

[View this email in your browser](#)



CONNECTICUT WEEKLY AGRICULTURAL REPORT

The latest news and updates in Connecticut agriculture

Brought to you by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture

In This Issue

October 23, 2020; Vol. C, No. 39

[Federal Shellfish Assistance](#)

[Specialty Crop Block Grant Awards](#)

[CT Farm Map](#)

[COVID-19 Resources](#)

[8 Counties Declared Disaster Area](#)

[CARES Small Business Grant](#)

[Ag Market Pricing](#)

[Advertisements](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)



Feeding our nation's kids through [#schoolmeals](#) has always been a community effort – from farmers to school nutrition professionals to teachers. This October, we're celebrating these essential workers for National Farm to School Month. Learn more [here](#).

**CLICK HERE FOR COVID-19 TESTING RESOURCES FOR YOUR
FARM AND EMPLOYEES**



Shellfish Industry Buoyed by Federal Assistance Programs

Connecticut is home to more than 70,000 acres of shellfish farms under cultivation in coastal waters generating \$30 million plus in farm-gate sales annually. However, the coronavirus pandemic brought wholesale markets to a grinding halt with the closure of restaurants. Shellfish businesses saw losses of up to 90% from March through May 30th and no federal assistance to keep them afloat.

Many operations shifted gears and transitioned to direct to consumer sales. Shellfish harvesters began selling from their docks and partnering with other farms and essential businesses to continue moving product to market, keep staff employed, and ensure the everyday work vital to sustaining the industry continued.

On Tuesday, October 20, Governor Ned Lamont, Congressman Joe Courtney, Agriculture Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt, and Deputy Commissioner Mason Trumble of the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) gathered in front of the Mystic Oysters Pop-Up Shop at the Noank Aquaculture Collaborative in Groton, to celebrate the availability of two new federal funding opportunities for the state's shellfish industry.

They were joined by Mystic Oysters co-owner Jim Markow to announce the arrival of \$1.8 million in federal COVID-19 relief funds available through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Assistance to Fishery Participants program through the CARES Act and inclusion of aquaculture in round two of the federal Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP 2), which will help to cover from 8.8% to 10.6% of their total 2019 sales.

"It took a village to make this happen, to educate USDA, and present one united front," said Agriculture Commissioner Hurlburt. "The NOAA funds are helpful but including aquaculture in CFAP 2 is another step to ensure that the industry receives the same resources that all other farms have available to them."

As various programs were rolled out to assist agricultural businesses, the shellfish industry was left in a lurch. In spite of having care, custody, and control

of their product from oyster seeding until harvest three years later, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), which provided up to \$16 billion in direct payments to deliver relief to America's farmers and ranchers impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, didn't include aquaculture. And, the roll out of CFAP 2 offering an additional \$14 billion in direct support for agricultural producers of eligible commodities didn't include aquaculture until September 21 after months of exclusion.

"It's a different form of farming – boats are our tractors and our crop is in the water," said Markow. "But we still harvest our crop. We produce a good, wholesome product that is probably the best in the country."

[Click here](#) to learn more about CFAP 2 and [here](#) to learn more about the NOAA funding.

DOAG AWARDED \$400,000 IN GRANT FUNDING FROM USDA

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg) has been awarded over \$400,000 in grant funding by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP). DoAg annually solicits proposals for projects that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops in Connecticut. Specialty crops are defined by the USDA as fruits and vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, maple syrup, honey, horticulture, and nursery crops. This year, DoAg funded three projects that impact and produce measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry. Funded organizations include the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut (CT NOFA) and CitySeed, a nonprofit based in New Haven that organizes and manages farmers' markets, among other food-related programming

CT NOFA's project, "The Ecotype Project: A Native Plant Based Approach to Agrarian Resilience," continues efforts to mitigate climate change by establishing a framework to increase the production of native plant seeds in Connecticut and, by doing so, increases the number of acres of pollinator habitat in Connecticut. CT NOFA plans to increase "seed literacy" among producers by instating a Seed School, which train producers in ecologically sustainable land stewardship methods. CT NOFA will not only provide on-farm consultations and access to seed cleaning equipment but also facilitate the distribution of pollinator crop seeds.

