



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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*Bureau of Agriculture Development & Resource Conservation
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Connecticut Farm Wine Development Council

Special Meeting Agenda

Friday, July 14, 2023

10:00 AM

[View the Meeting Here](#)

Members Present: Commissioner Hurlburt, Hilary Criollo, Richard Ruggiero, Linda Auger, Cara Sawyer, Washington da Silva, Jon Edwards

Members Absent: Indrajeet Chaubey, George Motel, Maribel La Luz, Jamie Jones

DoAg Staff: Rebecca Eddy, Kayleigh Royston, Lindsay Booth

Guests: Tod Kallenbach, DKA

1. Commissioner Hurlburt called the meeting to order at 10:07 am.
2. Motion to approve Regular Meeting Minutes from May 11, 2023, made by Hilary Criollo, and seconded by Linda Auger, no comments. All in favor, minutes approved.
3. Public Comment: There were no members of the public present; however, Rebecca Eddy noted there was an e-mail sent by Keith Bishop to Commissioner Hurlburt, Rebecca Eddy and some members of the council, which was shared with the board concerning legislation allowing additional selling locations of farm wines on non-contiguous property of a farm winery. Commissioner indicated he will forward the e-mail to both DECD and DCP and that many members of the council would likely concur with Mr. Bishop in wanting to see this action expedited, utilizing data already collected through various channels to avoid duplication. Discussion ensued on specifications of what legislation allows. Kayleigh Royston to follow up with DCP.
4. Reports
 - a. Marketing
 - DKA Update
 - Review of awareness survey results:

Todd Kallenbach from DKA shared information from the Consumer Research Survey conducted May 18 – June 15, 2023. The purpose of the survey was to obtain benchmark data before implementing the next phase of the marketing program, specifically the advertising campaign. Discussion ensued regarding survey results,

how results were obtained, future samples for surveys, response rate and engagement. There will be a post-campaign consumer survey, as well.

- Ad Campaign:
 - The approved ad campaign is digital, which includes: advertising, social media (Facebook and Instagram platforms), and mobile geofencing (banner ads sent to mobile devices within certain geographies which are digitally mapped out, including areas where farm wineries as located). The campaign for May 23 - June 30, 2023 yielded over 200,000 impressions for Facebook/Instagram, and over 100,000 impressions for Mobile Geofencing, with 289 and 132 clicks respectively. This can change during campaign season from month to month. Discussion ensued regarding future campaign plans. The messages for ads in the following months include click-thru's, incentives and messages within the ad to download the app and visiting the website/visit CT's 45+ Farm Wineries via CTWineCountry.com. Todd Kallenbach invited photography and suggestions, but requested images with items/etchings do not have specific farm wineries advertised. For campaigns in future years, video can potentially be added.
 - Rebecca Eddy highlighted the advertising campaign was to include all CT Farm wineries, which includes wineries not included in the Passport Program. Discussion ensued regarding how many licensed farm wineries are not part of Passport program.
 - Organic Socials – Meet Your Local Winemaker
 - The Organic Socials is managed by Rebecca Eddy and Ally Hughes. Some wineries have submitted photography and short videos. Richard Ruggiero mentioned they may purchase a drone. The Department of Agriculture does own a drone; however, only one employee in a different unit is the sole licensed user at this time. A link was shared in the chat, below.
 - Video/photography can be sent to Rebecca Eddy by e-mail or by visiting the Cognito Form link dropped within the chat. Videos/photos should feature wine makers and their families, and in different seasons where appropriate.
- b. Financial
 - Budget update
 - The state's financial system, CORE, is currently shutdown. Outside of the invoices for DKA, which have been submitted, there are no updates for

now. There have been no major changes regarding the funds the Farm Wine Development Council receive through CIA Funding in this past legislative session. Commissioner Hurlburt requested information be sent out to Council members once CORE reopens.

