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Our offices will be closed on Friday, December 24, 2021, and Friday, December 31, 2021, in observance of the holidays. The CT Weekly Ag Report will resume the week of January 3, 2022. Happy New Year!





Happy Holidays

The holidays are upon us, and on behalf of all the staff at the Department of Agriculture, I extend best wishes this season and into the New Year to you and your families!

For many it was another year defined by uncertainty and stress, but also hope and resilience. Connecticut's agricultural producers stood strong and weathered the storms, literally and figuratively, ensuring access to local food, fiber, and flowers remained stable and secure.

Here at the department we are committed to providing the support our industry needs to continue growing. I am beyond proud of the team we have and the service they have provided during these challenging times.

We look forward to continuing our work together to sustain our vibrant agricultural industry and build a sustainable and equitable food system for our residents.

Wishing you a joyous and safe holiday season and Happy New Year!

Bryan P. Hurlburt, Commissioner of Agriculture

SIX COUNTIES APPROVED FOR FEDERAL AGRICULTURE DISASTER DECLARATION DUE TO HURRICANE IDA

On Dec. 21, Governor Ned Lamont announced that he has received notice from U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack that an agriculture disaster declaration has been approved for portions of Connecticut due to the impact of the remnants of Hurricane Ida on the state in early September.

Agency to cover production losses from the storm, such as emergency loans, provided that eligibility requirements are met. While Middlesex and New London are named as primary counties in the declaration, the other four are named as contiguous disaster counties, making farmers in all six of those named counties eligible for assistance.

Farmers will have eight months from the date of the secretarial disaster declaration to apply for emergency loans. The Farm Service Agency considers each emergency loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of production losses on the farm and the security and repayment ability of the operator. Farmers interested in applying for the assistance must contact their local Farm Service Agency office.

In August, a similar federal agriculture disaster declaration <u>was approved</u> for Connecticut as a result of the damages caused by Tropical Storm Elsa, which impacted the state in early July. That particular declaration applies to all eight of the state's counties, and farmers statewide are still eligible to apply for assistance under it.

COVID-19 PRODUCER RESOURCES

Agriculture businesses, non-profits, and other organizations should follow the sector rules that apply to them. Private business owners can implement or continue to require social distancing and other measures as deemed necessary.

Find the most current sector rules guidance at www.ct.gov/coronavirus.

The Department of Agriculture has archived information from various sources related to COVID-19, which can be found here:

https://portal.ct.gov/DOAG/Commissioner/COVID-19-Resources-for-Farmers.

REGISTER FOR ON-FARM MOBILE VACCINATION SITE

Farms interested in hosting a mobile vaccination clinic for farm employees are encouraged to fill out the <u>DPH vans intake form</u>.

CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURE IN THE NEWS

<u>'It's about feeding people': Stratford gets state's first hydroponic mobile farm,</u> CT Post, 12/21

<u>5 Connecticut creameries serving fresh holiday eggnog</u>, CT Insider, 12/20 <u>"Connecticut Flower & Garden Show" Coming February 24–27, 2022 to Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford</u>, AP News, 12/20





DEADLINE EXTENDED FOR CERTIFIED ORGANIC AND TRANSITIONING OPERATIONS TO APPLY FOR PANDEMIC SUPPORT

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has extended the deadline for agricultural producers who are certified organic, or transitioning to organic, to apply for the Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP). This program provides pandemic assistance to cover certification and education expenses. The deadline to apply for 2020 and 2021 eligible expenses is now Feb. 4, 2022, rather than the original deadline of Jan. 7, 2022.

Signup for OTECP, administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), began Nov. 8.

Read the full release.