CitySeed seeks to create an online sales platform for Connecticut farmers with their project "Increasing Access to Specialty Crops by Removing Barriers to Adopting Online Ordering Systems." Objectives of this project include building capacity of specialty crop farmers to incorporate online sales systems both at farmers' markets and on-farm, providing remote technical support and online resources to farmers who install these systems, capturing a new customer base that seeks safe and efficient food procurement methods during the pandemic and into the future, and measuring the impact and efficacy of these systems. CitySeed will be publishing a guidance document online with the results of their research at the culmination of the project in 2023.

The third and final project resides within DoAg's Ag Development Unit with the project "Carving a Path for Limited Resource New and Beginning Farmers." To enhance the competitiveness of Connecticut-grown specialty crops, DoAg will be using this funding to increase land access to new and beginning farmers. Through the use of focus groups, curriculum development, land mapping, and an advisory committee, DoAg will work towards the ultimate goal of acquiring land rentals and supplying stipends to encourage resource-limited farmers to access land parcels surrounding urban areas.

For more information about the Connecticut Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, please visit [DoAg's Specialty Crop Block Grant page](#) or contact the SCBGP coordinator, Haley Rowland, at Haley.Rowland@ct.gov.

COVID-19 Resources for Agricultural Producers

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>

List your farm, farmers' market or farm stand on CTGrownMap.com by clicking [here](#).

COVID-19 Guidance for Connecticut Farmers' Markets

COVID-19 Guidance for Connecticut Farm Stands, Stores, and CSA

COVID-19 Guidance for Pick-Your-Own & Cut-Your-Own Farms

COVID-19 Considerations for Animal Activities at Fairs, Shows, and Other Events available [here](#).

CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURE IN THE NEWS

[Yale dining unearths new potato harvest at local farm](#), 10/16, Yale News

[Local Connecticut farms offer support and resources in response to overwhelming community needs during the coronavirus pandemic](#), 10/17, Hartford Courant

[CT shellfish industry receives much needed federal funding](#), 10/20, WTNH

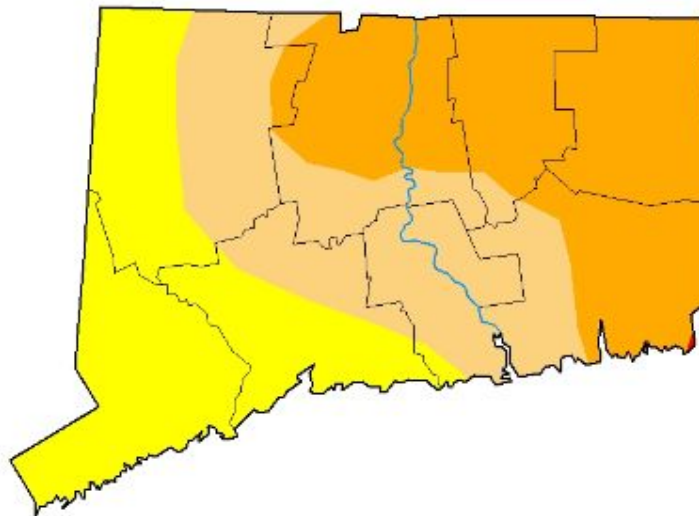
[Pumpkins Likely Smaller This Year Thanks to Drought](#), 10/20, NBC CT

[Enduring months of drought, some help for CT farmers](#), 10/20, FOX 61

[Lamont, Courtney to highlight new federal funds for shellfish farmers](#), 10/20, FOX 61

U.S. Drought Monitor
Connecticut

October 20, 2020
(Released Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Curtis Riganti
National Drought Mitigation Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

USDA DESIGNATES ALL 8 COUNTIES AS DROUGHT DISASTER AREAS

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue has designated Litchfield and Tolland Counties as primary natural disaster areas due to the drought. In addition, USDA designated primary drought areas in New York and Massachusetts, extending the declaration to contiguous counties as follows: Fairfield, Hartford, New Haven, Middlesex, Windham, and New London.

A Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators in primary counties and those counties contiguous to such primary counties eligible to be considered for certain assistance from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met. This assistance includes FSA emergency loans. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of a Secretarial disaster declaration to apply for emergency loans.

Farmers should locate their local FSA service center and contact them to discuss available options.

SBA OFFERS ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOANS TO SMALL BUSINESSES

The U.S. Small Business Administration announced October 22 that Economic Injury Disaster Loans are available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture, and private nonprofit organizations in Litchfield County, Connecticut as a result of drought that began on Aug. 18, 2020.

The loan amount can be up to \$2 million with interest rates of 3 percent for

small businesses and 2.75 percent for private nonprofit organizations of all sizes, with terms up to 30 years. The SBA determines eligibility based on the size of the applicant, type of activity and its financial resources. Loan amounts and terms are set by the SBA and are based on each applicant's financial condition. These working capital loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other bills that could have been paid had the disaster not occurred. The loans are not intended to replace lost sales or profits.

Applicants may apply online using the Electronic Loan Application (ELA) via SBA's secure website at DisasterLoan.sba.gov and should apply under SBA declaration # 16741, not for the COVID-19 incident.

Disaster loan information and application forms may also be obtained by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 (800-877-8339 for the deaf and hard-of-hearing) or by sending an email to DisasterCustomerService@sba.gov. Loan applications can be downloaded from sba.gov/disaster. Completed applications should be mailed to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

Submit completed loan applications to SBA no later than June 16, 2021.

STATE ANNOUNCES \$50 MILLION GRANT PROGRAM FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Governor Ned Lamont has announced that he is creating the Connecticut CARES Small Business Grant Program to assist small businesses and nonprofits that have been impacted by the economic downturn caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The program will provide businesses and nonprofits in Connecticut that have fewer than twenty employees or a 2019 payroll of less than \$1.5 million with a one-time grant of \$5,000.

To fund the program, the governor is committing \$50 million from the state's Coronavirus Relief Fund, which utilizes federal CARES Act funding. The program will be administered by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). The grants can be used for payroll, rent, utilities, inventory, purchase of machinery or equipment, or costs associated with compliance of the ongoing [Reopen Connecticut Business Sector Rules](#).

The governor is directing DECD to commit half of the funds to small businesses and nonprofits that are located in towns and cities designated as [distressed municipalities](#).

DECD estimates it will begin accepting online applications the week of November 9, and all of the funds are anticipated to be disbursed by December 30. Information on eligibility requirements, upcoming webinars, and other aspects of the program will be published on the state's business portal at business.ct.gov.

FARM CREDIT EAST'S GENERATIONNEXT WEBINAR SERIES

A successful manager is required to master many aspects of the farm business. To help the next generation develop the necessary business and financial skills, Farm Credit East is hosting GenerationNext seminars virtually this winter, and currently seeks interested young leaders to attend. There will be eight, 90-minute sessions held online once per week starting December 2, covering a range of farm business management topics.

GenerationNext is optimal for those producers who will be the next generation operators of a farm business or for entrepreneurs starting their own business. The 90-minute web sessions will cover a range of topics, including leadership and management, human resource development, financial management, production economics, marketing, risk management, and farm transfer and estate planning.

Whether just entering into a management role or an experienced manager, participants will gain valuable insights from Farm Credit East farm business consultants and from their GenerationNext colleagues. For more information and to sign up, visit FarmCreditEast.com/GenerationNext. It is not necessary to have an existing relationship with Farm Credit East to attend. Contact your local Farm Credit East office, or call 800-562-2235 for more information or to sign up.