c. Legislative

- Jon Edwards asked a question about the Dubitsky Bill regarding how to maintain status as a Farm Winery for one year after crop loss, for example. He also expressed concern about getting this information out to all CT Farm wineries. Commissioner Hurlburt and Kayleigh Royston shared that it would have to be authorized/certified by the Commissioner of DCP. DCP should have a form that can be completed stating that if a farm winery (other) has sustained significant loss through no fault of such farm winery permittee in acknowledgement of the loss to retain their farm winery status. The bill is currently in effect. The Department of Agriculture will reach out to DCP to ensure the form is available. The bill also includes the language for the additional permits. Further discussion ensued regarding loss and how to gauge the amount of loss. Commissioner Hurlburt indicated farm wineries should file early and update accordingly. It was asked if the filings were just for notification or if there would be economic relief from the loss. Commissioner Hurlburt indicated filings for DCP were solely to ensure those affected by loss would retain their Farm Winery permit. Language was added to a current bill that added weather related disasters as eligible funding; however, the Department of Agriculture will need to build out what the program entails. It will likely include infrastructure, climate resiliency plans and how to manage potential future events. Commissioner Hurlburt indicated there have not been, and there would not be until the next legislative session, any production loss payments that have been approved through the legislature. If vines were lost during the February and May cold snaps, the Tree Assistance Program through the Farm Service Agency is available. Information was shared within the chat. No disaster declarations are necessary in order to file. The FSA county offices should assist with the application process. Legislatively, there were no changes to the budget within the Community Investment Account. It was asked if the budget is ever adjusted for inflation. Commissioner Hurlburt indicated there is no current adjustment; however, there have been conversations among several legislators regarding this and

changes. There has been hesitancy among many regarding changes that could potentially impact the CIA. Further conversation ensued. Commissioner Hurlburt indicated it would be added for legislative review. A link was shared in the chat, below.

d. Big E

- The Big E is rapidly approaching. The new coolers were delivered prior to fiscal year end and they are in office. The kegator purchase is in process. The paperwork process for the Big E, relative to wineries, has become more streamlined. Rebecca Eddy will be sending paperwork for signature next week, and will be submitting to the Town of West Springfield for their August 8 agenda for the License Commission meeting. She will follow up with others next week related to pricing with DCP.
- There is a new license commission clerk. The pouring license also includes sampling, which was not previously communicated before. Rebecca Eddy communicated with the Mass Department of Ag and again with the license commission clerk that this was not previously communicated, requesting when the change was made. The license commission clerk indicated the ability to sample with the pouring license has always existed. Bottle sales still need to be separate from the pouring license.
- The full building list of vendors is not completely available. It is anticipated the CT Building will have more vendors than the last two years post-covid, and will appear more robust in attendance.
- Richard Ruggiero asked about an awarded wine receiving their award/certificate. They received a Gold for their Washington Trail White. Rebecca Eddy indicated she will send an email to Big E representatives regarding receipt of award/certificate.

e. Research and Education

- Washington da Silva had to leave the meeting early, but indicated in the chat he had nothing new to share for Research and Education. Jamie Jones is heading the Chair and was unable to join. He connected with Rebecca Eddy before the meeting and asked that it be shared on August 2 the CT Agriculture Experiment Station will have Plant Science Day at Lockwood Farm in Hamden. Research results and presentation will occur. Members were encouraged to attend. Discussion ensued regarding Spotted Lantern Fly, reporting, programs and plans to talk about next steps. The

USDA has programs regarding the Spotted Lantern Fly. Linda Auger asked more information about grant opportunities and the possibility of purchasing specific netting that helps with the mitigation of the Spotted Lantern Fly. She added that if larger groups, such as the USDA of CT DoAg, purchased netting in larger quantities that pricing would be better for distribution. When Spotted Lantern Flies arrive at vineyards is too late for mitigation as they will decimate produce that remains in a very short time. Linda Auger wondered if there would be opportunities for grants for these purchases. Commissioner Hurlburt asked Linda Auger to e-mail him information regarding the netting she spoke. He indicated he would send this information to his contacts at the USDA in their working group. Commissioner Hurlburt was unaware there was a netting that is helpful in Spotted Lantern Fly mitigation. Richard Ruggiero asked Commissioner Hurlburt if the Ag Experiment Station has had any recent research on grapes/hybrids. Richard Ruggiero mentioned he has heard about new red hybrids and white hybrids. He asked if any of those were growing at the Ag Experiment Station, or if they were just taking care of what already was in place. Commissioner Hurlburt did not know the answer to this question, but indicated he could follow up with Washington da Silva and find out the answer.

