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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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Wishing a Happy Father's Day to all those father figures teaching the next generation the value of agriculture. May you enjoy a day filled with family, friends, and your favorite Connecticut Grown products.

2021 Legislative Session Summary

By Kayleigh Royston, Legislative Liaison

At midnight on June 10, the virtual 2021 legislative session came to an end. This session encompassed many of the concepts left behind when the 2020 session was abruptly cut short due to COVID-19, as well as a number of concepts in response to the pandemic. The 2021 legislative session was a

The 2021 budget was passed with bipartisan support and allocated additional funding to increase benefit amounts for the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) as well as to create a "CT Grown for CT Kids" program. CT Grown for CT Kids will provide funding to assist local and regional boards of education in developing farm-to-school programs to increase the availability of local foods in child nutrition programs, allows educators to use hands-on educational techniques to teach students about nutrition and farm-to-school connections, sustain relationships with local farmers and producers, and enrich the education experience of students.

Several hundred bills passed both chambers of the General Assembly in concurrence and were sent to Governor Lamont for his signature. A number of those bills will impact farming and agriculture.

Throughout the session, the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) tracked more than 140 bills, introduced four legislative proposals, and advocated for policies that will be beneficial to the agricultural community in Connecticut.

Legislative proposals affecting the Department of Agriculture are primarily heard by the legislature's Environment committee. This year, DoAg introduced the following four bills:

- An Act Concerning Enhancements to Certain Agricultural Programs

This bill makes several changes to the Connecticut farmers' market nutrition programs; effective immediately, the value of the farmers' market nutrition program (FMNP) checks will be increased to not less than \$20 for the 2021 season. Measures put in place via executive order during COVID-19 which allowed for proxy redemption of these benefits and removing the in-person signatory requirements will become law. Effective for the 2022 FMNP season, chicken eggs will be eligible for redemption with FMNP checks.

- An Act Concerning Animal Welfare - [P.A.21-90](#)

This bill makes a number of changes to existing animal welfare statutes, including; allowing municipalities and regional animal control facilities to appoint a temporary ACO from another municipality; requires regional animal control facilities to meet the same construction, maintenance, and sanitation standards as municipal pounds; requires animal shelters to have dogs and cats examined regularly by a licensed veterinarian and maintain records of veterinary services rendered, which existing law requires of animal importers; requires DoAg to develop a process to allow an animal's owner to request a reduction in the rabies quarantine period under specified circumstances.

This bill gives a much-needed update to the reimbursement rates in the Animal Population Control Program (APCP), as well as increasing the funding percentage that can be allocated to the departments feral cat program.

Farms - [P.A. 21-24](#)

This bill extends Connecticut's PA-490 program to certain aquaculture operations. PA 490 allows farm, forest, open space, and maritime heritage land to be assessed for property tax purposes based on current use value rather than fair market rate. In exchange for this reduced assessment, the property owner cannot change the land's use for a period of time.

This bill expands the Connecticut shellfish restoration program by allowing DoAg to do the following: acquire shell or other cultch material to deposit on state shellfish beds; contract to use a shell recovery vessel to collect and deposit shell on the beds; and receive and deposit on the bed cultch from oyster shell recycling programs. It allows for DoAg to seek and receive private, state, or federal grants, in addition to state funds, to operate the program.

This bill also reconstitutes and restructures the Connecticut Seafood Development Council, the Department of Agriculture will begin seeking out interested candidates in the coming months.

- An Act Concerning Supplemental Revisions to the State's Hemp Program Statutes - [P.A.21-89](#)

This bill revises the state's hemp program statutes to conform with USDA's Final Rules for hemp production, which became effective March 22, 2021. Compliance is necessary for the state to receive federal approval of its state hemp production plan.

A number of other bills were passed this session related to climate change initiatives, criminal justice reform, and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A full list of bills passed this session will be available on the [Connecticut General Assembly web page](#) in the coming days.



Agency Icon



Agency Seal



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CTGrown.gov

Agency Horizontal w/ Website

DOAG UNVEILS NEW AGENCY LOGO ON HEELS OF UPDATED CT GROWN BRAND CAMPAIGN

communications with the industry. The new agency logo reflects the direction of the agency and ties in many of the same elements seen in the updated CT Grown brand campaign launched earlier this year.

