

Connecticut Weekly AGRICULTURAL REPORT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor
Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner
Steve Jensen, Editor



Connecticut Department of Agriculture
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EVOLUTION OF CT HOPS INDUSTRY ON DISPLAY AT ANNUAL GROWERS' MEETING

By Steve Jensen, Office of Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky

Just a few years ago, producing hops commercially in Connecticut was nothing more than a topic of conversation among a handful of potential growers contemplating putting in a crop to capitalize on their passion and the state's booming craft-beer industry.

"Five years ago there were no hops in the ground here at all," said Alex DeFrancesco, President of the Connecticut Hop Growers' Association said during the group's second annual meeting Saturday in a greenhouse complex at his family's farm in Northford. "Three years ago there was maybe 20 acres. Now we have 45-50 acres in the ground – I would say that's a success."

Evidence of the rapid evolution of the state's hop industry was on display throughout the daylong meeting, attended by about 40 growers and brewers.

Demonstrations were given of a hops dryer and a climate-controlled facility where dried hops are formed into pellets for storage before being brewed – both vital steps in the harvest-to-brew process.

Precise temperature and moisture levels must be maintained so that the hop's flavorful oils are not compromised and the hop cone overcooked into "rabbit food," said DeFrancesco, who planted his own hopyard about two years ago and is currently the state's go-to source for pelletizing with equipment bought with the aid of a CT Dept. of Agriculture matching grant.

"You can raise a phenomenal crop but if it's not dried correctly and stored correctly you might as well throw it in the garbage," he said.

Determining which varieties of hops would thrive in Connecticut is being achieved by research at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, led by Chief Scientist Dr. James LaMondia and begun a few years ago with grants from the CT Dept. of Agriculture.

LaMondia gave a presentation at the meeting in which he detailed his research on finding varieties suitable for Connecticut's climate and resistant to perhaps a hop grower's biggest enemy - downy mildew - which thrives in moist conditions and can be fatal to plants.

Downy mildew, and to a lesser extent powdery mildew, typically infect plants in the humid weeks of late summer.

Spores are often spread by the wind, and can arrive here in storms that originate in the South.

LaMondia advised controlling the mildew with sprays, including horticultural oils.

"But just because you do one application in the spring doesn't mean it's not going to blow in from somewhere else," he advised. "You need to scout for the fluffy little white spores on the plant."

Hops are also affected by spider mites that arrive in hot, dusty conditions and cause discoloring, and potato leaf hoppers that can stunt a plant's growth.

Growers can bring diseased plants to the experiment station to determine which pathogen has infect-

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NORTHEAST EGGS/USDA

Per doz. Grade A and Grade A white in cartons to retailers (volume buyers)

XTRA LARGE	.98	1.14
LARGE	.92	1.06
MEDIUM	.83	.96

NEW ENGLAND SHELL EGGS

Per doz. Grade A brown in carton delivered store door. (Range)

XTRA LARGE	2.29	2.39
LARGE	2.28	2.37
MEDIUM	1.20	1.47
SMALL	.76	.86

LANCASTER, PA LIVESTOCK

Avg. Dressing. Per cwt. Unless noted

	LOW	HIGH
SLAUGHTER COWS Avg. Dressing		
breakers 75-80% lean	54.00	59.50
boners 80-85% lean	54.00	59.00
lean 88-90% lean	48.00	55.00
SLAUGHTER STEERS		
Hi Ch/Prime 3-4	118.00	124.00
Choice 2-3	115.00	119.00
Select 1-2	111.00	115.00
SLAUGHTER HOLSTEINS		
Hi Ch/Prime 3-4	84.00	88.00
Choice 2-3	80.00	84.00
Sel 1-2	77.00	79.00
SLAUGHTER HEIFERS		
Hi Ch/Prime 2-3	113.50	118.50
Choice 2-3	112.00	113.00
Select 1-2	109.50	112.00
CALVES - Graded bull		
No 1 96-130 lbs	102.00	111.00
SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Woolled & Shorn		
Markets: Choice 2-3		
90-110 lbs	190.00	225.00
110-130 lbs	180.00	200.00
130-150 lbs	150.00	175.00
150-200 lbs	142.00	154.00
SLAUGHTER EWES: Good 2-3		
80-120 lbs	115.00	120.00
120-160 lbs	90.00	110.00
160-200 lbs	75.00	105.00
200-300 lbs	70.00	90.00
SLAUGHTER KIDS: Sel 1		
40-60 lbs	160.00	177.00
60-80 lbs	185.00	220.00
80-100 lbs	195.00	235.00
SLAUGHTER NANNIES/DOES: Sel 1		
80-130 lbs	200.00	225.00
130-180 lbs	240.00	255.00
SLAUGHTER BUCKS/BILLIES: Sel 1		
100-150 lbs	240.00	265.00
150-250 lbs	300.00	345.00

ORGANIC DAIRY RETAIL

Madison, WI. January 1-12. In dollars.