SOLID GROUND STIPENDS FOR NEW AND BEGINNING FARMERS En Español Debajo

The following opportunity is intended for new and beginning farmers with less than 10 years of experience operating their own business. These funds are intended to help new and beginning farmers purchase better tools and make



Who is eligible:

- Connecticut farm operators that have been operating their own business for less than 10 years
- Aspiring Connecticut farm business owners that plan to launch their business in 2022 and have more than one season of farming experience on someone else's farm
- Market gardeners in Connecticut with at least one season of experience selling their products

Stipend Purpose:

UConn Extension's Solid Ground Program seeks to make available stipends to new and beginning farmers for the following purposes:

- Purchase of inputs such as seeds, compost, soil amendments, mulch, equipment rental, small equipment purchases, materials for integrated pest management.
- To offset producer costs associated with conservation practices, land preparation, land leasing, and Wi-Fi connectivity.
- Assistance beyond the types mentioned above that are relevant to pivoting the business due to COVID-19.

Stipend Level:

Stipend requests can be \$500 minimum up to \$2000 maximum per farm business.

Timeline:

Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on January 21, 2022.

For more information on the program, and to apply, click here.

USDA LAUNCHES LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack announced USDA is deploying \$100 million under the new <u>Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Program</u> to make available nearly \$1 billion in loan guarantees; these loan guarantees will back private investment in processing and food supply infrastructure that will strengthen the food supply chain for the American people.

USDA is making the funding available through the American Rescue Plan Act. The program is part of the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to address food system challenges dating back decades and <u>further exacerbated</u> by the

and they will help eliminate bottlenecks in the food supply chain.

Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Program

Through the <u>Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan Program</u>, USDA will partner with lenders to guarantee loans of up to \$40 million to help eligible entities expand meat and poultry processing capacity and finance other food supply chain infrastructure. Lenders may provide the loans to eligible cooperatives, corporations, for profits, nonprofits, Tribal communities, public bodies and people in rural and urban areas.

USDA Rural Development (RD) will administer the loans. Funding may be used to:

- start-up or expand food supply chain activities such as aggregating, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling or distributing food.
- address supply chain bottlenecks.
- increase capacity and help create a more resilient, diverse and secure U.S. food supply chain.

USDA is accepting electronic applications from lenders through the <u>Food Supply Chain Online Application System</u> until funds are expended. Paper applications will not be accepted. To access the online application system, lenders must submit a request to <u>rdfoodsupplychainloans@usda.gov</u>. For more information, visit <u>www.rd.usda.gov/foodsupplychainloans</u> or see the notice published in the Dec. 9 <u>Federal Register</u>.

RMA PUBLISHES PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE APPLE CROP INSURANCE POLICY

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced publication of a proposed rule in the *Federal Register* to amend the Apple Crop Provisions. The proposed changes are based on stakeholder feedback and recommended changes from a contracted study on the apple crop insurance program. Following feedback from the proposed rule, USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) will publish a final rule that is expected to be effective for the 2023 crop year.

RMA is proposing to make changes to the apple crop insurance program that:

- Enable producers to elect different coverage levels and percent of price elections by type, which allows producers to manage individual coverage and price risk more effectively.
- Allow producers' premiums to be reduced in response to orchard management practices, such as removing or grafting trees, that typically



to direct markets or premium processing markets.

- Exclude apples sold for the slicer market from being considered "fresh apple production."
- Introduce a fresh fruit factor to account for the reduced market value of production insured under the Quality Option sold for a grade other than U.S. Fancy.

RMA is soliciting comments on these proposed changes. The comment period will close on Feb. 14, 2022. Interested parties can submit comments <u>here.</u>



UCONN IS SEEKING VEGETABLE PRODUCERS' INPUT TO DESIGN A PROJECT ON WASHING PRODUCE

The purpose of this survey is to prioritize research and extension efforts at UConn regarding the application of natural antimicrobial and probiotic based produce wash to control food-borne pathogens on vegetable produce and reducing pathogen loads in wash water.

We would also study the use of dump tank wash versus spray systems to reduce Ag water use and wastewater disposal. Results will be used in the development of a grant proposal for a project to address these needs.