Producers are encouraged to visit CTGrown.org to download the new CT Grown brand materials to update their website, packaging, and other promotions for eligible products.

COVID-19 PRODUCER RESOURCES

As Connecticut's coronavirus response efforts continue to roll out, the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg) announces that all COVID-19 guidance documents specific to agriculture have been rescinded. This falls in line with Governor Lamont's announced plans to eliminate most of the state's COVID-19 restrictions for every sector by May 19, 2021.

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/Commissioner/COVID-19-Resources-for-Farmers>.

COVID-19 Long-Term Recovery Resource Page

The State of Connecticut has rolled out a Recovery Grant Funding Resources Page. This page compiles all known federal, state and philanthropic COVID-19 recovery grant opportunities in one place and includes a link to information on how to apply, as well as the deadline for the grant. An additional non-funding resources landing page will be rolling out shortly.

Link to page: <https://business.ct.gov/CT-Recovers/Grants-and-Funding-Opportunities-for-Connecticut-Recovery>.

REGISTER FOR ON-FARM MOBILE VACCINATION SITE

Farms interested in hosting a mobile vaccination clinic for farm employees are encouraged to fill out the [DPH vans intake form](#).

CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURE IN THE NEWS

[Somethings Brewing at Stewards of the Land in Northford](#), 6/11, WFSB
[Ledyard High School Agri-Science Program fights hunger in its community](#),

Hartford Courant

[6 farms in Connecticut where you can pick your own berries](#), 6/14, Middletown Press

[Waterbury Business Receives Farm Transition Grant](#), 6/14, Patch.com

[Schools' Food Service Chief Finds A Recipe For Success](#), 6/15, The Chronicle



LAST CALL: FMNP FARMER CERTIFICATION MEETINGS

Please remember - this is the beginning of a new certification period.

All fruit, vegetable, and honey producers selling at Certified Connecticut Grown Farmers' Markets must be certified with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). To be certified, producers must attend a certification meeting regardless of whether you were previously certified.

The certification allows farms to accept the FMNP checks for fresh fruits, vegetables, and honey from WIC clients and income-eligible seniors over the age of 60. Join us to get your certification, learn more about available grant funding for your farm, and accepting SNAP to expand your sales.

Below is the remaining meeting date which will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

- Wednesday, June 23, 2021 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

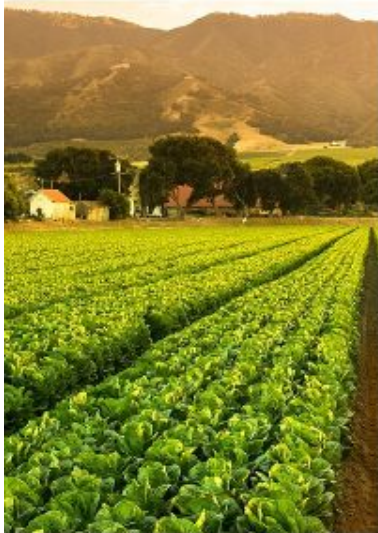
Registration is now open at <https://bit.ly/2TyWoKG>. Registration must be received at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Once registered, you will receive meeting information the day before the meeting. Questions can be directed to Erin Windham at Erin.Windham@ct.gov or 860-519-6083.

USDA ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL AID TO AG PRODUCERS AND BUSINESSES

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced additional aid to agricultural producers and businesses as part of the USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative. Earlier this year, Secretary Vilsack announced plans to use

initiative announced in March, USDA pledged to continue Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) payments and to provide aid to producers and businesses left behind. Implementation of the assistance announced today will continue within 60 days to include support to timber harvesters, biofuels, dairy farmers and processors, livestock farmers and contract growers of poultry, assistance for organic cost share, and grants for PPE.

Read the full release [here](#).



Expanding Access to Capital for Rural Connecticut

Wednesday, June 30th
3pm-4:30pm

Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/159520346651>

Our Connecticut cohorts at the U.S. Small Business Administration, CT DoAg, CT Department of Economic Development, CT Small Business Development Center, Farm Service Agency and U.S. Department of Agriculture will present on opportunities to access capital for stakeholders and small businesses to expand and rebuild rural communities.

