



Connecticut Department of Agriculture
 Dannel P. Malloy, Governor; Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner
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Marketing & Technology Bureau, (860) 713-2503
 Linda Piotrowicz, Interim Editor
 Wednesday, January 11, 2012

NOTES from the DEPARTMENT . . .

A LOOK AT CONNECTICUT OYSTER CULTIVATION

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BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Connecticut has had a private leased shellfish bed system since the late 1800s. Individuals farm and cultivate oysters on specific parcels. Good oyster cultivation and best management as practiced in Connecticut involves several steps. The first step is to clean and prepare the bed by removing poor-quality oysters, predators, and fouling organisms. The second step is to move the young oyster seed each year from the recruitment areas. The lot is monitored for predators during the grow-out period and when oysters reach market size, they are sold. During that grow-out period, a different lot is cleaned off and planted with another crop of seed. This is why oyster aquaculture fits into agriculture with the cultivation and farming practices of preparing a grow-out bed, then planting it, then harvesting it. Shellfish populations on the leased beds are managed from beginning to end.

Currently oyster seed comes from three places: hatcheries, privately owned spawning beds, and public town- and state-designated natural beds. A premium oyster is a single oyster with a deep cup and nicely shaped strong shell, which is appealing for the half-shell raw market. Therefore, whether you have your own private natural spawning beds or harvest oyster seed from the public natural beds, the young oyster seed should be moved to deeper, sheltered bodies of waters where additional spat is less likely to settle on them. Oysters permanently attach or affix themselves to something—typically oyster shell—either living or dead. Allowing oysters to keep settling upon themselves creates an unmanageable cluster that requires intensive labor to separate and results in a less-than-perfect shell, thereby lowering the value.

CONCERNS ABOUT OVERFISHING

"Overfishing" relates typically to a public fishery, in which commercial fishing occurs on open grounds where all harvesters catch oysters in the same area. This has created problems in the Chesapeake

Bay area where indeed damage was done by commercial harvesters competing against each other in a very short time span when the harvesting season opened. The Bay's oyster population has severely declined over the past century due to over-harvesting, which removed huge volumes of oysters. Over-harvesting also led to the demise of the Bay's healthy oyster reefs, which were scraped away by dredging.

In addition to the removal of huge volumes of oysters, overfishing would also impact the survival of juvenile oysters, as juveniles would be sold to shucking houses attached to a mature oyster, rather than the harvester taking the time to chip juveniles from the mature shell before they are sold. Discarded shells with juveniles attached would be returned to shell pile, where the juvenile oysters would die, rather than be returned to the water to be planted on private grounds. In Connecticut, that same oyster would be planted on a leased bed and juvenile attached oysters allowed to grow. As a one-year-class oyster, these juveniles would be chipped apart from the larger, lower-quality oyster, creating several half-shell quality oysters.

The biggest problem with a strictly public fishery is the failure of individuals to return shell material to the growing areas. A lack of clean shell material, or "cultch," is the most significant impediment to oyster bed productivity.

The "overfishing" concern does not relate to the activities that take place on privately held commercial beds on which populations are managed.

IMPACTS ON OYSTER SETTING

More important than the number of oysters in the water are the impacts of environmental factors. Oyster larvae are free swimming for two to three weeks. Weather and currents have a dramatic influence on where the larvae are distributed. The oyster larvae respond to temperature, light, salinity, and chemical cues in the water as to the locations that they will "set" or attach to a substrate.

(continued on Page 3)



HONEY AND RELATED

RETAIL: NEW ENGLAND	Low	High
Honey, 1lb, bottle	7.00	10.00
Honey, 5gal	175.00	215.00
Bees wax, 1lb, block	5.50	5.75
Bees wax, 50lb (per lb)	4.50	5.00
WHOLESALE: PER LB	Low	High
Canola, white, TX	1.60	1.60
Cotton, light ambr, TX	1.50	1.50
Mixd flwr, Xlight ambr, TX	1.65	1.65
Orange, white, FL	1.75	1.75
Pepper, light ambr, FL	1.40	1.50
Wildflwr, Xlight ambr, FL	1.55	1.65

**WHOLESALE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
NEW ENGLAND GROWN**

	Low	High
ALFALFA SPROUTS, 5lb	11.00	12.00
APPLE, Cort, 88ct, xfcy	24.00	25.00
APPLE, Hnycsp, 72ct, xfcy	36.00	46.00
CIDER 4/1gal	16.00	16.00
PARSNIP, 25lb	24.00	25.00
POTATOES, Rnd, wh, chef, 50lb	11.00	13.00
POTATOES, 10lb	2.50	2.60
SQUASH, Bttrnt, 1/9bu, lg	14.00	16.00
TOMATOES, Cherry, 5lb flat	14.00	14.00
TOMATOES, Grnhs, on vine, 12lb	25.00	25.00

