care for the natural resources on their land – soil, water, air, plants, and animals by addressing soil health, irrigation and water conservation, weeds and pests, and high tunnels.

For more information visit the link below.
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.

50-R. The SIG Insurance Agencies offer a wide range of carriers, can save you up to 23% on your farm insurance and provide better protection. References available from satisfied farmers. Call us for all your insurance needs with locations in CT, RI, NY and NH. Contact our AG department at 866-346-3744, option 4.

54-R. Transplanters, vacuum seeders, fertilizer applicators, garlic and potato planters and harvesters. High quality Italian-made precision equipment for the vegetable, tobacco, hemp, fruit, and floral markets. Call or email us today for details. Griffin Farm Equipment, LLC. 860-508-2426, Griffinfarm@aol.com; www.griffinfarmtools.com

55-R. 250 Bales clean golden yellow rye straw, cut 6/1, large bales. 203-506-6318.


22-3. SnowBlower – 48” PTO. Like new only used twice $3,095 new. Asking $2,500 best offer. 860-604-3452


22-5. Lynn Blackmer, your local Nationwide Farm Insurance agent. AFIS Certified. Nationwide Farm Master Certified. Serving CT, RI & MA. Any type/size farm. CT Farm Bureau members may quality for discount. Cell: 860-377-8947 lblackmer@caluorinsurance.com Appointments available any time.

Wanted

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Job Opportunities

The State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Regulatory Services' State Animal Control Unit has an available position for a State Animal Control Officer. In this position you will be accountable for independently performing a full range of tasks in the enforcement and education of laws and regulations pertaining to the control and proper care of domestic, companion and exotic animals.

For more information, please review the job description here: https://www.jobapscloud.com/CT/sup/bulppreview.asp?R1=220228&R2=1405PS&R3=001. Closing date: March 16, 2022

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

Upcoming Events
(click on image below for info)
WEBINAR 1  
Assessing soil health: What is the status of my soil health?  
Tuesday, February 15  
Speaker: Kristen Kurtz (Cornell Soil Health Lab)

WEBINAR 2  
The value of soil health: soil, plant, and animal interactions  
Tuesday, March 22  
Speakers: Sam Corcoran (UConn Extension)  
Joe Emethner (UConn Extension)

WEBINAR 3  
Creating meaningful soil health change: What can I do to make positive changes to my soil health?  
Tuesday, April 19  
Speakers: Karlee Farber-Strik (NJ NCRS)  
Matthew Demont (Soil Health Division, NRCS)

All webinars will be held from 10 am to 12 noon.

Webinars are open to service providers and farmers and will be comprised of three for farmers in addition to interactive educational sessions. Participation in all webinars is encouraged, but not required. For more information, visit https://extension.uconn.edu/ or contact Rachel Bemposta, Project Director at rachel.bemposta@uconn.edu

REGISTER HERE: s.uconn.edu/regsarespring22

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A WEBINAR SERIES  
Join us this season to talk about the different stressors that farmers face in Connecticut and the ways your fellow farmers are managing them. This webinar series is open to all, but all participants will be completely anonymous to other attendees. Feel free to submit questions and thoughts ahead of time to Rebecca.Toms@UConn.edu.

You're Not Perfect: The Myth of the Perfect Farm and Celebrating your Successes  
February 16th, 7PM-8:30PM  
Wih: Jen Solinetti, Woven Roots Farm, Tyingham, MA

What it's Like: What to Expect if You Want to See a Therapist  
March 8th, 7PM, 8:30PM  
A conversation with Alaina D'Pesa, LCW and Becca Toms

Farm Talk: Sharing Common Stressors Among CT farmers  
March 1 from 10:30AM-12PM  
A panel discussion with Lauren Little, Steve Munno, and Andromeda Maci

Brought to you by: SOLID GROUND

Register at: https://newfarms.uconn.edu/solidground/