Panelists include:

- David Lehman, Commissioner, CT Dept. of Economic and Community Development
- Bryan Hurlburt, Commissioner, CT Dept. of Agriculture
- Carolyn Marlowe, Farm Loan Manager, USDA Farm Service Agency
- Catherine Marx, District Director, U.S. Small Business Administration
- Matt Pugliese, Associate State Director, CT Small Business Development Center
- Johan Strandson, Area Director, U.S. Dept of Agriculture



U.S. Small Business
Administration



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UCONN EXTENSION OFFERS BIOLOGICAL CONTROL WEBINAR FOR ORNAMENTAL GREENHOUSE GROWERS

On Monday, July 19, 2021, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. EST, UCONN Extension and USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) will host a webinar with Suzanne Wainwright Evans on biological controls for ornamental greenhouse growers. One pesticide recertification credit is available (PA, 3A) for this online webinar.

Registration is required for this webinar. Click [here](#) to register.

For more information contact: Rosa E. Raudales at rosa@uconn.edu or Leanne Pundt at Leanne.pundt@uconn.edu.



DAIRY FARMERS ENCOURAGED TO RESPOND TO COST OF PRODUCTION SURVEY

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture and UCONN Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy are encouraging Connecticut dairy farmers to complete the Cost of Production Survey which is utilized to determine calculations for the quarterly Dairy Farm Viability Payments issued through the Community Investment Act.

Survey results provide up-to-date data to reflect the current cost of production for dairy farms of all sizes in Connecticut. The data currently used to calculate the quarterly Dairy Farm Viability payments is 10 years old.

A mailing was sent out in early April to all licensed milk producers. This contained a code unique to your farm. If you have not responded, please do so immediately. The survey can be completed online or by paper copy.

- Did you misplace the code?
- Need assistance completing the survey?

Contact Richard Meinert (Richard.meinert@uconn.edu, 860-626-6857) or Alyssa McDonnell (alyssa.mcdonnell@uconn.edu, 860-992-7550).

For more information or FAQs, please click [here](#).

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture has contracted with the University of Connecticut Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy to conduct this survey. All information is protected and the unique farm identifier code will be used to determine which questionnaires have and have not been returned.

USDA TO BEGIN LOAN PAYMENTS TO SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED BORROWERS UNDER AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT SECTION 1005

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (FSA) today [published the first notice of funding availability \(NOFA\)](#) (PDF, 242 KB) announcing loan payments for eligible borrowers with qualifying direct farm loans under the American Rescue Plan Act Section 1005. The official NOFA will be published in the Federal Register early next week and USDA expects

have collateral and have been previously referred to the Department of Treasury for debt collection for offset, will be published within 120 days.

Section 1005 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) provides funding and authorization for USDA FSA to pay up to 120 percent of direct and guaranteed loan outstanding balances as of January 1, 2021, for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as defined in Section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a)). Section 2501(a) defines a socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher as a farmer or rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group, which is further defined as a group whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. Qualifying loans as part of today's announcement are certain direct loans under the Farm Loan Programs (FLP) and Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL).

To learn more about the loan payments to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, visit www.farmers.gov/americanrescueplan.

USDA ANNOUNCES GRANTS FOR URBAN AGRICULTURE AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the availability of up to \$4 million for grants to support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production projects. USDA's Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (Office) is accepting proposals for planning and innovation projects, and these grants are part of USDA's broader efforts to support urban agriculture.

USDA will accept applications on Grants.gov until 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on July 30, 2021.

A pre-recorded webinar will provide an overview of the grants' purpose, project types, eligibility and basic requirements for submitting an application. The webinar will be posted at farmers.gov/urban.

\$76.9 MILLION AVAILABLE FOR FARMERS' MARKET AND LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION PROGRAM

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announced the availability of \$76.9 million in funding for the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program (FMLFPP).

The FMLFPP program provides grants on a competitive basis for a wide variety of direct-to-consumer and local food marketing projects like farmers markets, CSAs, food hubs, and value-added product incubators. FMLFPP has two

(RFA) for each subprogram.

