

Thursday, September 12, 2024

**LT. GOVERNOR BYSIEWICZ AND AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER HURLBURT  
ANNOUNCE \$250,000 FUNDING TO 12 RECIPIENTS OF THE CONNECTICUT RESOURCE  
CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT'S CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE GRANT PROGRAM**

(Bethany, CT) – On Thursday, September 12, 2024, Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz and Agriculture Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt held a press conference at Clover Nook Farm in Bethany joined by Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development (CT RC&D) to announce the awardees from Round 2 of its Climate Smart Agriculture Grant program. In this second round of funding, CT RC&D administered \$250,000 to twelve farms around Connecticut. This funding will drive over \$663,000 in climate smart projects.

In February of this year, CT RC&D administered the first round of CSAG funding and awarded \$250,000 to eight farms around Connecticut. In total through the Climate Smart Agriculture Grant program, CT RC&D has awarded \$500,000 to twenty Connecticut farms, driving over \$1.5 million in on-farm energy and soil health projects.

"Our Department of Agriculture and the Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development are continuing to provide opportunities for farms across the state to complete climate smart projects," said **Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz**. "Through the Climate Smart Agriculture Grant program, we are empowering farmers to build resiliency and sustainability through on-farm energy and soil health projects. I'm excited to see these grant projects come to fruition!"

In March 2023, Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg) awarded nearly \$7 million to 12 entities through the Climate Smart Agriculture & Forestry Grant, established under Public Act 22-118 to increase the number of farmers implementing climate-smart agriculture and forestry practices.

"CT DoAg is committed to investing in climate smart farming practices and long-term resiliency projects enabling Connecticut's agricultural producers to continue their

operations in an increasingly sustainable manner,” said Agriculture Commissioner Hurlburt. “The implementation of these farming practices positions Connecticut’s farmers to be part of the climate change solution through on-farm energy and soil health projects.”

CT RC&D received \$1 million in funding from CT DoAg for a two-part proposal which included offering sub-grants to Connecticut producers to implement energy or soil health practices and also offer 4 Climate Smart Equipment Hubs for CT Veteran Farmers, Northeastern CT, CT River Valley Region, and Northwestern CT. Through this grant CT RC&D is sub-granting \$500,000 offered in two rounds to producers with creative and out-of-the box plans to increase resiliency and reduce climate impacts on their farms.

“With a total of 60 applicants requesting over \$1.8 million in funding in both rounds of funding, the response to CT RC&D's Climate Smart Agriculture Grant shows the need for this kind of program in Connecticut,” said Jocelyn Lahey, Executive Director of CT RC&D. “We are thrilled to be able to support a total of 20 of those proposals from both rounds.”

Among the recipients from Round 2 are: Lars Demander, who became co-owner of Clover Nook Farm in Bethany with his father, Eric Demander, in 2016. Lars is the 8<sup>th</sup> generation of his family to own and operate Clover Nook Farm, which was founded in 1765. Clover Nook Farm primarily grows sweet corn, pumpkins, kiwiberries, and other mixed vegetables. Additionally, they raise their own beef cattle, along with producing all of the necessary hay and pasture to sustain them.

Understanding the importance of on-farm renewable energy, their project includes the purchase and installation of a Mitsubishi Heat Pump System in the farm store, which will replace their fossil fuel-based propane heating system. This electric system will utilize renewable energy sources and provide air conditioning during warmer months which will improve efficiency of refrigeration units.

Additional Round 2 CT RC&D Climate Smart Agriculture grantees include:

- **Assawaga Farm** (Putnam) to support compost production improvement by funding an Avant e527 electric compact articulated loader and ASP aeration system, as well as build an in-vessel aerated static pile system.

- **Blackmer Farm** (North Grosvenordale) to support on-farm renewable energy by funding the purchase and installation of a 21.4 kW solar PV roof-mounted system.
- **Daffodil Hill Growers** (Southbury) to support soil health improvement by funding a field cultivator and sub soiler for use in field preparation, as well as a Gandy Box and hopper for dispensing fertilizer and seed.
- **Echo Farm** (Woodstock) to support on-farm renewable energy by funding a geothermal ground source heat pump system to supply all heating and cooling needs of a 4,320-square-feet, two-story barn.
- **Full Heart Farm** (Ledyard) to support on-farm renewable energy by funding barn roof reinforcement and a 8.91 kW roof-mounted grid tied PV system which will power 100% of the farm's energy usage, as well as to support on-farm energy efficiency by funding insulation for the barn's attic and walls, energy efficient exterior doors, and LED fixtures.
- **Howling Flats Farm** (Canaan) to support on-farm energy efficiency by funding the purchase of covers and insulation for a walk-in freezer and automatic waterers.
- **Killam & Bassette Farmstead** (South Glastonbury) to support on-farm energy efficiency by funding the purchase and installation of an efficient 20'x8' Refurbished Insulated Holding Freezer which will replace 13 smaller freezers.
- **Massaro Community Farm** (Woodbridge) to support soil health improvement by funding the purchase of a Rainflo Bed Shaper, Brillion Chisel Plow, Jiffy Hitch, Stihl battery-powered mower, and cover crop seed, which will be utilized to create no-till permanent beds and living pathways in two acres of fields.
- **Northwest Community Farm** (Winchester) to support on-farm renewable energy by funding the purchase and installation of a 34.2 kW DC capacity ground-mounted system.
- **Steadfast Farms Poultry Processing & Slaughter** (Bethlehem) to support on-farm renewable energy by funding the purchase and installation of a 21.87 kW roof-mounted system.
- **Taylor Acres** (Easton) to support soil health improvement by funding a BCS walk-behind tractor with attachments (flail mower, rotary plow, power harrow, and chipper/shredder) along with cover crop seeds and compost.

*Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development (CT RC&D) is a statewide 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization in operation since 1968 with a variety of environmental and agricultural programs. The CT RC&D Climate Smart Agriculture Grant program is made possible with funding from the CT Department of Agriculture and its purpose is to offer sub-grants to Connecticut producers for the purpose of implementing climate smart on-farm energy and/or soil health practices.*

*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](http://www.CTGrown.gov).*

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**Connecticut**  
Resource Conservation  
& Development Area

## Climate Smart Agriculture Grant Round 2 Awardees

