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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

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Joey Geremia (left) of Geremia Greenhouses in Wallingford welcomed Agriculture Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt (center) and Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz (right) on April 3, 2020 to see their robust production area and retail store.

[COVID-19: Supporting Our Community](#)

Dear Agriculture Producers, Stakeholders and Organizations,

Every storm has a silver lining. Amid all of the challenges as the COVID-19 situation escalates and disrupts our daily lives, it's important to seek those bright spots. Last week, I had the opportunity to visit Geremia Greenhouses in Wallingford with Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz where greenhouses were filled with a colorful array of hydrangea, pansies, tulips, and Easter lilies ready to decorate yards and homes for the upcoming Easter holiday.

While you may not be gathering with family and friends to partake in a communal Passover or Easter meal, you can still support our Connecticut producers by buying local. Meat, dairy, shellfish and produce are all readily

or buy an extra gallon (or two) or milk to donate to a local food pantry or soup kitchen. You can find your nearest farm at CTGrownMap.com.

One in nine Connecticut families struggle with food insecurity every day and the demand for food is increasing. Yesterday, I was at Connecticut Regional Market where Foodshare was handing out fresh produce in a drive-thru style distribution. Their dedicated staff and volunteers handed out 12,000 pounds of produce to more than 1,000 cars.

Milk is one of the most requested items by those in need and is the most bioavailable source of three of the top four most deficient nutrients in the U.S. diet. However, our dairy industry is in crisis as restaurants and schools are closed and prices are plummeting. Last week, the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board met and voted to donate a total of \$40,000 to Foodshare and Connecticut Food Bank for the purchase of milk and dairy products. This provides residents with access to healthy food and creates an outlet for milk that may not otherwise have a place to go.

We are continuing to collaborate with partners, including Connecticut Sea Grant and UConn Extension, to facilitate direct sales of fresh shellfish and other seafood to consumers with a newly created aquaculture sales website: <http://aquaculture.uconn.edu/seafood-sales>. Our Bureau of Aquaculture also released updated guidance to further assist with direct to consumer market access.

Additional guidance for vendors and managers at farmers' markets, as well as, pet adoptions through animal shelters along with community gardens and urban agriculture has also been released. Those links can be found below. Our staff continues to develop guidance as needed to address changes during these rapidly changing times.

If you are experiencing difficulty finding a bright spot or have concerns, please reach out to us at AGR.COVID19@ct.gov.

Bryan P. Hurlburt
Commissioner of Agriculture

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



From left to right: Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt, Jason Jakubowski of Foodshare, Paul Shipman of Connecticut Food Bank, and Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz during the check presentation of \$40,000 to purchase milk and dairy products for residents experiencing food insecurity. Read the full release [here](#).

COVID-19 CONSUMER RESOURCES

[Connecticut Grown Farm Map](#): online, interactive listing of open farm stands, farm stores and farmers' markets to access Connecticut Grown produce, dairy, meat, shellfish, greenhouse and nursery stock.

COVID-19 PRODUCER RESOURCES

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

[Community Garden and Urban Agriculture Guidance](#)

[Updated Guidance for the Direct Marketing of Shellfish by Licensed Shellstock Shippers During COVID-19](#)

[Farmers' Market Guidance](#)

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

[Farmer Relief Fund](#)

[SBA Paycheck Protection Program](#)

[SBA Paycheck Protection Program Frequently Asked Questions](#): resource for farmers and ranchers.

[Facebook Small Business Grants](#)

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

[Safe Stores Rules](#)

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.

CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURE IN THE NEWS

[Farmers face volatile times amid restaurant closures, grocery shortages](#), The Day, 4/3

[CT farms get creative amid shopping fears during coronavirus spread](#), New Haven Register, 4/3

[Website offers consumers a direct connection to fresh seafood](#), The Day, 4/7

[Amid coronavirus pandemic, milk trucks roll out in CT](#), CT Post, 4/7

[Fresh Air and Education both available at Auerfarm](#), NBC CT, 4/7

[Oyster farmer tries to keep struggling company afloat amid virus outbreak](#), The Denver Channel, 4/7

[‘You can’t turn off a cow:’ Milk market dries up without schools, restaurants](#), Republican American, 4/7

FARM VIABILITY GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE MAY 21

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture is excited to announce a second round of funding available through the Farm Viability Grant. Grant guidelines and applications for this spring cycle of funding can be found [online](#). Applications are due no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 21.

The Farm Viability Grant provides matching funds to Connecticut municipalities, groups of municipalities, regional councils of governments, and/or agricultural non-profit organizations for projects that foster agricultural viability. Examples of projects include establishing new marketing outlets for farmers, enhancing the awareness of CT Grown, increasing access to farmland and farmland preservation, and improving food security in urban and rural areas.

The maximum award is \$49,999. Applicants must provide a 40% match through cash or in-kind services.

New for this spring cycle of funding, applicants can request up to 25% of the grant award cover the cost of salary and fringe for staff who are directly related to the execution of the project.

An online webinar will be held Friday, April 24 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Please RSVP to Crystal Morris-Crenshaw at Crystal.Morris@ct.gov no later than Wednesday, April 22. Applicants will be provided the webinar information 24 hours prior to the webinar. Questions regarding the program can be directed to Jaime.Smith@ct.gov.

REQUEST FOR SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK APPLICATIONS

defined by the USDA as fruits and vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, maple syrup, honey, horticulture, and nursery crops.

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.

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

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



Visit a greenhouse, nursery, or garden center to find annuals, perennials, shrubs, and vegetable plants to decorate your home. Some locations are offering online ordering and curbside pickup. Find a location at www.CTGrownMap.com.

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](#).

[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](#)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 or 860-655-0958. If no answer, leave message. All calls returned.

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 or email clark.chapin@usda.gov.
Application deadline is April 15, 2020.

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



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