



Agency Legislative Proposal

2026 Session

General Information

Agency	Dept. of Agriculture
Proposal Name	An Act Concerning Agricultural Development at the Department of Agriculture
Legislative Liaison	Kayleigh Royston
Division Requesting Proposal	Agricultural Development and Resource Conversation
Drafter	Kayleigh Royston

Overview

Brief Summary of Proposal

Makes revisions to the Farmers Market Nutrition program to reflect programmatic changes in recent years, including the transition to electronic benefits.

What problem is this proposal looking to solve?

Current statutory language is outdated and references methodology and materials no longer utilized.

How does the proposal solve the problem?

This proposal updates current language and processes to reflect the programs modernization from paper to electronic benefit redemption, codifying current practices and creating consistency amongst industry communications and standards.

Section by section summary:

Section #(s)	Section Summary
1	22-6g- revises statutory definitions to the Farmers Market Nutrition Program to reflect current program uses. For example, the program no longer uses paper vouchers and instead offers electronic benefits, these benefits are no longer exclusively limited to farmers markets and may be utilized at additional locations, such as farm stands.

2	22-6h- Updates language related to the administration of the Seniors/Farmers Market Nutrition Program (S/FMNP), reflective of current practice.
3	22-6i- Updates language related to the eligibility requirements of the S/FMNP, reflective of current practices.
4	22-6j- Updates language related to the responsibilities of participants in the S/FMNP, reflective of current practices.
5	22-6k- Updates language related to the authorization of markets, reflective of current practices. Repeal of subsections (c) and (d)- due to the transition of electronic benefits, it is no longer necessary for all farmers at a participating location to be participating in the FMNP program. (This prevents paper checks being exchanged with farmers who are not certified to be in FMNP and would be ineligible to cash them)- with the electronic benefit model, both participant and farmer have the required tech prior to the exchange of benefits. Subsection (d) is being repealed as the electronic benefits do not require the farmer to exclusively receive benefits at one location throughout the season.
6	22-6l- Updates language related to vendor certification of S/FMNP vendors, reflective of current practices.
7	22-6m- Updates language related to the responsibilities of farmers in the S/FMNP, reflective of current practices.
8	22-6n- Updates language related to penalties for violations of the S/FMNP, reflective of current practices.
9	22-6o- Updates language related to citations of non-compliance for the S/FMNP, reflective of current practice.
10	22-6p- Updates language related to the benefits as distributed in the S/FMNP, reflective of current practice.
11	22-6q- Updates language related to the benefits to the CT Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program.
12	Repeal Section: 22-33- Reg language for the Connecticut Quality Seal Program, inactive for 20+ years 22-50 through 22-54- Apple Marketing Order- not active or enforced Subsection (b) of 22-26k- Requirement for regulations for Farm Transition Grant.

Statutory Reference:	22-6g, 22-6h, 22-6i, 22-6j, 22-6k, 22-6l, 22-6m, 22-6n, 22-6o, 22-6p, 22-6q, 22-26k, 22-50, 22-51, 22-52, 22-53, 22-54, 22-33
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Background

New Proposal Resubmission

Have there been any changes in federal laws or regulations that make this legislation necessary?

No

Have there been any changes in state laws or regulations that make this legislation necessary?

No

Has this proposal or a similar proposal been implemented in other states?

No

Have certain constituencies called for this proposal?

No

Interagency Impact

Check here if this proposal does NOT impact other agencies

Agency	Dept. of Public Health	
Contact	Adam Skowera	
Date Contacted	N/A	
Status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Unresolved
Open Issues	N/A	

Fiscal Impact

- No Fiscal Impact
- Budget Option Submitted

Include the section number(s) which have a fiscal impact and the anticipated impact:

State

No

Municipal

No

Federal

No

Other Information

If there is any additional information we should know, please detail below:

In the last three years, DoAg has transitioned to an electronic benefit redemption model for the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program that allows consumers to redeem benefits through the use of a mobile application or a card with a QR code which is scanned by the farmer. The result of the transition to electronic benefits has increased participant access to benefits and improved ease of use. In making the transition to electronic benefits, terminology has changed from voucher to benefits, and vendor to farmer.

