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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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June is National Dairy Month - a great way to start the summer with nutrient-rich dairy foods. From calcium to potassium, dairy products like milk contain nine essential nutrients.

## Project Expands Support for CT's Shellfish Industry During COVID-19 Pandemic

Connecticut shellfish farmers who endured severe sales losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic are being offered the chance to earn income by working on a unique project to rehabilitate the state's natural shellfish beds.

The project, developed by Connecticut Sea Grant and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, will employ shellfish farmers with vessels normally used to harvest oysters to instead raise and relocate oyster shell buried in silt and other materials off the bottom of the beds. The exposed oyster shell would then provide the preferred habitat for oyster larvae. The shellfish farmers would be compensated for a portion of their hours worked.

The project is the second phase of a three-part initiative to support shellfish farmers hurt by sales losses to restaurants and other key customers. At the same time farmers are being assisted, the natural shellfish beds that are the

acres offshore in areas mainly from West Haven to Greenwich.

“We are pleased to have been able to secure new funds to support the aquaculture industry, using innovative avenues to provide some short-term cash flow for work that will enhance the productivity of natural beds in the future, with associated economic and ecological benefits,” said Sylvan De Guise, director of Connecticut Sea Grant.

Connecticut Sea Grant and the state Department of Agriculture collaboratively received \$74,999 in federal funds from the National Sea Grant Office to fund the project, which is being supplemented with \$50,474 worth of in-kind services. During the first phase of the project that began on May 6, shellfish farmers have been working on different areas of the natural beds than are being targeted in the second phase.

A third phase of the project, which would begin pending approval of additional federal funding, would compensate farmers for shellfish that have grown too large for consumer markets. Those shellfish would then be planted on closed portions of state and town shellfish beds across the state to repopulate those areas.

“Over the past four weeks, more than one dozen shellfish companies have actively rehabilitated the state’s public shellfish beds during phase one of this project plan,” said state Agriculture Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt. “The implementation of phase two within the next week will enable continuation of this critical work in shallower areas and provide producers with compensation through our collaboration with Connecticut Sea Grant.

“These efforts are crucial to ensuring the future sustainability of the state’s shellfish industry through enhanced management of Connecticut’s public seed beds and facilitating availability of oyster seed to the entire industry,” Hurlburt said.

The Department of Agriculture will continue to document the enhancement achieved through the rehabilitation efforts using a combination of vessel monitoring system data, landings reporting and via the deployment of an underwater video camera. The camera footage would document bottom conditions of those areas that have been worked versus baseline conditions in areas of the beds that remain untouched. Staff intend to document long-term recovery of beds by assessing conditions and oyster recruitment levels on project areas in subsequent seasons. The information will be used to develop best management practices for the natural oyster seed beds to achieve maximum production of oyster seed there in the future.

Shellfish companies interested in participating in the program should submit their request via email to David Carey, director of the Department of Agriculture Bureau of Aquaculture, at: [David.Carey@ct.gov](mailto:David.Carey@ct.gov).



### **Farmers Lend a Helping Hand**

June is National Dairy Month and Connecticut's dairy farmers started it off on Wednesday, June 3 with 1,550 gallons of milk sent from the Guida's Dairy facility in New Britain, owned and operated by the dairy cooperative Dairy Farmers of America, to the Brooklyn Middle School where area non-profits and local service agencies picked up and distributed their portion of the donated milk.

Local dairy farmers partnered with the Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group (TEEG) on this donation and distribution effort. TEEG brought to the table their partners which include local school districts, hospitals, community kitchens, and more. This donation event supplied a week's worth of milk to families in need in the greater Windham County area.

Efforts like the distribution happening Wednesday morning not only puts a nutritious food source in the hands of families in need, it helps secure a market for dairy farmers' milk. This donation event will supply a week's worth of milk to families in need in the greater Windham County area.

While the milk is ultimately free for those families in need, there are still costs associated with processing, packaging and delivering the milk. To cover those costs, Jon Hermonot of Fairholm Farm in Woodstock reached out to area businesses who donated more than \$7,000 to cover costs. Dairy Farmers of America contributed \$1,500 towards that total amount through their DFA Cares Foundation.

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### **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.

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### **COVID-19 PRODUCER RESOURCES**

Find the latest guidance on best practices, resources and updates related to

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

**Farm Stand, Farm Store, CSA Guidance** available [here](#).

**Pick-Your-Own Guidance** available [here](#).

**Farmers' Market Guidance** available [here](#).

**Food Safety Guidance** available [here](#).

**Updated: Equine Phase 1 Reopen Guidance** available [here](#).

**NEW: CDC Guidance on Agricultural Employers and Workers** available [here](#).

**NEW: Potential Resources for Seasonal Farmworker Housing** available [here](#).

### **FREE Hand Sanitizer Distribution**

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture, through a donation by Exxon Mobile to FEMA, has obtained a bulk container of liquid (not gelled) hand sanitizer for use by farmers at no cost.