SHIPPED IN

	Low	High
ARTICHOKES, 24ct, CA	38.00	40.00
BEANS, Grn, rnd, bu, FL	22.00	26.00
BLACKBERRY, 12/6, MX	9.00	14.00
BLUEBERRIES 12/1pt, CE	20.00	24.00
BOK CHOY, 30lb, AZ	18.00	20.00
BROCCOLI RABE, 20lb, CA	38.00	40.00
CANTALOUPE, 12ct, GU	12.00	14.00
CARROTS, 50lb, CA	16.00	18.00
CLEMENTINES, 5lb, SP	3.00	3.50
DATES, 11lb, CA	55.00	55.00
GARLIC, Elphnt, 10lb, CA	28.00	30.00
LETTUCE, Bstn, 24, CA	14.00	16.00
ONION, Yel, 25lb, NY	7.00	7.00
ORANGES, 113ct, CA	17.00	19.00
RHUBARB, .6kg, Grnhs, NE	40.00	40.00
STRAWBERRIES, 8/1, FL	15.00	18.00

(Boston Terminal and wholesale grower prices)

NEW HOLLAND, PA, HOG AUCTION

January 3, 2012

Hogs sold by actual weights, prices quoted by hundred weight.

49-54	220-270 lbs	64.00-67.00
	270-300	63.00-67.50
	300-400lbs	60.00-65.00
45-49	270-300lbs	60.00-61.00
Sows: US 1-3	300-500 lbs	48.00-51.00
	500-700 lbs	53.00-58.00
Boars:	300-700 lbs	31.00-32.00

MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION

Middlefield, January 9, 2012

Live animals brought the following ave. prices per cwt.

NOTE: Auction will be open on January 16, 2012.

	Low	High
Bob Calves:		
45-60 lbs.	24.00	35.00
61-75 lbs.	42.50	45.00
76-90 lbs.	55.00	60.00
91-105 lbs.	65.00	70.00
106 lbs. & up	75.00	80.00
Farm Calves	82.50	115.00
Veal Calves	55.00	97.50
Open Heifers	73.00	80.00
Beef Steers	57.00	83.00
Feeder Steers	75.00	85.00
Starter Calves	38.00	42.00
Stock Bulls	65.00	100.00
Beef Bulls	74.00	950.00
Sows	31.00	31.00
Goats each	125.00	155.00
Kid Goats each	37.50	175.00
Canners	up to	71.50
Cutters	72.00	75.00
Utility Grade Cows	76.00	80.25
Rabbits each	5.00	25.00
Chickens each	5.00	24.00
Ducks each	8.00	36.00
Feeder Pigs	20.00	100.00

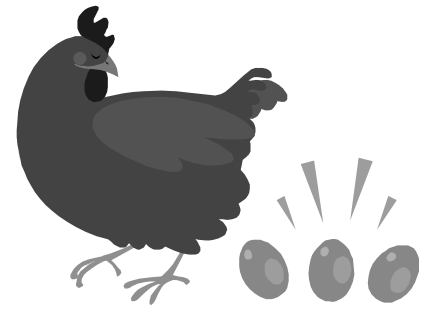
NEW HOLLAND LIVESTOCK AUCTION

January 9, 2012

Bulk/ High/ Low Dressing

SLAUGHTER COWS:
Breakers 75-80%lean
74.50-78.00--- 79.50-83.50----71.50---74.00
Boners 80-85% lean
68.00-73.00---74.50-79.00----64.00-67.00
Lean 88-90% lean
63.00-67.00----69.00-71.00----57.00-61.00
SLAUGHTER BULLS: Yield Grade 1
930-1725 lbs -85.00-91.00
CALVES: All prices per cwt.
Graded Bull Calves: Number 1
95-115lbs - 120.00-130.00

Holstein Heifers: Number 1
85-90 lbs 140.00—160.00
SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Non-Traditional Markets:
Wooled & Shorn Choice and Prime 2-3
40-60 lbs 240.00-260.00
60-80 lbs 220.00-243.00
80-90 lbs 218.00-234.00
90-110 lbs 218.00-232.00
110-130 lbs 196.00-211.00



WEEKLY NEW ENGLAND SHELL EGGS

Prices paid per dozen. Grade A brown egg in carton delivered store door. (Range)

XTRA LARGE	182-193
LARGE	180-190
MEDIUM	122-133

NORTHEAST EGG PRICES USDA

January 9, 2012

Prices to retailers, sales to volume buyers, USDA Grade A and Grade A, white eggs in cartons, warehouse, centers per dozen. (Range)

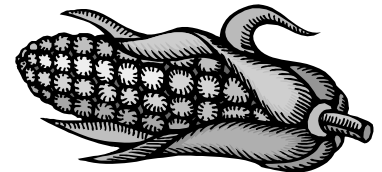
EXTRA LARGE	113-117
LARGE	111-115
MEDIUM	89-93

PENNSYLVANIA GRAIN REPORT

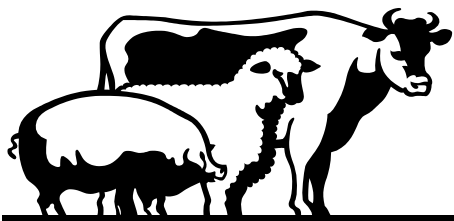
January 3, 2012

Grain market for eastern Pennsylvania.

