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PRESS RELEASE

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CAES Begins New PFAS Analysis Program for Connecticut Farms

New Haven - CAES is now accepting soil samples from Connecticut farms for a new program providing free analysis of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), a class of highly toxic chemicals. PFAS, which have been found on farms and in drinking water across the nation, can cause harmful health effects at extremely low concentrations and have earned the nickname "forever chemicals" due to their lack of degradation over time. They have been in use since the 1940s in many industrial and consumer products (e.g., firefighting foams, textiles, and food packaging), which has resulted in widespread environmental contamination. Farms are particularly concerned due to high PFAS levels in municipal biosolids, which have been historically applied as fertilizer.

The new program, which is voluntary for CT farms, provides sampling kits to ensure contamination-free soil collection, and provides data on 14 PFAS directly to the farmers who submit samples. "Our hope is that PFAS data will help farmers protect their safety and that of their customers" says Jasmine Jones, the PFAS technician at CAES. PFAS found in farm soils may impact crops and livestock, and may pose a risk to drinking water wells on and near farms. There are no enforceable limits for PFAS on farms at the state or federal level, though high levels can be harmful to human and animal health. "Collecting data on PFAS concentrations at CT farms is an important step towards understanding the scope of PFAS contamination issues in CT" says Sara Nason, Ph.D., a research scientist at CAES. The new CAES program uses a certified EPA method for soil analysis, and has ISO:17025:2017 accreditation, an internationally recognized lab quality certification. "Data quality has been a big priority for our PFAS measurements" says Nason.

Additional program information can be found on the CAES website at: https://portal.ct.gov/caes/about-caes/pfas-in-ct-agricultural-soils/pfas-in-ct-agricultural-soils.

Detailed information on PFAS can be found on the following websites:
https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP-PFAS
https://pfas-1.itrcweb.org/
https://www.ecos.org/pfas/
https://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-explained

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