This survey should only take 7-10 minutes or less to complete. This survey is open to all vegetable producers in the Northeast. Your responses are confidential, and this survey does not contain questions that may personally identify you.



CT DAIRY FARMER PROMOTION GRANTS AVAILABLE

A wonderful opportunity for Connecticut Dairy Farmers to start the new year with fresh promotion of dairy and dairy farming.

Connecticut Milk Promotion Board and New England Dairy are offering a competitive dairy promotion grant program to Connecticut dairy farm families and employees. Funding for this project was paid for by the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board.

Funded projects will be eligible for grant funds of up to \$5,000 to improve public perception of dairy farming and/or increase consumption of local dairy products. The total grant funding available is \$15,000. Grants are available for projects that will be completed before May 13, 2022.

Apply now at this <u>link.</u> **Deadline for submission is January 13, 2022**.

Have a great idea, but not sure if it's grant worthy? Send us a quick description and we will be happy to help! Contact New England Dairy Farmer Relations specialist Jennifer Schenkel at <a href="mailto:issaercong: sending sending





TOK JCHOOLD

+ Schools for Roots!

<u>Put Local on Your Tray</u> is here to help schools and farms connect to source local roots for our Rooting for Winter campaign.

Did you know that 20 lbs. of mixed roots vegetables can make approx. 125 1/2 cup servings!

CT Grown carrots, turnips, potatoes and more range from .75¢ to \$3lb. That is a big range to work with when talking with farmers.

Check out more and Root for Winter at https://putlocalonyourtray.uconn.edu/rootingforwinter/



Contact nicholas.e.tedesco@uconn.edu with any questions & to connect with a local school market











FARM CREDIT EAST IS SEEKING INTERESTED YOUNG LEADERS TO ATTEND GENERATIONNEXT SEMINARS

financial skills, Farm Credit East is once again hosting GenerationNext seminars, and is currently seeking interested young leaders to attend. <u>Inperson sessions are limited, however a virtual option is also available.</u>

GenerationNext is optimal for those producers who will be the next generation operators of a farm business or for entrepreneurs starting their own business (Suggested age 20-35). The 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.

Virtual sessions will be two-hour sessions that run for eight weeks, starting January 5, and running every Wednesday through February.

A three-part in-person course will be held in the Bangor, Maine, area with each session running about 10:00 am - 3:00 pm. The first session will be held on January 5, followed by sessions on January 19 and February 9.

For more information on the GenerationNext Seminars, or to sign up, click here.



AFT'S NEW ENGLAND FARMER MICROGRANTS PROGRAM OPEN

The program provides direct financial support to farmers in New England of up to \$5,000 each. This year's funding will have a special emphasis on livestock farmers and the adoption of regenerative agriculture practices.

Funding will be given to projects that involve equipment or services related to:

- 1. Finding or getting onto farmland
- 2. Bringing more farmland into production



Round 1 is open now and will close on January 7, 2022.

Learn More About the Program



NATIONAL FARMERS UNION ANNOUNCES 2022 WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

National Farmers Union has announced the 2022 Women's Conference will be held **virtually from January 10-13**, **2022** (Farm Union members and non-members) and **in-person from January 16-18 in Nashville** (members only) to connect women in agriculture and provide education on applicable business skills and innovative marketing tactics.

Farmers, policy makers, educators, and specialists will present on a number of subjects, including business management, leadership, community building, and more. The 2022 Women's Conference will be a hybrid event with virtual sessions focusing on cooperatives, business management, and food sovereignty.

For pricing information, COVID-19 protocols, the conference agenda, more information, and sign ups for the Conference, click <u>here.</u>





VIRTUAL FARMLAND MIXER

Tuesday January 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

- Farmland Access Overview, 6:30-7:00 p.m. (Optional)
- Farmland Mixer, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

If you are a farmer in the state that is looking for land to lease or buy, this is a great opportunity for you to talk to landowners and get other resources from service providers about how to prepare to lease or buy land.