Corn, No.2, bu.	7.05-7.58
Ear Corn, ton	207.50-207.50
Soybeans, No.2, bu.	11.00-11.70



Wooled & Shorn Choice 2-3
40-60 lbs 184.00-214.00
60-80 lbs 184.00-203.00
80-90 lbs 180.00-195.00
90-110lbs n/a
110-130lbs 177.00-193.00
SLAUGHTER EWES: Good 2-3: Med. Flesh
120-160 lbs 104.00 -119.00
160-200 lbs 100.00-114.00
200-300lbs 96.00-111.00
Utility 1-2: Thin Flesh
120-160 lbs 88.00-102.00
160-200 lbs 94.00-109.00
SLAUGHTER GOATS: All goats are Selection 1, sold by the head, on est. weights.
Kids: 30-40 lbs 95.00-118.00
50-60lbs 112.00-125.00
60-80lbs 132.00-157.00
80-90lbs 160.00-170.00
90-100lbs 161.00-171.00
100-110lbs n/a
Nannies/Does: 80-130 lbs 126.00-141.00
130-180 lbs 143.00-158.00
Bucks/Billies: 100-150lbs 182.00-197.00
150-200 lbs 225.00-240.00



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212-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 today at 203-444-6553.

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233-R. Prides Corner Farms is a diversified 500 acre wholesale production nursery located in Lebanon, CT that produces plants for customers in the Northeast & Mid-Atlantic region. Our product lineup includes perennials, grasses, herbs, native plants, trees, shrubs, & edible ornamentals. We are actively seeking individuals for Foreperson Trainees and Grower Interns. Qualified applicants will be enthusiastic, positive minded people that like working outdoors and have an interest in plants. We provide on the job training for these full time career opportunities with benefits. A great team environment! Give us a call or email. Human Resources HR@pridescorner.com 1-860-642-3081 www.pridescorner.com

MISCELLANEOUS

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219-R. Lily's LLC Appraisal Services specializes in Estates, Commercial & Industrial, Residential, Agricultural, Conservation Easements and Reevaluation Appraisals. Call Lori Longhi at 860-463-9997.

CT 2012 OUTSTANDING YOUNG FARMER NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

The Connecticut Agricultural Information Council is accepting nominations for the 2012 Outstanding Young Farmer (OYF).

The application can be found at www.ctaef.org and must be postmarked by February 17, 2012. The winner will be notified in early March and the award will be presented at Ag Day at the Capitol, March 21, 2012.

The purpose of the OYF program is to bring about a greater interest in the farmer, foster better urban-rural relations through the understanding of agriculture's challenges, develop an appreciation of their contributions and achievements, and inform the agribusiness community of the growing urban awareness of farmers' importance and impact on the American economy.

WIC/SR FMNP RECERT MEETING RESCHEDULED

The WIC/Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) Re-Certification Meeting originally scheduled for 1/24/12 has been rescheduled to 2/10/12. It will begin at 9:00 a.m. at the New London County Extension Center, 562 New London Turnpike, Norwich. Please contact Mark Zotti at 860-713-2538 or mark.zotti@ct.gov with any questions.

ATTENTION FARMERS' MARKET MASTERS

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture maintains a list of markets looking for farmers/vendors for the 2012 season. The list is sent out to all farmers/vendors monthly. If you would like your market included on this list, contact Mark Zotti at Mark.Zotti@ct.gov or 860-713-2538.

A LOOK AT CONNECTICUT OYSTER CULTIVATION (continued from Page 1)

Clean oyster shell is the preferred substrate, but oysters will also set on other hard surfaces. Siltation and lack of clean oyster shell are the greatest deterrents to oyster setting. Survival of larvae depends on many factors including the presence or absence of appropriate types of plankton to feed on, presence or absence of harmful algal blooms, temperature fluctuations, salinity fluctuations, and distribution or displacement of larvae, just to name a few.

The definitive 1966 study by Loosanoff (National Marine Fisheries Service scientist whom many consider to have conducted the most authoritative oyster research) found that oyster setting could not be correlated to the number of parent oysters living in Long Island Sound:

Neither could the numbers of larvae be correlated with the numbers of parent oysters living in Long Island Sound. For example, in 1937, when more than a million bushels of adult oysters were growing in the Sound, many plankton samples taken in the middle of summer contained no oyster larvae (Loosanoff and Engle, 1940). On the other hand, in 1958, when the adult oyster population was extremely small, oyster larvae, especially those in advanced stages, were numerous, sometimes as common as three mature larvae per gallon of water. (Loosanoff, 1966).