More information on how to apply can be found on the [FMPP webpage](#) and [LFPP webpage](#), where you will find requirements for submitting an application to the most recently updated FY2021 RFAs. The application window is currently open now through 11:59 p.m. EST on June 21, 2021.

\$15.3 MILLION AVAILABLE FOR REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS PARTNERSHIP

AMS also announced the availability of \$15.3 million for the RFSP program. Housed under the umbrella program, the Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP), along with FMLFPP, RFSP is a new program that supports foodshed-level approaches to developing regional food economies. The increase in funding pools for both the FMLFPP and RSFP program is part of Congress's ongoing efforts to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on local and regional food systems.

Administered by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), the RFSP program provides competitive grant funding to support multi-stakeholder partnerships and encourage foodshed-level approaches to planning and developing local and regional food economies.

More information on the application process can be found on the [AMS RFSP webpage](#). The FY2021 applications must be received before 11:59 p.m. EST on July 6, 2021. All submissions must be done through [grants.gov](#).



virtual **CONNECTICUT
FARMER
VETERAN
MEETING**

**JUNE.30.2021
7PM**

Are you a Veteran Farmer or a Veteran thinking about a career in agriculture? Join us for an informational meet, greet and networking event among Connecticut Veterans. Part of the discussion will include forming a Committee to bring a chapter of the Farmer Veteran Coalition here to Connecticut.

**INTERESTED IN ATTENDING?
REGISTER AT: [CTRCD.ORG/AGRICULTURE/FARMUP/](https://ctrkd.org/agriculture/farmup/)**



Updated Farmers' Market Reference Guide Available



UPDATED FARMERS' MARKET REFERENCE GUIDE AVAILABLE

Guide. Together with our partners at the Department of Consumer Protection, the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the updated guide offers answers to many questions regarding establishing and selling at Connecticut Farmers' Markets.

The guide is a complete resource for market managers and vendors, with over 36 sections addressing commonly asked questions, regulations pertaining to sales of products, and contact information for regulating agencies. The Reference Guide is viewable online and can be downloaded to your computer, mobile device, or printed.

[Access the Reference Guide now.](#)



FREE ONE-ON-ONE CONSULTATIONS FOR CONNECTICUT FARMERS

For those that are growing commercially, aka are a farm businesses, there is an opportunity for you to have consultations with some of the experts in the state surrounding a wide variety of topics.

Look at the different types of consultations that are available here: <https://newfarms.uconn.edu/consultations/>

These are free one-on-one consultations to Connecticut farmers, with specialists in certain fields of knowledge. These consultations are intended for those who have been farming for 10 years or less, but folks can apply if they have been farming for a longer period of time.

Sign up for an consultation with an experts on the topics of

- Vegetable Production
- Livestock
- Conservation and Land use
- Fruit production
- Flower production

The consultations will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis and are subject to the consultants availability. If all spots are filled, we will maintain a waiting list. Deadlines for sign ups are dependent on each consultant.

love gardening, please access the [UConn Home and Garden Education Center](#).

Sign up here: <https://newfarms.uconn.edu/consultations/>

SIGN UP NOW FOR FARM CREDIT EAST'S WINERY BENCHMARK PROGRAM

The sign-up period for Farm Credit East's annual Winery Benchmarks program is now open. The Winery Benchmarks is a unique program for Northeast wineries to measure their businesses against wine industry peers. The program is now accepting registrations for the 2021 benchmark.

The program offers participants two report options: the Management Review report or an Executive Summary report. The Management Review report provides a highly detailed comprehensive report on every area of the winery business. The Executive Summary report requires less data for a reduced cost. It is ideal for wineries that are just getting started in the program and may not have all the data required for the more comprehensive report.

Registration for the 2021 benchmark is currently underway. Data will be required by June 25. A meeting for benchmark participants is being planned for August.

If you are a past participant or new to the program, contact your local Farm Credit East office to learn more. You can also contact the program's director, Gregg McConnell, at Gregg.Mcconnell@farmcrediteast.com.