To begin, Will O'Meara, farmer and CT Field Agent at <u>Land For Good</u>, will give a short optional presentation on land access and various methods of getting onto farmland.

At 7:00 p.m., the mixer portion of the program will begin which will include pitches of available farm properties in Connecticut.

Landowners registering for the event should expect to give a five minute pitch describing their land base, infrastructure, and type of opportunity they are offering (lease, lease to own, purchase, etc.)

Assistance is available to help prepare your offer and to assess the suitability of your farmland.

Sign Up Here





QUICKBOOKS AND ACCOUNTING FOR FARMERS AND FOOD PRODUCERS

This winter's program on QuickBooks and basic farm accounting is a hybrid of self-directed learning, individual support, and remote classes with farm financial record keeping professionals. It is designed for farmers and local food producers who are either new to QuickBooks or need to improve their current recordkeeping practices.

For the months of January and February, participants will have access to the following:

- <u>The Farmer's Office</u>, an online source of accounting and QB videos and resources designed for farmers (usually \$49/month access)
- 6 Quickbooks classes that cover Chart of Accounts, Revenue and Expenses, Assets and Liabilities, the Balance Sheet, Reporting, and Recordkeeping Best Practices.
- Office hours with Farmer's Office author Julia Shanks to ask questions specific to your business
- Eligible attendees can receive additional 1×1 support in financial recordkeeping, planning or analysis upon attendance of at least 3 classes. This assistance is available until June 2022. See below for qualification information.

Class Schedule:

Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m., January 11-February 15 (6 classes held over Zoom)

Available for:

- Massachusetts Farmers
- New York State Beginning Farmers
- Massachusetts Specialty Food Producers that produce a value-added product where at least 50% of the ingredient's volume, weight, or value come from local farms.

Click <u>here</u> to register.









2022 VEGETABLE PRODUCTION CERTIFICATE COURSE

UConn Extension is offering a Vegetable Production Certificate Course, beginning on January 20, 2022.

It is a fully online course for new and beginning farmers who have 0-3 years of vegetable growing experience or no formal training in agriculture. The participants will learn answers to the basic questions about farm business planning, planning and preparing for vegetable farm, warm and cool-season vegetable production techniques, season extension, identification of biotic and abiotic issues, and marketing.

The price of the course is \$149.

Please contact the course coordinator, Shuresh Ghimire (Shuresh.Ghimire@uconn.edu, 860-870-6933) with any questions about this course.

Registration deadline: January 14, 2022

Register Here

ACQUIRING YOUR FARM ONLINE TRAINING SERIES

A virtual training series for aspiring, new and beginning farmers preparing to access farmland in New England. Learn how to identify your goals and set financial parameters, review pros and cons of owning versus leasing, conduct a land search, assess farm properties, discover keys to successful communication, and more.

secure tenure.

Topics include:

- Farmland tenure
- Identifying your goals
- Affording farmland & financial preparedness
- Owning vs. leasing
- · Finding farmland
- Communication & negotiation

Join us this winter! Wednesday evenings from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. each day:

January 19, 2022

January 26, 2022

February 2, 2022

February 9, 2022

February 16, 2022

February 23, 2022

Sliding-scale registration fee allows more access to events by paying an amount that fits one's budget. Those who pay the suggested rate will help support the participation for others. The suggested registration fee is \$50. Registration gives you access to the full series, as well as class worksheets, resource handouts, and session recordings to watch at your convenience.

For more information, call 603-357-1600 or email info@landforgood.org. To register now click the button below.

Register Here



with funds needed to take actionable steps to improve the safety of dairy products. Projects funded through this program will support increased production safety standards with the goal of accessing new markets. Projects that increase marketability of dairy products will be prioritized. Activities covered by this grant include accessing technical assistance, audits, food safety plan development, training, testing fees, and certain infrastructure upgrades.