Legislative Language

Insert fully drafted bill below. Please use standard legislative drafting considerations, as published by LCO [here](#).

Section 1. Section 22-6g of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

For the purposes of sections 22-6g to 22-6p, inclusive:

- (1) "Application" means a request made by an individual to the department for [vendor] farmer certification in CFM/WIC on a form provided by the department;
- (2) "Authorized [farmers' market] redemption location" means a farmers' market, farm stand, or mobile market that operates within the service area and is a site authorized by the department for the exchange of [vouchers] benefits and Connecticut-grown fresh produce and honey;
- (3) "Certified [vendor] farmer" means an individual who has met all CFM/WIC conditions as outlined by the department and who is guaranteed payment on all [vouchers] benefits accepted, provided compliance is maintained by that individual regarding all CFM/WIC rules and procedures as outlined in the [vendor] farmer certification handbook;
- (4) "Certified vendor identification stamp" means a department-issued stamp that shall be utilized by the certified vendor during each occurrence of voucher deposit in the financial institution of certified vendor choice. This stamp shall remain the sole property of the department and shall be forfeited by the certified vendor to the department in the event of suspension;]
- [(5) (4) "Certified [vendor] farmer identification sign" means a department-issued sign which shall be clearly displayed by the certified [vendor] farmer at all times when accepting or intending to accept [vouchers] benefits in an authorized [farmers' market] redemption location. Signs shall remain the sole property of the department and shall be forfeited by the certified [vendor] farmer to the department in the event of suspension;]
- [(6) "Certified vendor number" means a personal identification number issued by the department and assigned to an individual whom the department has identified as a certified vendor;]

[(7)] (5) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture;

[(8)] (6) "Department" means the Department of Agriculture;

[(9)] (7) "Designated distribution WIC clinic" means a site authorized by the department for dispersal of [vouchers] benefits by the local WIC agency;

[(10)] (8) "Distribution" means the process outlined by the department and the means by which local WIC agencies actually [dispense] distribute [vouchers] benefits to eligible participants;

[(11)] (9) "Farm products" means any fresh fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, nuts, shell eggs, honey or other bee products, maple syrup or maple sugar, flowers, nursery stock and other horticultural commodities, livestock food products, including meat, milk, cheese and other dairy products, food products of "aquaculture", as defined in subsection (q) of section 1-1, including fish, oysters, clams, mussels and other molluscan shellfish taken from the waters of the state or tidal wetlands, products from any tree, vine or plant and their flowers, or any of the products listed in this subdivision that have been processed by the participating farmer, including, but not limited to, baked goods made with farm products;

[(12)] (10) "Farmers' market" means a cooperative or nonprofit enterprise or association that consistently occupies a given site throughout the season, which operates principally as a common marketplace for a group of farmers, at least two of whom are selling Connecticut-grown fresh produce, to sell Connecticut-grown farm products directly to consumers, and where the products sold are produced by the participating farmers with the sole intent and purpose of generating a portion of household income;

[(13)] (11) "Fresh produce" means fruits and vegetables that have not been processed in any manner and chicken eggs;

[(14)] (12) "CFM/WIC" means the Connecticut Farmers' Market Nutrition Program [farmers' market supplemental food program] for Women, Infants and Children participants as administered by the department;

[(15)] (13) "Local WIC agency" means an entity that contracts with the CT Department of Public Health for the administration of the WIC program [administers local health

programs and which has entered into contract for] and distributes [voucher] benefits [distribution and related service with the department] to eligible WIC participants;

[(16)] (14) "Connecticut-grown" means produce and other farm products [that have a traceable point of origin within Connecticut] as defined in section 22-38;

[(17)] (15) "Posted hours and days" means the operational time frames stated in assurances submitted by a duly authorized representative of an authorized [farmers' market] redemption location which includes a beginning and an ending date for each year of operation;