CHEESE		
CHDDR, MILD-MED, 8 OZ	4.25	11.00
CHDDR, SHARP, 8 OZ	5.00	12.00
COLBY, 8 OZ	5.25	5.75
MONTEREY JACK, 8 OZ	5.00	5.75
GOUDA, 8 OZ	10.00	12.00
CURDS, 16 OZ	6.00	6.75
BUTTER		
8 OZ	5.00	9.00
1 LB	6.85	14.00

WHOLESALE FRUITS & VEGETABLESBoston Terminal and Wholesale Grower Prices
CONNECTICUT AND NEW ENGLAND GROWN

	LOW	HIGH
ALFALFA SPROUTS, 5 LBS	14.00	15.00
ALFALFA SPROUTS, 12-4 OZ	16.00	18.00
APPLE, CORTLAND, XFCY, 80	30.00	31.00
APPLE, CORTLAND, XFCY, 88	30.00	31.00
APPL, CRTLAND, FCY, 12-3LB	22.00	22.00
APPLE, GALA, US FANCY, 88	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GALA, US FANCY, 100	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GALA, US FANCY, 125	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GOLD DEL, FCY, 64	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GOLD DEL, FCY, 72	24.00	24.00
APPLE, GOLD DEL, #1, 12-3LB	24.00	24.00
APPL, HNYCRSP, XFCY, TRAY, 80	60.00	60.00
APPL, HNYCRSP, XFCY, TRAY, 88	60.00	60.00
APPLE, HNYCRSP, XFY, TRAY, 100	31.00	32.00
APPLE, HNYCRSP, FCY, TRAY, 80	31.00	32.00
APPLE, HNYCRSP, FCY, TRAY, 88	31.00	32.00
APPLE, HNYCRSP, FCY, TRAY, 72	31.00	32.00
APPLE, LADY, XFCY, 1/2BU, 2-1/8"	24.00	24.00
APPLE, MACOUN, XFCY, 72	30.00	30.00
APPLE, MACOUN, XFCY, 80	30.00	30.00
APPLE, MACOUN, XFCY, 88	30.00	30.00
APPLE, MACOUN, XFCY, 100	24.00	24.00
APPLE, MAC, XFCY, TRYPK 72	30.00	31.00
APPLE, MAC, XFCY, TRYPK 80	30.00	31.00
APPLE, MAC, XFCY, TRYPK 88	30.00	31.00
APPLE, MAC, XFCY, TRYPK 100	26.00	26.00
APPLE, MAC, USFCY, TRYPK 80	21.00	21.00
APPLE, MAC, USFCY, TRYPK 88	21.00	21.00
APPLE, MAC, USFCY, TRYPK 100	21.00	21.00
APPLE, RED DEL, FCY, 72	23.00	23.00
APPLE, RED DEL, FCY, 80	23.00	23.00
APPLE, RED DEL, FCY, 125	20.00	20.00
APPLE, RED DEL, #1, 12-3LB	24.00	24.00
BEAN SPROUTS, 10 LBS	6.00	7.00
BEAN SPROUTS, 12-12 OZ	12.00	15.00
BEET, CHIOGGA, 25 LB, M-L, LSE	14.00	15.00
BEETS, GOLD, 25 LB, M, LOOSE	14.00	14.00
BEETS, RED, 25 LB, M, LOOSE	7.00	7.00
BEETS, RED, 25 LB, M-L, LOOSE	14.00	14.00
BRUSSELS SPROUTS, 25 LB, CTN	40.00	40.00
CARROT, L, 25LB SACK, LOOSE	11.00	11.00
CIDER, 4- 1 GALLON	21.00	22.00
CIDER, 9-1/2 GALLON	22.50	25.00
CRNBRY, LATEHOWE, M, 24-12OZ	28.00	28.00
ORNMNTL CORN, 3/BN, 20	40.00	50.00
ORNMNTL GOURD, 20 LBS	15.00	15.00
ORNMNTL GOURD, SHEL, 1/2BU	22.00	24.00
ORNMNTL GOURD, SHEL, BU	32.00	35.00
PARSNIP, M, 20LB FILM, LOOSE	22.00	23.00
PARSNIP, M, 20LB FILM, 18-1LB	23.00	24.00
PUMPKIN, PIE, M-L, BUSHEL	20.00	24.00
SQUASH, ACORN, L, 1-1/9	18.00	18.00
SQUASH, ACORN, M, 1-1/9	16.00	16.00
SQUASH, BUTTERNUT, M, 1-1/9	15.00	16.00
SQUASH, DELICATA, M, 1/2 BU	14.00	14.00
SQUASH, KABOCHA, M, 1-1/9	16.00	18.00
SQUASH, SPAGHETTI, M, 1-1/9	15.00	16.00
STRAW BALES, MINI, EACH	6.00	6.00
STRAW BALES, STD, EACH	8.00	10.00

MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION

Middlefield, CT - January 15, 2018

Bob Calves:	LOW	HIGH
45-60 lbs.	35.00	42.00
61-75 lbs.	45.00	48.00
76-90 lbs.	55.00	60.00
91-105 lbs.	62.50	65.00
106 lbs. & up	70.00	75.00
Farm Calves	80.00	85.00
Starter Calves	25.00	29.00
Veal Calves	100.00	107.50
Feeder Heifers	92.50	100.00
Beef Heifers	57.50	85.00
Feeder Steers	65.00	110.00
Beef Steers	101.00	117.50
Feeder Bulls	85.00	105.00
Beef Bulls	59.00	79.00
Replacement Cows	n/a	n/a
Replacement Heifers	n/a	n/a
Boars	n/a	n/a
Sows	n/a	n/a
Butcher Hogs	n/a	n/a
Feeder Pigs each	9@	22.50
Sheep each	30.00	152.50
Lambs each	42.50	260.00
Goats each	140.00	345.00
Kid Goats each	50.00	305.00
Canners	up to	54.00
Cutters	55.00	58.00
Utility Grade Cows	59.00	62.00
Rabbits each	8.00	21.00
Chickens each	5.00	25.00
Ducks each	3.00	5.00

WHOLESALE ORGANIC CHICKEN

Price per lb or per carton to first receiver.

WHOLE FRYER	1.70	3.32
BNLS BREAST	5.69	10.58
B/IN BREAST	3.60	6.16
WHOLE LEG	1.88	4.76
THIGHS	1.95	3.92
BROWN EGGS		
EXTRA LARGE, DOZEN	2.61	3.60
XLARGE, 1/2 DOZEN	1.80	1.95
LARGE, DOZEN	2.30	3.50
LARGE, 1/2 DOZEN	1.71	1.90

**WHOLESALE NEGOTIATED PASTURE
RAISED POULTRY**

December 29. All prices listed are in dollars per lb.

CHICKEN		
BREAST, B/IN	4.89	16.45
BREAST, BNLS	5.89	18.50
LEG	3.50	9.95
THIGH	4.89	14.99
WINGS	2.25	7.31
GROUND	7.00	15.74
TURKEY		
BREAST	7.00	24.92
LEG	3.50	9.47
THIGH	3.50	12.94
WINGS	3.50	12.94
GROUND	7.99	18.99
DUCK		
WHOLE	4.03	12.99
BREAST	11.91	29.99
LEG	6.76	13.99
EGGS		
JUMBO	4.00	6.00
LARGE	4.00	6.00

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-ed it. LaMondia is now using a CT Dept. of Agriculture grant to collect wild hops that are native to Connecticut and may be resistant to certain diseases.

"If they have been growing out in the woods for a hundred years on their own, they probably have hardy characteristics that would be useful," he said.

Plants found so far are not the older varieties known to be native to Connecticut, he said, but hybrids of different European and Native American varieties that have cross-bred over the decades.

Lamondia and DeFrancesco gave a presentation on the progress of the Connecticut hop industry last month at the Northeast Hop Alliance annual meeting in upstate New York, where about 400 acres of hops are under production.

"A few years ago we didn't exist," said DeFrancesco, who also has traveled to Britain to work with hop growers there. "Now people are paying attention to us."

DeFrancesco said about ten of the approximately 70 craft breweries in the state are now using Connecticut hops, with the most popular and successful varieties being Chinook, Cascade and Centennial – all standards in the industry.

Last summer, the General Assembly approved a "Farm Brewery" bill supported by the CT Dept. of Agriculture that allows growers to obtain a farm brewery manufacturer permit to make, bottle and sell their own beer, as well as offer tastings and sell it at farmers' markets.

The bill requires permittees to use a certain amount of hops, barley, or other ingredients grown or malted in the state in order to sell their product as Connecticut Craft Beer.

Saturday's meeting also featured a tasting of Connecticut beers brewed by members of the growers' association.

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.

4-R. Packaging for egg sales. New egg cartons, flats, egg cases, 30 doz and 15 doz. Polinsky Farm 860-376-2227.

5-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.

9-R. Hay for sale from fertilized fields. \$4.50 per bale. 203-453-9865.

"What the last few years have taught us is that we can absolutely grow hops successfully in Connecticut," despite the often-humid climate, LaMondia said. "But a lot depends on the brewer. We can certainly grow a very good crop, but it's up to the brewers to make a good beer."