No less than 1 gallon, not to exceed 5 gallons, can be taken in total by each business or organization.

You must bring your own containers. Once signed up a reminder email which shall include sanitizer labeling information will be provided.

Masks AND gloves are required at pick up. Questions should be texted to Jaime Smith at 860-573-1944 or emailed to [Jaime.Smith@ct.gov](mailto:Jaime.Smith@ct.gov).

**Date:** Thursday, 6/11/2020 from 8:30 am - 3:45 pm

**Location:** [Hartford Regional Market](#)

101 Reserve Rd, Hartford, CT 06114

**Sign up:** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040A4BA5AC2CA0F58-hand1>

### **FREE Mask Distribution**

The Connecticut State Grange and Connecticut Farm Bureau Association have joined forces to obtain and distribute free face coverings to agricultural producers in the state. They have purchased 80 boxes containing 50 masks per box. These will be made available to any farm operation, large or small.

Connecticut State Grange Agricultural Direct J. Allen Cameron says, "The Connecticut State Grange has a rich history of supporting Connecticut agriculture. We thank you and encourage you to be steadfast in your endeavors ensuring a continual flow of meats, milk, vegetables, fruits, seafood and plants make their way to markets throughout Connecticut."

Contact [agriculture@ctstategrange.org](mailto:agriculture@ctstategrange.org) with your mailing address and phone number to receive 50 masks.

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### **AGRICULTURAL FAIR UPDATES**

Visit [CTAgFairs.org](http://CTAgFairs.org) for an up-to-date list of active and cancelled fairs for 2020.

This listing is being regularly modified.

Utilize the [interactive map](#) to find an active fair near you.

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[Farmers market returns](#), Milford Mirror, 6/2

[Local farmer helps New London food center with milk donation program amid shortage](#), WTNH News 8, 6/4

[Ellington Farmers Market Starts Season At High School](#), Hartford Courant, 6/4



## June is Dairy Month

CONNECTICUT DAIRY: WE FARM TO FEED YOU

### **June is National Dairy Month**

Dairy is not only a nutritious food, but it's part of all the things we love to eat and is present during some of the most special moments in our lives. Think about some of your favorite milk moments throughout your life: enjoying a plate of cookies with that perfect glass of milk, your go-to morning smoothie, an ice cream outing with the family, an amazing cheese plate...the list goes on and on.

The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board's partner, New England Dairy, is celebrating their 100th anniversary with a goal to share 100 milk moments on social media.

Join the moo-vement by tagging @ConnecticutDairy and @NewEnglandDairy and using the hashtag #100MilkMoments.

### **FARMERS' MARKET GRANTS AVAILABLE**

Farm Credit East recently announced that it will be providing small grants to Northeast farmers' markets to support their promotion and development efforts. Interested farmers' markets must apply by June 8.

The grant funding is intended to assist these markets in their efforts to support participating farmers, complete market enhancements, conduct marketing efforts, and/or host programs that support disadvantaged communities or improve access to fresh, local food.

Any farmers' market located within Farm Credit East's territory is eligible to apply. Grants will be offered up to \$1,000. Special consideration will be given to first-time applicants and markets supporting under-served communities with limited access to fresh, local food. Grant applications must be received by Monday, June 8 and applicants will be notified by June 15. Visit [FarmCreditEast.com/FarmersMarket](http://FarmCreditEast.com/FarmersMarket) to learn more or to apply.

USDA's Farm Service Agency announces that Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) webinars for all farmers and ranchers. Ag producers can learn more about the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program and how to submit additional commodities for USDA consideration through the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process.

Webinar Dates & Topics:

- June 9 at 3:00 p.m. EDT - Outreach CFAP Webinar for Specialty Crop Producers
- June 11 at 3:00 p.m. EDT- Outreach CFAP Webinar for Dairy & Non-Specialty Crop Producers
- June 16 at 3:00 p.m. EDT - Outreach CFAP Webinar for Non-Specialty Crop & Livestock Producers
- June 18 at 3:00 p.m. EDT- Outreach CFAP Webinar on FSA Programs in the Time of Coronavirus

Please visit the FSA webinar page as pre-registration links will soon be posted. <https://bit.ly/3dD1KK6>

Producers are also reminded of the CFAP Call Center available for producers who would like additional one-on-one support with the CFAP application process. Please call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance.

FSA June Deadline Reminders:

- June 22 - Last date to submit additional commodities for consideration into CFAP
- June 30 - ARC/PLC Signup Ends

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### **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](#)

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

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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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