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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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Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz joined U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Department of Agriculture Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt, and DSS SNAP Program Administration Manager Daniel Giacomi for a roundtable discussion via Zoom to discuss how best to expand access to benefits like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

[Responding to COVID-19](#)

Dear Agriculture Producers, Stakeholders and Organizations,

It's hard to believe that five weeks have passed since our agency transitioned to teleworking in response to COVID-19. It's all too easy to become caught up in the daily whirlwind of emails, phone calls, and Zoom meetings, as we respond to an evolving situation. Our highest priority remains ensuring that you, our agriculture community, are not only deemed essential, but are able to navigate moving your products, goods, and services, to ensure our residents have access to a fresh and abundant supply of food, floriculture, and aquaculture.

Earlier this week our team compiled a detailed list of all the efforts put forward thus far to assist, direct, and guide our regulated communities through COVID-19. These actions not only address the present challenges, but also ensure that agriculture in Connecticut remains a vibrant and diverse economic driver in the

Community Development, we were able to establish that farms, farmers' markets, farm stands, greenhouse, nursery, urban and community gardens are essential within the first week. This was pivotal and has enabled us to react swiftly and implement processes where no previously existed.

Myself, and many of our staff, have participated in listening and Q&A sessions with stakeholders across a variety of sectors to hear your concerns and how market disruptions are impacting your businesses. This has led to the release of more than a half dozen guidance documents, with more on the way. You can find all of those, along with additional COVID-19 resources, on our dedicated [webpage](#).

We have also increased outreach and media engagement to not only share the struggles but also highlight success stories - greenhouse growers connecting with shellfish harvesters to help move product, farmers offering home delivery, online ordering and curbside pickup, and donations to food banks to assist those experiencing food insecurity. If you haven't been checking out our "Agriculture in the News" highlights below, please do so. Many producers have been featured from all across the state representing greenhouse, farm stands, aquaculture and dairy, just to name a few. In addition, our social media pages are seeing organic increases of nearly 250% on reach and engagement. Consumer support for local agriculture is on the rise as you all meet the challenge of providing local products when others are unable.

I am proud of our entire Department for demonstrating how responsible and proactive they have been thus far to the industry's needs, but we aren't stopping here. There is still much work ahead. While we may not be in a traditional office, we are available, accessible, and working on your behalf. If you have any ideas, suggestions, or stories to share, please send it to AGR.COVID19@ct.gov. We look forward to hearing from you and together, we will get through this.

Bryan P. Hurlburt
Commissioner of Agriculture

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



Download the [#CTGrown Social Media Toolkit](#)

Sample post: Connecticut's greenhouses and nurseries have a colorful array of hanging baskets, cut flowers, potted plants, and flowering shrubs. Beautify your backyard with #CTGrown plants, flowers and shrubs to create a relaxing space while you enjoy the fresh air. #StayHomePlantCTGrown

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](#).

NEW [Resources for Equine Facilities, Non-Profits and Owners](#)

NEW [COVID-19 Related Farmers' Markets Signage](#)

NEW [The COVID-19 Federal Rural Resource Guide](#)

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

NEW [HEDCO COVID-19 Business Response Line of Credit](#)

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

[Safe Store Guidance from DECD](#)

[Milk prices continue to drop during coronavirus crisis, hurting local dairy farmers](#), WTNH, 4/10

[Dairy farmers donate to food banks as demand for milk dries up](#), Journal Inquirer, 4/10

[Colin McEnroe: Next Steps after Coronavirus](#), Middletown Press, 4/12

[Interview with Bryan P. Hurlburt, Commissioner, Department of Agriculture](#), Community Access/iHeart, 4/13

[Food Stamp Applications Quadruple](#), New Haven Independent, 4/15

[Local farmers hit hard by coronavirus pandemic](#), WTNH, 4/15

[The Modern Milkman is delivering dairy and more](#), Connecticut Magazine, 4/15

[Farmers squeezed to dump milk, scrambling to adjust](#), CT News Junkie, 4/16

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

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

on April 23, 2020.



CT Farmer Resiliency Group Formed

Many of our Connecticut farms and families have been dealing with stress long before this pandemic took place. Through a collaborative of UConn Extension faculty and staff along with some of their critical partners ([Farm Credit East](#), [ACA](#), [Connecticut Department of Agriculture](#), [Connecticut Farm Bureau](#), [CT NOFA](#), [Eggleston Equine](#), and [Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#)) a resource page has been created to help farmers and producers mitigate some of the stressors they are facing. More information and resources are available here: <http://ctfarmrisk.uconn.edu/agstress.php>

In addition, a private Facebook group for farmers and agricultural service providers has been created. This is an opportunity for these groups to communicate with one another during this challenging time.

Join today! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/361718224745725/>

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](#).

Ag Market Pricing

[Middlesex Livestock Auction - CT](#)

[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](#)

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

The State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agriculture Development and Resource Conservation is recruiting for multiple Agriculture Marketing & Inspection Representative 1 (AMIR1) positions. The incumbent will be accountable for independently performing a full range of tasks for the development of agricultural businesses and production. Application Deadline: April 30, 2020. [Apply here](#).

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