Grants available of \$10,000 - \$40,000.

Deadline to apply: February 3, 2022. Details here.



PROMOTE YOUR UPCOMING EVENTS ON CT GROWN COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Did you know you can add events to our community calendar? It's a quick and easy way to get your events in front of the Connecticut Grown audience. Your events will be featured on the CT Grown events calendar, in email newsletters, and more! Let us market you.

To add your events to our calendar, fill out this form to receive a username, password, and instructions!

Fill Out the Form

ADD YOUR BUSINESS TO CT GROWN MAP

The Department of Agriculture, in coordination with CT NOFA, offers a variety of online listings on the <u>CT Grown Map</u> page. All agricultural businesses, farm



Ag Market Pricing

Middlesex Livestock Auction - CT
Prices provided on November 29, 2021

New Holland Dairy Auction - New Holland, PA

CT Farmers' Market Prices
Prices provided on October 22, 2021

New Holland, PA Hay Report

Northeast Regional Eggs

USDA Mexico Canada Weekly

<u>Update</u>

New England Shell Eggs

Wholesale Fruits & Vegetables -

Boston

Pennsylvania Weekly Cattle Auction

<u>Summary</u>

Wholesale Ornamental Flowers -

<u>Boston</u>

<u>Pennsylvania Livestock Auction -</u> <u>Eighty Four, PA</u>

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. <u>Sonpal's Power Fence</u> 860-491-2290.
- 46-R. Lynn Blackmer, local Nationwide Farm Insurance Agent. AFIS certified. Nationwide Farm Master Certified. Serving CT & RI. Any type/size farm. CT Farm Bureau members may qualify for discounts. Cell: 860-377-8947. lblackmer@caluoriinsurance.com Appointments available any time.
- 50-R. The SIG Insurance Agencies offer a wide range of carriers, can save you up to 23% on your farm insurance and provide better protection. References available from satisfied farmers. Call us for all your insurance needs with locations in CT, RI, NY and NH. Contact our AG department at 866-346-3744, option 4.

details. Griffin Farm Equipment, LLC. 860-508-2426, <u>Griffinfarm@aol.com;</u> <u>www.griffinfarmtools.com</u>

55-R. 250 Bales clean golden yellow rye straw, cut 6/1, large bales. 203-506-6318.

56-R. Piglets for Sale: \$100, FlamigFarm.com, West Simsbury, 860-658-5070.

57-R. Christmas greens, wreaths, roping, many sizes and varieties. Excellent for fundraisers. We deliver. 203-457-1344.

Wanted

42-R. EZTRAIL kicker bale wagons, any condition. Cash paid. Call or text George, 860-918-5442.

Job Opportunities

CitySeed is expanding, and seeking a part-time Development Associate to join the team. <u>Learn more</u>.

Brass City Harvest in Waterbury, CT is seeking a culinary kitchen leader. To lean more about the position, click <u>here.</u>

UConn Extension, in partnership with the <u>Connecticut Farm to School Collaborative</u> (CTFTSC), is actively seeking to fill a temporary Project Assistant position for 6 months in 2022 starting asap. This is a part-time, partially remote position. Deadline to apply is January 17th. <u>Click here for more information on the position</u>.

Interested in Advertising? Click <u>here</u> for details on rates and submission.

<u>Upcoming Events</u> (click on image below for info)









2022 Farm Viability Grant

Connecticut Department of Agriculture

Application Period:

Monday, November 29, 2021 - Monday, February 14, 2022

Eligible Applicants:

Municipalities
Groups of Municipalities
Regional Councils of Governments
Agricultural Non-Profits

Maximum Award:

\$49,999

Match Requirement:

40% of the total project cost

Projects must respond to one of the following areas of need in CT Agriculture:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Agriculture
Urban Agriculture
Food Supply Chain
Farmland Accessibility

Apply Here!

Contact Alison.Grabarz@ct.gov with any questions.



Facebook







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