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# CONNECTICUT WEEKLY AGRICULTURAL REPORT

The latest news and updates in Connecticut agriculture

*Brought to you by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture*

## In This Issue

April 1, 2020; Vol. C, No. 10

[Industry Update](#)

[COVID-19 Resources](#)

[Connecticut Grown Map](#)

[Farmers Seeking Markets](#)

[Ag Market Pricing](#)

[Advertisements](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)



Agriculture Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt (right) joined Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz (center) at Bishop's Orchards Farm Market & Winery in Guilford on March 27, 2020, to see their online ordering and curbside pickup in action.

## [COVID-19: Industry Update](#)

Dear Agriculture Producers, Stakeholders and Organizations,

Spring always brings much anticipation and hope for the year ahead within the agriculture community. While you continue planting seed, fertilizing fields, pruning trees, tending to nursery and greenhouse production, harvesting shellfish, or milking cows, we understand that COVID-19 is impacting your daily activities. There has been market disruption and the long-term impacts of coronavirus are unknown. But, we are also seeing a renewed sense of appreciation for the work of our farming community during this challenging time.

Here at the Department, we have been organizing virtual town halls with

support, solutions, and resources as we tackle this crisis together.

Agriculture producers are pivoting with the changing demands and rising to meet the needs of consumers instilling confidence in our local food supply chain - showcasing just how valuable agriculture is to our local economy and community. From distilleries who are now making hand sanitizer to farmers' markets and farm stores that are offering curbside pick up and online ordering, you are meeting the needs of a rapidly changing marketplace and enabling consumers to support local agriculture. We have been engaging with the media and appreciate those of you who have welcomed us and news crews onto your farms.

Below and on our [website](#) you will find new resources and information related to COVID-19, including the recently finalized guidance for [Farmers' Markets](#). Please continue submitting your questions, comments, and concerns to [AGR.COVID19@ct.gov](mailto:AGR.COVID19@ct.gov).

Thank you for all you do and all of your efforts to support and advance agriculture in our state. Be safe and stay healthy.

Bryan P. Hurlburt  
Commissioner of Agriculture

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## [COVID-19 Survey: Impact on Agriculture](#)

UConn Extension has released a short survey for agricultural producers to provide feedback on the impacts of COVID-19 on their business. This anonymous survey will help them to better understand the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the state's agriculture industry and continue developing Extension resources.

Take the survey at: [http://bit.ly/Ag\\_COVID](http://bit.ly/Ag_COVID)

This survey was reviewed by the [Connecticut Department of Agriculture](#), [Connecticut Farm Bureau](#), [Connecticut Nursery & Landscape Association](#), [Connecticut Greenhouse Growers' Association](#).

## [COVID-19 Resources for Agricultural Producers](#)

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### PRODUCER OUTREACH RESOURCES

**[Connecticut Grown Map](#)**: This joint effort promotes the availability of all Connecticut farmers who can provide food and farm products in this time of crisis. This service is available at no cost to the public and producers. To be

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**Social Media Toolkit**: Download ready-to-use content, hashtags and images.

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### **COVID-19 RESOURCES**

Find the latest guidance on best practices, resources and updates related to COVID-19 visit <https://portal.ct.gov/doag-covid>

[Business services](#) – including tax filing extensions, business assistance and small business disaster relief loans

[Farmer Relief Fund](#)

[SBA Paycheck Protection Program](#)

[Facebook Small Business Grants](#)

[Essential Food and Agriculture Employee Work Permit](#)

[Safe Stores Rules](#)

- **Safe stores mandatory statewide rules**: Effective upon the opening of each retail establishment for the first time on April 3, 2020, every retail establishment in the state will be required to take additional protective measures to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 between and among customers, employees, and other persons such as delivery drivers and maintenance people. The order requires the commissioner of the Economic and Community Development to issue mandatory statewide rules prescribing such additional protective measures. Such rules will be mandatory throughout the state and supersede and preempt any current or contemplated municipal order.

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### **CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURE IN THE NEWS**

[Amid the coronavirus crisis, farm stands are ready to fill Connecticut's growing food needs](#), CT Post, 3/25

[Bethany farm opens ahead of normal season to provide fresh produce, meats](#), WTNH, 3/26

[Local markets and garden centers to open amid virus concerns](#), Record-Journal, 3/27

[Shoppers in Connecticut relying heavily on local farmers during COVID-19 pandemic](#), WTNH, 4/1

[Connecticut Farmers Face A Growing Season Like No Other](#), WNPR, 4/1

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Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz and Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt visited Hastings Farm in Suffield on March 24 to see how the farm is responding to changing consumer needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS / DEADLINES**

#### **SPECIAL HEALTH INSURANCE ENROLLMENT**

With the exceptional circumstances due to the spread of the coronavirus, COVID-19, Access Health CT (AHCT) announced that a NEW Special Enrollment Period will be available to uninsured Connecticut residents to sign up for a health insurance plan offered by either of AHCT's two insurance carriers. There are other carriers who do not participate in the exchange who are working to provide reinsurance to make this special enrollment period possible.

The New Special Enrollment Period ends on Thursday, April 2, 2020. Connecticut residents must be lawfully present in the United States, and not incarcerated to be eligible. The coverage for those who enroll during this New Special Enrollment Period will start on April 1, 2020.

