



Bryan P. Hurlburt
Commissioner

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
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Office of the Commissioner



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Connecticut Farmers Impacted by COVID-19 Eligible for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program Financial Assistance

HARTFORD, CT – Governor Ned Lamont, Congressman Joe Courtney, and Agriculture Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt are encouraging Connecticut farmers and producers to sign up to receive financial assistance through the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Coronavirus Food Assistance program (CFAP), which was authorized by Congress through the bipartisan Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (H.R. 748). Earlier this week U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue released additional details on CFAP which will provide up to \$16 billion in direct payments to deliver relief to America's farmers and ranchers impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

"This federal assistance is crucial for Connecticut's farmers to continue their operations and maintain our state's vibrant agricultural diversity," said Governor Lamont. "Throughout all of the market disruptions, producers have continued planting, growing, and caring for their animals in order to meet the needs of consumers for fresh, local food."

CFAP will provide vital financial assistance to producers of agricultural commodities who have suffered a five-percent-or-greater price decline or who had losses due to market supply chain disruptions due to COVID-19 and face additional significant market costs. Eligible commodities include: non-specialty crops, wool, livestock, dairy, and specialty crops (fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans, and mushrooms).

USDA will consider additional crops to be eligible for CFAP by collecting information on potentially eligible crops, including aquaculture, nursery, and cut flowers.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how fragile our food system is," said Commissioner Hurlburt. "We all know how important food is, but now many people understand how important it is to have a robust, local food system for people to access. These payments will support our farmers at a critical time and provide the funds necessary to stabilize our food supply chain. For residents who are interested in supporting local farms, please visit www.CTGrownMap.com to find farms in your area."

Beginning May 26, USDA's Farm Service Agency will be accepting applications from agricultural producers who have suffered losses. While offices are open by phone appointment only, FSA will be working with agricultural producers by phone and using email and online tools to process applications.

"This update from Secretary Perdue couldn't have come soon enough for our dairy and commodity crop farmers in eastern Connecticut," said Rep. Courtney. "Before we passed the CARES Act we made sure it included a way for our farmers to receive direct support, straight into their pockets. Now, farmers can finally start preparing to apply on May 26 for the funding we authorized specifically to help them offset

the steep price declines we've seen due to COVID-19. My colleagues and I on the Congressional Dairy Caucus are working to authorize more resources to help all of our farmers through this crisis, and we're not letting our foot off the gas to press the USDA to expand these new direct payments to producers in the nursery and aquaculture sectors. We've got a wide variety of nursery growers and shellfish farmers in eastern Connecticut, and I am continuing to pursue that assistance for them as aggressively as possible. Right now, I encourage our farmers to sign up as soon as possible to take advantage of direct payments through this new program."

For additional CFAP details, including eligibility, application process, and payment calculator, as well as locations of the nearest FSA office, visit <https://www.farmers.gov/cfap>.

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The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg) mission is to foster a healthy economic, environmental and social climate for agriculture by developing, promoting, and regulating agricultural businesses; protecting agricultural and aquacultural resources; enforcing laws pertaining to domestic animals; and promoting an understanding among the state's citizens of the diversity of Connecticut agriculture, its cultural heritage, and its contribution to the state's economy. For more information, visit www.CTGrown.gov.