SETTING OF OYSTERS

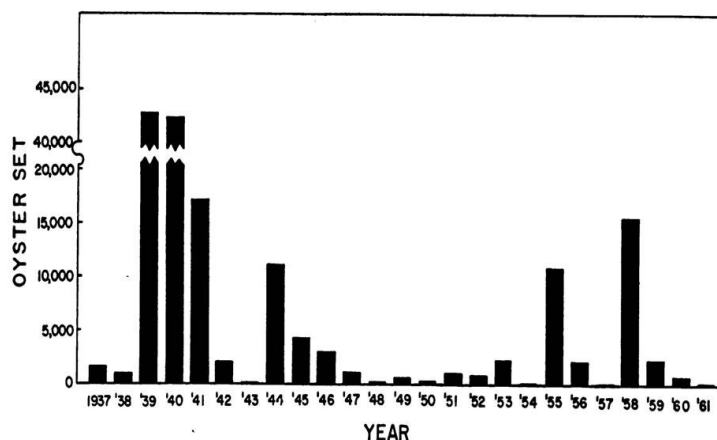


Figure 1 (above) shows the average number of oyster set per station between the years 1937 and 1961 from the Loosanoff paper. As you can see, numbers vary considerably from year to year. Department of Agriculture Bureau of Aquaculture (DA/BA) research conducted by Dr. Inke Sunila from 1997 to 2010 shows similar results.

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A LOOK AT CONNECTICUT OYSTER CULTIVATION
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In the DA/BA study, approximately 45 sites per year are sampled and the percentage of shells having oyster set is recorded (Figure 2, below). Notice the large increase from 2003 to 2004, when oyster production was at a historical low after mass mortalities due to oyster disease in Long Island Sound. We went from virtually no oyster set appearing on oyster shells in 2004 to approximately 13% in 2004. We then see a dramatic increase to over 60% in 2008.

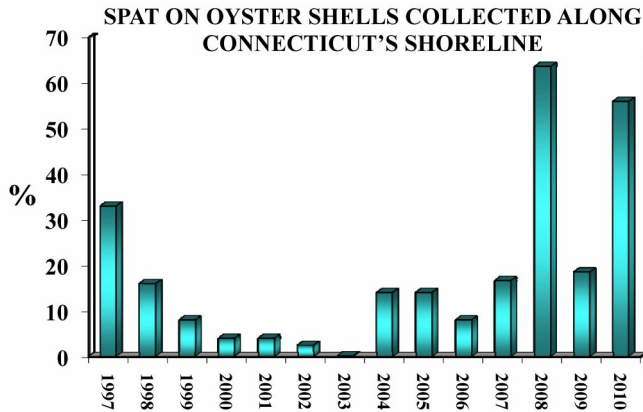


Figure 2. (percentage of oyster shells with spat on collected from on an average of 45 sites/year, 1370 shells/year)

HOW DO WE KNOW THE ENVIRONMENT IS THE DETERMINING FACTOR IN OYSTER SETTING?

A 1998 study by Cox determined that on average, a two-year old eastern oyster (about 1.6 inches in length) produces about 2 million eggs. A three-year old oyster (2.75 inch) produces 45 million eggs. In either case, huge numbers of eggs are spawned, but if environmental conditions are not favorable, oysters will not set no matter how many larvae are produced. Concerns raised over depleting the standing biomass are unfounded and not supported by many years of scientific research in Long Island Sound. Extensive early research that has continued from the 1920's through today has failed to predict what specific environmental conditions are responsible for creating heavy sets of oysters, but we do know for sure that the number of parent oysters in the sound is not one of the determining factors.

CT GROWN JOINT VENTURE GRANT APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture is accepting applications for the Connecticut Grown Joint Venture Grant Program through January 31, 2012. The guidelines, application, and state forms are available at www.ctgrown.gov (click on "Programs and Services," then "CT Grown Joint Venture Grants") or by calling 860-713-2503. Applications must be postmarked by January 31, 2012.



Advertising Rates: Fifteen words or less \$3.75 per insertion. For ads of more than 15 words, 25 cents per word per insertion. Initial letters, hyphenated words, phone numbers, and addresses, etc., are counted separately. Print or type copy. Publication on a specific date cannot be guaranteed. Advertisements will be published on a first-come, first-served basis. Ads must be received by noon the Friday before a publication date to be considered for insertion. Only ads of an agricultural nature with a Connecticut phone number will be accepted. Remittance with copy required. Make check or money order payable to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture.

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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