Details on sign up here: <https://agency.accesshealthct.com/access-health-ct-announces-a-new-special-enrollment-period-for-uninsured-connecticut-residents>

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#### **FARM CREDIT EAST WEBINAR**

Farm Credit East is offering an educational webinar regarding new payroll and tax provisions outlined in the newly passed Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This free webinar will be held on Thursday, April 2, from noon to

of the CARES Act, as well as tax planning considerations for agricultural businesses. Tax and payroll provisions of the FFCRA, including emergency leave and payroll tax credits for employers, will also be covered.

To register for the free, one-hour webinar, or to see recordings of past webinars, visit [FarmCreditEast.com/Webinars](https://FarmCreditEast.com/Webinars). Also, for ongoing updates on tax provisions including updates on tax law changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, visit our Tax Talks blog at [FarmCreditEast.com/TaxTalks](https://FarmCreditEast.com/TaxTalks).

For the latest updates on Farm Credit East's handling the COVID-19 pandemic, please monitor our CEO's message at [FarmCreditEast.com](https://FarmCreditEast.com).

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### **FREE ONLINE FOOD SAFETY COURSES**

Now through April 30, get the essential training every restaurant and foodservice worker needs to keep guests and themselves safe for FREE! This offer includes both the online training and assessment. Details [here](#).

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### **NORTHEAST SARE ACCEPTING GRANT PROPOSALS**

The Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program will continue to accept proposals for its [Partnership](#) and [Graduate Student Research](#) Grant Programs while staff assess ways to best serve stakeholders during the current COVID-19 situation.

Information about the grant programs may be found on the Northeast SARE website at [www.northeastsare.org](http://www.northeastsare.org). Applicants who encounter delays or closures that hinder their ability to obtain necessary authorized signatures required on the application may proceed and submit proposals without those signatures, following procedures outlined in the grant submission system.

Grant applicants and current recipients are encouraged to reach out with any questions and may email staff at [northeastsare@uvm.edu](mailto:northeastsare@uvm.edu).

The [Partnership Grant Program](#) funds projects conducted by agricultural service providers—researchers, educators, nonprofit staff and others—working in direct partnership with farmers. Grants are capped at \$30,000, and proposals are due online by 5 p.m. ET on April 14.

The [Graduate Student Research Grant Program](#) is open to any graduate student enrolled at an accredited college, university or veterinary school located in the Northeast. Up to \$15,000 will be awarded per grant. The deadline to apply is 5 p.m. ET on April 21.

All projects must be conducted in Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, D.C. or West Virginia.

Northeast SARE is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture and hosted by University of Vermont Extension.

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### **REQUEST FOR SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK APPLICATIONS**

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture is seeking applications for projects that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. Specialty crops are

Projects must impact and produce measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry and/or the public. Projects cannot begin until after January 1, 2021, and must be completed by March 1, 2023. The maximum award is \$75,000.

Eligible applicants include universities and colleges, municipalities, registered nonprofits, state agencies, and Council of Governments.

A conference call on how to write and submit an application for the program will be held for new applicants on April 1, 2020 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Please call: 866-917-9738 Passcode: 88236281#. RSVP's are not required.

More info and complete application guidelines and forms are available at [www.CTGrown.gov/grants](http://www.CTGrown.gov/grants), or by contacting Jaime Smith at 860-573-1944 or [jaime.smith@ct.gov](mailto:jaime.smith@ct.gov).

Applications are due to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture by 4:00 p.m. on April 23, 2020.



### **Looking for a farmers' market in 2020?**

Farmers pursuing new/additional farmers' markets in 2020 are encouraged to provide information about the farm products they produce by completing this online form:

<https://www.cognitofrms.com/CTDeptOfAgriculture/FarmersLookingForFarmersMarkets2020>

Information will be shared with all farmers' market managers throughout Connecticut who are looking for new farmer vendors.

As the list of markets looking for new farmers is assembled, the information will be shared with any farmer who completes the above online form.

Questions about selling farm products at a farmers' market can be directed to [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov) or by reviewing the relevant chapters of the [Farmers' Market Reference Guide](#).

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### **Ag Market Pricing**

[Northeast Regional Eggs](#)

[New Holland, PA Hay Report](#)

[New England Shell Eggs](#)

[Wholesale Fruits & Vegetables - Boston](#)

[Pennsylvania Weekly Cattle Auction Summary](#)

[Wholesale Ornamental Flowers - Boston](#)

[Pennsylvania Livestock Auction - Waynesburg, PA](#)

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### **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](http://www.bludon.com)

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2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or [www.bludon.com](http://www.bludon.com)

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

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4-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 Zyskowski today at 203-444-6553

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

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7-R. Black angus heifers, 23 months old. 3 available. Each to calf in or around May. Asking \$1,400 each. Call 860-212-5463

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14-R. Honeybees: 5-frame NUCS, DEEPS only available first week of May. Jones' Apiaries LLC 860-677-9391

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15-R. Need Honey Bee Pollination? Call Heritage Apiaries, Canton, CT. 860-805-7191

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#### **Wanted**

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

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#### **Job Opportunities**

20-R. HELP WANTED: USDA Farm Service Agency is looking for loss adjuster

[https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Connecticut/news-releases/2020/stnr\\_20200213\\_rel\\_03](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Connecticut/news-releases/2020/stnr_20200213_rel_03) or email [clark.chapin@usda.gov](mailto:clark.chapin@usda.gov).  
Application deadline is April 15, 2020.

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**Interested in Advertising?** Click [here](#) for details on rates and submission.

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