[(18)] (16) "Participant" means a client of WIC who is at least one year of age, who possesses one of the WIC classification codes selected for inclusion by the Department of Public Health and who is an active participant in a designated distribution clinic;

[(19)] (17) "Season" means a clearly delineated period of time during a given year that has a beginning date and ending date, as specified by the department, which correlates with a major portion of the harvest period for Connecticut-grown fresh produce;

[(20)] (18) "Service area" means the geographic areas that encompass all of the designated distribution clinics and authorized [farmers' markets] redemption locations within Connecticut for a given season;

[(21)] (19) "USDA-FNS" means the United States Department of Agriculture-Food and Nutrition Service;

[(22)] (20) "[Vendor] Farmer certification handbook" means a publication by the department that is based on USDA-FNS mandates and guidelines, addresses CFM/WIC rules and procedures applicable to a certified [vendor] farmer, and provides the basis for [vendor] farmer training. A copy of the publication shall be issued to each individual prior to application. New editions supersede all previous editions;

[(23)] (21) "[Voucher] Benefit" means a [negotiable instrument] monetary amount issued by the department to participants that is redeemable only for Connecticut-grown fresh, unprocessed, produce from certified [vendor] farmers at authorized [farmers' markets] redemption locations, with a limited negotiable period that directly correlates to the season designated by the department;

[(24)] (22) "WIC" means the special supplemental food program for women, infants and children, as administered by the Department of Public Health.

Section 2. Section 22-6h of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

(a) There is established the Connecticut Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children which [shall] may be jointly funded by the state of Connecticut and the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. The program shall supply Connecticut-grown fresh produce to participants of the CFM/WIC [special supplemental food program] through the distribution of [vouchers] benefits that are redeemable only at [designated] authorized redemption locations in Connecticut [farmers' markets]. The program is designed to provide both a supplemental source of fresh produce for the dietary needs of women, infants and children who are [judged] determined to be at nutritional risk and to stimulate an increased demand for Connecticut-grown fresh produce at authorized Connecticut [farmers' markets,] redemption locations.

(b) The program shall be administered by the Commissioner of Agriculture who shall maintain all conditions as outlined in the farmers' market nutrition program agreement entered into with USDA-FNS, as amended.

Section 3. Section 22-6i of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

(a) The Department of Public Health WIC client screening processes and records shall provide the basis for identifying participants eligible for receipt of [vouchers] benefits.
(b) Local WIC agencies shall distribute [vouchers] benefits at designated distribution clinics to participants in the manner specified by the department in the program and procedures guide for distribution to clinic staff. Local WIC agency services shall ensure that:

[(1)] Vouchers are distributed only to participants through verification that the client name and number on the distribution registry provided by the Department of Public Health

correspond with the client name and number printed on the WIC identification folder in the possession of the participant.

[(2) (1) Each eligible participant is issued a benefit amount, determined annually, based on the state and federal allocation for the given program year. [five three-dollar vouchers during each distribution as authorized by the department.]

[(3) The voucher serial numbers issued to the participant correspond to the number in the distribution registry in which the participant signature is affixed.]

[(4) Each voucher issued and the distribution registry are properly signed by the participant in the presence of local agency staff at the time of distribution or, if a proxy is utilized, a written, electronic or verbal communication is made by the participant or such proxy which acknowledges receipt from the local agency staff at the time of distribution.]

[(5)(2) Any adult may act as a proxy provided the participant designates such adult as [his or her] their proxy in writing.

[(6)(3) Each participant is provided a thorough explanation of program guidelines and participant responsibility as outlined by the department.

[(7)(4) All CFM/WIC support materials are put into use as outlined by the department.

[(8)(5) Accurate and complete records of all related CFM/WIC activities in the possession of a WIC local agency are maintained and retained for a minimum of [four] three years. In the event of litigation, negotiation, or audit findings, the records shall be retained until all issues arising from such actions have been resolved or until the end of the regular four-year period, whichever is later.