UConn TO SELL BEEF AT MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION

In lieu of an auction held on the UConn campus, UConn beef cattle will be sold at the Middlesex Livestock Auction (488 Cherry Hill Road, Middlefield, CT 06455) on Monday, November 2, 2020 beginning at 7:00 p.m. Please contact Mary Margaret Cole, Executive Program Director, UConn Livestock Units at Mary_Margaret.Cole@uconn.edu with any questions. Visit <http://animalscience.uconn.edu/join.php> to join the email list if you would like to receive a digital copy of the animal sale list when it becomes available. The list of animals UConn will bring to Middlesex will be posted mid to late October at s.uconn.edu/beefauction.

SBA & TREASURY ANNOUNCE SIMPLER PPP LOAN FORGIVENESS

The U.S. Small Business Administration, in consultation with the Treasury Department, has released a simpler loan forgiveness application for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans of \$50,000 or less. This action streamlines the PPP forgiveness process to provide financial and administrative relief to America's smallest businesses while also ensuring sound stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

SBA and Treasury have also eased the burden on PPP lenders, allowing lenders to process forgiveness applications more swiftly.

SBA began approving PPP forgiveness applications and remitting forgiveness payments to PPP lenders for PPP borrowers on October 2, 2020. SBA will continue to process all PPP forgiveness applications in an expeditious manner.

Click [here](#) to view the simpler loan forgiveness application.

Click [here](#) to view the instructions for completing the simpler loan forgiveness application.

Click [here](#) to view the Interim Final Rule on the simpler forgiveness process for loans of \$50,000 or less.

DAIRY MARGIN COVERAGE PROGRAM ENROLLMENT OPEN

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) began accepting applications for the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program on Tuesday, October 13, 2020 for 2021 enrollment.

Signup runs through Dec. 11, 2020. DMC is a voluntary risk management program that offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between

the all-milk price and the average feed price (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. DMC payments triggered for seven months in 2019 and three months so far in 2020.

To determine the appropriate level of coverage for a specific dairy operation, producers can utilize the recently updated online [dairy decision tool](#).

For more information, visit the [farmers.gov DMC webpage](#), or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/service-center-locator](#).

WOMEN, FOOD & AGRICULTURE NETWORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Women, Food & Agriculture Network (WFAN) is excited to share their annual conference details. Happening online November 6-7, participants will gather in a (virtual) space designed to foster connection and community.

There will be seventeen different workshops, affinity groups, a movie night, yoga sessions, and more. More conference details, including registration, can be found [here](#).





NORTHEAST GREENHOUSE CONFERENCE WEBINAR SERIES

The Northeast Greenhouse Conference and Expo has announced that they will offer a webinar series this fall, beginning Nov. 4 sponsored by New England Floriculture Inc., in order to deliver content relevant to greenhouse pests, diseases, biocontrols, PGRs, and sanitation. Although having to postpone the Northeast Greenhouse Conference and Expo to 2021 due to the Coronavirus pandemic is regrettable, the hope is that these webinars will provide important education (and pesticide recertification credit) for the greenhouse community in 2020. Pesticide recertification credits will be offered for the New England States and New York.

Visit <https://www.negreenhouse.org/virtual-series-schedule.html> for the dates/topics and registration information.



FSA Farm Loans

• Real Estate • Operating • Youth Loans

Farm Loans through the USDA Farm Service Agency are available to agricultural producers who are not able to obtain commercial credit.

- Family farms
- Beginning farmers
- Those with no down payment
- Youth between the ages of 10-20
- Visit: farmers.gov/funds

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Connecticut Farm Loan Office:
238 West Town St
Norwich, CT 06360
860-887-9941

Carolyn Marlowe
Farm Loan Officer
Melanie Exley
Farm Loan Assistant
Skye Budney
Farm Loan Program Technician



Ag Market Pricing

Middlesex Livestock Auction - CT
UPDATED: October 22, 2020

New Holland Dairy Auction - New Holland, PA

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 - Eighty Four, 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.

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

24-R. Seven foot International 3-point hitch cultivator. \$300. 860-779-2107.

28-R. Christmas Greens, wreaths, and roping. Many sizes and varieties. Excellent for fund raisers and honoring fallen veterans. 203-457-1344

32-R. Modine Power-Vented propane heater, 240K BTU. Greenhouse/high tunnel heater. Brand new, still in box. \$1,600 Call 860-576-2277.