Ag Market Pricing

[Middlesex Livestock Auction - CT](#)
Prices last provided on June 14, 2021

[New Holland Dairy Auction - New Holland, PA](#)

[Northeast Regional Eggs](#)

[New Holland, PA Hay Report](#)

[New England Shell Eggs](#)

[USDA Mexico Canada Weekly Update](#)

[Pennsylvania Weekly Cattle Auction Summary](#)

[Wholesale Fruits & Vegetables - Boston](#)

[Pennsylvania Livestock Auction - Eighty Four, PA](#)

[Wholesale Ornamental Flowers - Boston](#)

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.

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.

47-R. Kuhn GMC 600 II HD, 3 point hitch disc mower, 7'10" working width, ready to mow. \$5,500. Durham, 860-638-9689.

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.

53-R. Hereford cow/calf pairs. 2 years old with stout bull calves, bred back. Old Beech Farm. 860-693-2052.

54-R. Transplanters, vacuum seeders, fertilizer applicators, garlic and potato planters and harvesters. High quality Italian-made precision equipment for the vegetable, tobacco, hemp, fruit, and floral markets. Call or email us today for details. Griffin Farm Equipment, LLC. 860-508-2426, Griffinfarm@aol.com; www.griffinfarmtools.com

Wanted

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

Job Opportunities

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture Farmland Preservation Program is seeking qualified State Certified General Appraisers with the required education credentials and the experience to be part of our approved panel of Independent Fee Appraisers. They conduct appraisals for the land valuation of conservation easements pertaining to the purchase of development rights to farmland, in compliance with The Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice

and have completed the proper coursework required by USDA-NRCS appraisal specifications, to conduct appraisals for the Agricultural Land Easement component of the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP-ALE). For further information you may contact Denise O'Meara, Property Agent 2, at 860-713-2511.

The UConn Extension Center located in Vernon, CT is seeking applications for two (2) Educational Program Assistant 1 positions – one full-time position and one part-time position (75%). These positions are responsible for supporting and helping implement high-quality, comprehensive, Extension programming at different program sites throughout the region, with specific support to Farm Business Planning, Beginning Farmer, Food Systems, Food Safety, Vegetable, Master Gardener, and 4-H programs. The Educational Program Assistants will report to the Center Coordinator to prioritize programmatic work assignments.

Please apply online at <https://hr.uconn.edu/jobs>, Staff Positions, Search #495338. This job posting is scheduled to be removed at 11:55 p.m. Eastern time on June 22, 2021.

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

Upcoming Events

(click the image to be redirected to the event website)





GEOHERMAL PILOT PROGRAM

Providing FREE Geothermal FARM ASSESSMENTS

CT FARM ENERGY GEOTHERMAL PILOT PROGRAM

Spring is here and we are booking May consults now. Eligible farms and ag based rural small businesses can receive a free geothermal site assessment and report. Here's your chance to see how geothermal may play a role on your farm. <https://ctfarmenergy.org/ct-farm-energy-geothermal-pilot-program/>



Virtual Farm Field Day

All farmers are welcome!

JULY 15, 2021
6:00PM

Featuring Adamah Farm in Falls Village, CT via Zoom

Thank you for visiting our farm! Consider how to regularly increase your productivity.

Learn about a practical and financial solution to increase a source of additional farm income and an opportunity to diversify crops and use space that isn't suited for crops or other activities.

Come learn about establishing a chestnut agroforestry farm. USDA, NRCS, and Agricultural Service providers. We'll walk through the process of assessing the property for potential tree crops and agroforestry uses. Look at the steps to establish and maintain the potential tree crop planting of chestnut trees while already planted orchards on part of farm expansion. In the webinar we'll go through the process. Hear about forest's growth and how the newly planted trees are part of the family. Learn how New Farm in Connecticut can get started in expanding farm diversity and expand into agroforestry.

REGISTER ONLINE:
CTCRD.ORG/AGRICULTURE/SOIL-HEALTH-INITIATIVE/

For more info, please email info@ctcrd.org

Save the Date!

Plant Science Day 2021 Wednesday, August 4

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station
Lockwood Farm
890 Evergreen Avenue
Hamden, CT 06518



CAES

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station
Putting Science to Work for Society since 1875

portal.ct.gov/caes

Toll-Free 877.855.2237



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