[(9)(6) All agency records pertaining to this program shall be made available for inspection to representatives of USDA-FNS, the Comptroller General of the United States, the state Auditors of Public Accounts, the department, and the Department of Public Health as necessary, at any time during normal business hours, and as frequently as is deemed necessary for inspection and audit. Confidentiality of personal information shall be maintained as to all program participants at all times.

Section 4. Section 22-6j of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

Participants shall be responsible for:

- (1) [Qualifying under WIC program guidelines and] Attending a designated distribution clinic during the relevant distribution cycles when [vouchers] benefits are [dispersed]disbursed;
- [(2) Properly countersigning a [voucher] benefit prior to use;]
- [(3)](2) Using [vouchers] benefits only to purchase Connecticut-grown fresh produce from certified farmers who display a [CFM/WIC] certified farmer identification poster [signs] at authorized [farmers' markets] redemption locations;
- [(4)](3) Redeeming [vouchers] benefits on or before the expiration date [printed on the face] of the voucher]benefit or surrendering all claim to the value of [vouchers] benefits that remain unredeemed;
- [(5)](4) Ensuring [vouchers] benefits that are received are not assigned to any other party other than as provided by the [department]statute;
- [(6)](5) Reporting violations or problems to the department or the local agency; and
- [(7)](6) Reporting all incidents of lost or stolen [vouchers] benefits to the local agency.

Section 5. Section 22-6k of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

(a) Each authorized [farmers' market]redemption location shall maintain records of operation which shall be provided to the department and which shall include posted hours and days and shall be signed by a duly authorized representative of the [farmers' market]redemption location. [Farmers' market]Redemption location assurances shall be submitted in a manner outlined by the department and shall provide evidence of:

(1) Whether a [farmers' market]redemption location possesses the capability to serve the additional demands brought about by distribution of [vouchers]benefits in the area without causing undue harm to the existing farmers' markets, farm stands, or mobile market consumer base; and

(2) A willingness by persons associated with the [farmers' market]authorized redemption location to meet all [CFM/WIC]S/FMNP requirements. Information submitted by a [farmers' market]redemption location shall include, but not be limited to:

- (A) The number of Connecticut-grown fresh produce [vendor]farmer participants;
- (B) Hours of operation to be maintained per week;
- (C) Season of operation; and
- (D) Accessibility and consistency of farmers' market location.

(b) The department shall give priority to a [farmers' market]redemption location with previous involvement in CFM/WIC provided the [farmers' market]redemption location has maintained the conditions outlined in its [farmers' market] assurances and does not have a high incidence of certified [vendor]farmer noncompliance or suspensions.

[(c) In determining a farmers' market's authorization, the commissioner shall consider the number of eligible applications received by the department prior to the first of May which indicate the intent to participate in the proposed farmers' market. The standard for the authorization of a single or principal farmers' market in a county shall be one eligible application for every one hundred participants who participate in the distribution clinic in said county. A minimum of two or more eligible applications shall be required for a farmers' market to receive authorization.

(d) The number of farmers' markets authorized for the season shall be determined by the department no later than the thirty-first day of May prior to each season.]

Section 6. Section 22-6l of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

(a) [Vendor]Farmer certification shall not be in effect and [vouchers]benefits shall not be accepted until receipt by the applicant of a certified farmer [vendor identification stamp, a certified vendor] identification [sign]poster and the applicant copy of the department-vendor agreement.

(b) Each [vendor]farmer certification shall be valid for three years. The department shall not limit the number of [vendors]farmers who may become certified under CFM/WIC. A

[vendor]farmer who satisfies all the following criteria shall be certified to accept [vouchers]benefits:

- (1) Agrees to maintain only Connecticut-grown fresh produce, and honey on display in a certified [vendor]farmer stall;
- (2) Indicates an intent to participate in one or more authorized [farmers' markets]redemption locations;
- (3) [Demonstrates participation]Participates in training on CFM/WIC rules and procedures through attendance in an entire session of one of the scheduled training meetings conducted by department staff, completion of an annual online learning module, and receipt of a passing score on a knowledge test;

[(4) Submits a signed statement of receipts of a vendor certification handbook;]

[(5)](4) Submits a timely completed application and crop plan to the department using the application form and process [prior to the deadline] established by the department; and

[(6) Submits completed and signed certified vendor agreements to the department.]