f. Passport Program

- Radius and Coordinates Update
- In the May 11, 2023 meeting, council voted on changing the coordinates. This was accomplished in June. The coordinates for participating vineyards for the stamping feature were reduced to 50 feet. Rebecca Eddy indicated she was curious about feedback. There has been a tremendous increase in manual stamp requests. There were specific wineries that had many requests for manual stamp requests. This will necessitate the need to update the latitude and longitude of some tasting rooms. Impacts of this also includes limited space/patios. Example signage for use by wineries was distributed as well.
 - Action on multiple stamp locations per winery with the updated statute to sell at multiple locations
- Rebecca Eddy opened the discussion and requested thoughts and feedback on farm wineries with multiple locations appear in the Passport Program. Due to attendance, no quorum for voting to take place. Discussion ensued. Consensus is for one primary location for the Passport stamping.
- Richard Ruggiero asked why farm wineries need a second \$25.00 license to be considered a farm winery. Rebecca Eddy indicated the Department

of Agriculture is charged with implementing it. From this, discussion ensued regarding the distinction of a farm winery, a winery (that may not produce their own product) and the charge for the mentioned license. The form is to fill out the participation in the program. Richard Ruggiero opposes the requirement for a second license. Rebecca Eddy clarified the percentages required for identifying as a Connecticut Winery (25%) and a Connecticut Grown Winery (51%)

5. Old Business

- No old business to revisit.

6. New Business

- Hilary Criollo asked on behalf of Keith Bishop if the Department of Agriculture can share with the Wine Council information submitted by the wineries. Specifically, the program and information that was required in a grouped and summarized in table/graph form, that shows (without showing names) the acres in crop production, gallons per use from the wineries crop, gallons from other Connecticut fruit, gallons from out of state, acreage and percentage of fruit grown. Commissioner Hurlburt asked for clarification, if the Council is requesting, without naming names, per winery, what their blends are. Hilary Criollo confirmed that is the request. Discussion ensued regarding the reason for the request. Commissioner Hurlburt indicated he will review what the DoAg will be able to provide, and the DoAg will reach out to DCP for information the DoAg may not have. Based upon the information requested, it may be something the DoAg and DCP can provide without members of council having to initiate a FOIA request. Rebecca Eddy asked a clarifying question regarding who this information would be shared with. Hilary Criollo clarified it would be sharing with the Farm Wine Development Council. For Freedom of Information requests, every agency has a designated point person. For the DoAg, requests can be sent to agr.foia@ct.gov. The e-mail address for Department of Agriculture FOI's and the link for DCP Freedom of Information requests was placed in the chat, below. The next regularly scheduled meeting is December 14, 2023. Reminders will be sent.

7. Motion to adjourn by Jon Edwards and seconded by Hilary

Criollo, all in favor, meeting adjourned at 12:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Lindsay Booth, Administrative Assistant, on July 17, 2023.

[https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/tree_assistance_program-tap-fact_sheet.pdf)

[Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/tree_assistance_program-tap-fact_sheet.pdf](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/tree_assistance_program-tap-fact_sheet.pdf)

from Rebecca Eddy to everyone: 10:40 AM

Crop Loss Reporting form for July rainfall and floodwaters:

https://www.cognitofrms.com/CTDoAg/_2023GrowerCropLossReportJuly

from Rebecca Eddy to everyone: 10:54 AM

Form to submit for organic social:

<https://www.cognitofrms.com/CTDoAg/MeetYourCTFarmWinery>

from Kayleigh Royston to everyone: 10:58 AM

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/ACT/PA/PDF/2023PA-00049-R00HB-06241-PA.PDF>

from Kayleigh Royston to everyone: 11:58 AM

agr.foia@ct.gov

from Kayleigh Royston to everyone: 11:59 AM

<https://portal.ct.gov/DCP/Common-Elements/Consumer-Facts-and-Contacts/Freedom-of-Information>

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