One of those who brought a sample of his own brew was Jeff Standish, a firefighter who is growing a half-acre of hops at his family's historic 100-acre farm in Colchester.

He now has more customer demand from local breweries than he has product, and is planning to expand the hopyard at his Fox Hollow Hops at Standish Farms to about two acres.

Standish brought a small keg of his first-ever batch of beer, an India Pale Ale named "Karma Blend" that includes nine different hop varieties.

"It's a lot of work but I love it," he said of the growing and brewing process. "The self-satisfaction of growing a crop and seeing it brewed is fantastic. It's like pay-day."

COURSES OFFERED ON GREENHOUSE BEDDING PLANTS

Growers of greenhouse crops are invited to learn basic tips on nutrition, diseases and scouting at the following dates and locations:

- Feb. 13: Litchfield County Extension Center, Torrington.
- Feb. 22: Tolland Extension Center, Vernon

Four pesticide recertification credits available for private applicators. The fee for each class is \$25. To register contact: Leanne Pundt, at leanne.pundt@uconn.edu or 860-626-6855.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE FAIR FEB. 10 IN HARTFORD

Includes presentations and insight on applying for grants and loan programs from the CT Dept. of Agriculture and the federal NRCS and FSA, as well as finding free legal service and SCORE business-mentoring advice. Held from 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Al Price Technical School, 401 Flatbush Ave., Hartford. Sponsored by UConn Extension and CT NOFA.

12-R. Certified organic hay 4X5 net wrap July cut grass hay stored outside. \$40.00. July cut grass baleage 4X4 \$40.00. Falls Village, CT. 860-248-0362.

WANTED

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

11. Boulder Knoll Community Farm in Cheshire is seeking a Farm Manager to manage and implement production, maintenance, harvest, and distribution of vegetables to CSA members and food charities for our 2-acre community farm. For a full job description, contact dgroberg@friendsofboulderknoll.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

6-R. Farm/Land specializing in land, farms, and all types of Real Estate. Established Broker with a lifetime of agricultural experience and 40 years of finance. Representing both Buyers and Sellers. Call Clint Charter of Wallace-Tetreault Realty (860) 644-5667.



Above left: Jeff Standish of Colchester marks a small keg of an India Pale Ale he brewed and was sampled at the CT Hops Growers' Assoc. annual meeting. **Above:** Alex DeFrancesco demonstrates a hop dryer. **Above right:** Some of the Connecticut craft beers sampled at the meeting. **Left:** CT Dept. of Agriculture inspector Katie Yuhas addressed the meeting on how the federal Food Safety Modernization Act may affect hop growers. **Page 1 left:** Bags of hops grown at CT Valley Hops in Portland, whose owners, Jeff Fydenkevez and Alan Fenrow (**Page 1 right at right of photo**) brought their first ale, called Initial Public Offering, to the meeting.



2018-2020

FMNP Farmer Recertification Meetings

All fruit, vegetable, and honey producers currently certified with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) must attend a recertification meeting to maintain their certification.

The certification allows farms to accept the FMNP checks for fresh fruits, vegetables, and honey from WIC clients and income-eligible seniors over the age of 60.

Below is the current list of meeting dates and locations:

- Thurs., Feb. 1, 7:30-9:30 a.m., CT Farm Bureau Association, 78 Beaver Road, Wethersfield.
A Farm Transition Grant Training Workshop will immediately follow at 9:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, February 13, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
CAES Windsor, 153 Cook Hill Road, Windsor.

- Wednesday, February 21, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., New London County Extension Center, 562 New London Turnpike, Norwich.
- Monday, March 12, 10:00 a.m. – Noon, CAES New Haven, 123 Huntington Street, New Haven.

Please RSVP no later than 24 hours in advance of the meeting to Mark Hood at 860-713-2503 or Mark.Hood@ct.gov

Should a meeting be cancelled due to weather, attendees who RSVP will be contacted.

Additional meetings may be added. Please check the agency website at www.CTGrown.gov throughout January and February.

Questions can be directed to Jaime Smith at 860-713-2503 or Jaime.Smith@ct.gov

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CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
www.CTGrown.gov 860-713-2500

Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky
steven.reviczky@ct.gov 860-713-2501

Agricultural Development
and Resource Preservation Linda Piotrowicz
linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov 860-713-2503

Regional Market Linda Piotrowicz
linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov 860-566-3699

Regulatory Services Dr. Bruce Sherman
bruce.sherman@ct.gov 860-713-2504

State Veterinarian Dr. Mary J. Lis
mary.lis@ct.gov 860-713-2505

Aquaculture David Carey
david.carey@ct.gov 203-874-2855

Agricultural Report Editor Steve Jensen
steve.jensen@ct.gov 860-713-2519