Section 7. Section 22-6m of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

- (a) A certified [vendor]farmer may accept [vouchers]benefits only for a transaction that takes place at [a certified farmers' market]an authorized redemption location and only in exchange for Connecticut-grown fresh produce and may accept [vouchers]benefits as payment for Connecticut-grown fresh produce only if presented by an eligible participant on or before the usage expiration date[printed on the face of the voucher].
- (b) A certified [vendor]farmer shall (1) prominently display a certified [vendor]farmer identification [sign]poster as outlined in the certified [vendor]farmer handbook, (2) provide Connecticut-grown fresh produce and honey to participants upon receipt of [a valid and properly completed voucher, which is signed by the WIC client]benefits, (3) handle transactions with [WIC]participants in the same manner as transactions with all other customers, (4) not collect state or local taxes on purchases involving [vouchers]benefits,

(5) charge participants a price for Connecticut-grown fresh produce that is equal to or less than the current price charged to nonparticipant customers, (6) not levy a surcharge based on the use of [vouchers]benefits by participants, (7) return no cash or issue credit in any form to participants during sales transactions that involve [vouchers]benefits only and in the event of a single transaction in which a participant presents a combination of cash and [vouchers]benefits for the purchase of Connecticut-grown fresh produce and honey, cash or credit up to the value of the cash portion of the payment shall be given to the participant, (8) participate in training as the department deems necessary to carry out the intent of CFM/WIC, (9) cooperate with the department in the evaluation of each season by completely and accurately responding to a survey, with resubmission to the department in a specified and timely manner, (10) immediately inform the department in the event of loss, destruction, or theft of [either the certified vendor endorsement stamp or] certified [vendor]farmer identification [sign]poster so that a replacement may be issued, and (11) comply with all procedures and rules as herein outlined and as delineated in the department-[vendor] farmer agreement, the certified [vendor]farmer handbook and official written notices of clarification issued by the department to the [vendor]farmer.

Section 8. Section 22-6n of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

(a) [The commissioner shall return a voucher to a certified vendor unpaid if the certified vendor identification number is not properly affixed to the back of the voucher, the certified vendor does not endorse the voucher or the participant's signature is missing on the face of the voucher.] A [voucher]transaction may be resubmitted for payment in the event that the [signature or vendor certification identification]error can be properly and legally corrected by the certified [vendor]farmer. Violations of CFM/WIC procedures and rules applicable to a certified [vendor]farmer shall be identified as Class I violations, Class II violations and Class III violations. Violations involving the use of multiple [vouchers]benefits in a single sales transaction shall be considered as a single violation. Violations involving multiple sales transactions, regardless of time elapsed, shall be considered multiple violations at a standard of one violation per sales transaction.

(b) For Class I violations, the commissioner shall issue a warning letter to the violating certified [vendor]farmer. Failure to appropriately display the certified [vendor]farmer identification [sign]poster or not posting products and prices as specified in the signage requirements shall constitute a Class I violation.

(c) For Class II violations, the commissioner shall issue an official written citation of noncompliance to the violating certified [vendor]farmer. The following shall constitute Class II violations:

(1) Noncompliance with rules and procedures as outlined in the [vendor]farmer certification handbook and in the department-[vendor] farmer agreement which is not specifically identified as a Class I violation;

(2) Participant is charged a price that is greater than that charged nonparticipant or is charged for items not received;

(3) Refusal to accept valid [vouchers]benefits for Connecticut-grown fresh produce and honey;

(4) Failure to permit or comply with procedures regarding inspection of evidence by the department when point of origin of fresh produce and honey on display or offered for sale in a certified [vendor]farmer staff is in question;

(5) Abusive or discriminatory treatment of participants or CFM/WIC staff;

(6) Displaying or offering for sale non-Connecticut-grown fresh produce and honey in a certified [vendor]farmer stall;

(7) An authorized [farmers' market]redemption location is neither open nor staffed during posted hours and days during the season[in which the certified [vendor]farmer is a designated participant]; or

(8) The second like instance of a Class I violation by a single certified [vendor]farmer.