33-R. Loyal compact manure spreader, ground driven, not PTO. 28 cu ft capacity. Excellent condition. Used couple of times. \$1,200. Call 860-576-2277.

34-R. Salad Ace by Delfield commercial lettuce spinner/dryer. Used couple of times. Excellent condition. \$1,500. Call 860-576-2277.

Wanted

22-R. Orchard worker/manager needed. Experience worker preferred with equipment and orchard or farm experience. the right person could have a long-term opportunity. Please call 203-213-8833.

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

Upcoming Events

WEBINAR SERIES

LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS RESPONSE TO COVID-19
BUILDING BETTER BEYOND

MARKETING INNOVATIONS WHEN COMMUNITIES EAT AT HOME October 19 1 PM EST	FORMAL AND INFORMAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS February 15 1 PM EST
RETAINING & ENGAGING NEW LOCAL CUSTOMERS: TENSIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES November 16th 1 PM EST	ONLINE PLATFORMS: PIVOTS AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE March 15 1 PM EST
EMERGENCY FOOD, CHARITY, AND THE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM December 21 1 PM EST	INTEGRATING NATIONAL CONSUMER SURVEY RESULTS INTO FUTURE PLANNING April 18 1 PM EST
INNOVATIONS IN STATE POLICIES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SECTORS January 25 1 PM EST	NEXT STEPS TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM IN TIMES OF UNCERTAIN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR May 17 1 PM EST

<https://lfscovid.localfoodeconomics.com/>

UConn COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES
MIDDLESEX

UConn Beef Cattle to Be Sold at Middlesex Livestock Auction This Year



Monday, November 2, 2020
Middlesex Livestock Auction
181 Clary Hall Road
Middlefield, CT 06455

The list of animals will be posted mid to late October at uconn.edu/beefauction.

All future beef auction flyers will be sent digitally
Please join the beef auction email notification list, visit uconn.edu/beefauction
Contact us at 860-405-3413 if you are unable to join the email list!

For further information, contact Mary Margaret Cole at Mary_Margaret.Cole@uconn.edu



Culture and Resilience of Farmers in Your Community

What Health and Other Professionals Need to Know to Support
the Farming Population

A 3-part Webinar Series
October 12, 20 & 26
Times: 3:30pm

The Delaware and Maryland Eastern Shore coastal communities farm enterprises are diverse and rich with tradition. They also face challenges to their health and well-being requiring support from health and other professionals. Yet, these professionals may not be confident in their ability to assess or reduce impacts of stressors and increase resilience of the farming population.

This three-part webinar series is designed to increase your familiarity with the unique characteristics, nature and culture of farmers, farming and their communities. The series will build your confidence in applying what you've learned to your resource building, outreach and network development to better serve the farming population.

Cost: \$15 for the three-part series

Certificate of Completion: Provided to those completing the program surveys

State Work CEUs: will be offered for Maryland participants

Register online at:

<https://www.aacoe.com/culture-and-resilience-of-farmers-in-your-community>

Presenters:

- Alexander E. Chan, Ph.D., UMPT University of Maryland Extension Specialist - Mental and Behavioral Health
- Doreen Owen, Ph.D., University of Maryland Extension, School of Public Health - Professor Emerita
- Maria Ripstein, MS, ATC, FPC, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, Extension Educator
- Luanne Williams, MS, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension & Dir. Northeast Extension Risk Management Education Center

Sponsors:

University of Delaware Cooperative Extension
University of Maryland Extension
Delaware and Maryland's Farm Stress Task Forces



Funding Provided by:

University of Delaware Sea Grant - Sustainable Coastal Communities



This program is being made available by the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension, a member of the U.S. College of Agriculture and Natural Resources's Land-grant institutions. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
If you have special needs that need to be accommodated, please contact the office two weeks prior to the event.



FOLLOW on FACEBOOK



JOIN on PINTEREST



VISIT our WEBSITE

Copyright © 2020 Connecticut Department of Agriculture, All rights reserved.

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).