(d) For Class III violations, the commissioner shall suspend the violating [vendor]farmer from participation in CFM/WIC. The following shall constitute Class III violations:

(1) A third Class I violation by a single [vendor]farmer;

(2) The second of two Class II violations of the same type by a single [vendor]farmer;

(3) Exchanging ineligible products or cash for [vouchers]benefits; or

[(4) Cashing vouchers for a noncertified market.]

(e) The commissioner shall issue a written official notice of noncompliance to the certified [vendor]farmer within seventy-two hours of receipt of evidence involving an act of noncompliance. Suspension of a certified [vendor]farmer from participation in CFM/WIC shall remain in effect for the remainder of the season. An exception shall occur when suspension occurs within thirty days of the expiration date for [voucher]benefit usage by participants. In such case, suspension shall also include the entire season of the following calendar year. In the event of a suspension, the [vendor]farmer shall reimburse the commissioner for the value of any [vouchers]benefits deposited and paid upon after the official date of suspension notification. At the conclusion of a suspension period, the [vendor]farmer may reapply for certification in order to resume participation in CFM/WIC.

(f) Any [vendor]farmer successfully recertified following a suspension shall be on probationary status for one full season. Recurrence of a Class II violation during the probationary period and for which the certified [vendor]farmer has been cited shall be sufficient grounds for immediate and automatic suspension.

Section 9. Section 22-6o of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

A written notice of noncompliance or suspension from the department shall be pending for seventy-two hours of receipt by the certified [vendor]farmer. The certified [vendor]farmer shall be granted the pending period for presenting sufficient evidence to the department to substantiate a reversal. Remedies undertaken in response to receipt of written notice of a pending citation of noncompliance or suspension shall not constitute evidence in defense of such citation. Failure to present any evidence to the department within the specified pending period shall constitute acceptance of the citation of noncompliance or suspension by the certified [vendor]farmer. Submission of insufficient evidence by the certified [vendor]farmer for determination of reversal on the pending citation by the department shall result in an official citation of noncompliance or suspension upon completion of the pending period.

Section 10. Section 22-6p of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

(a) Assurances, on forms provided by the department, must be submitted no later than the first day of March in order for the [farmers' market]authorized redemption location to receive consideration of authorization for the upcoming season.

[(b) All applications shall be submitted no later than one month preceding the last date in which vouchers may be used by participants at authorized farmers' markets.]

[(c)](b) [Vouchers]Benefits shall be valid from the time of issue through the season ending date as designated by the department. [Such date shall be clearly printed on the voucher face. Voucher]Benefit usage shall be null and void after [expiration date]the end of the season.

[(d) All vouchers accepted by a certified vendor shall be deposited on or before thirty days following the date of expiration for voucher usage by participants. Such date shall be clearly printed on the front of vouchers. Any claim to voucher payment beyond the voucher reimbursement expiration date is not valid and shall be denied.]

[(e)](c) Deadlines for submission of records, reports, survey instruments and undistributed [vouchers]benefits by local agencies shall be established by the department and specified in the agreement entered into with the local agency.

[(f)](d) The department shall develop and submit a completed operations report in January in a manner prescribed by USDA-FNS which summarizes the [CFM/WIC]S/FMNP operations for the previous year.

Section 11. Section 22-6q of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2026):

(a) There is established the Connecticut Farmers' Market/Senior Nutrition Program which shall be provided for from funds available to the commissioner and from other sources as such funds may become available. The program shall supply Connecticut-grown fresh produce to senior participants through the distribution of [vouchers] benefits that are redeemable only at designated Connecticut [farmers' markets] redemption location. For

purposes of this section, a "senior participant" is defined as a person who is sixty years of age or older and is currently residing in elderly housing, or is a participant of a registered congregate meal site, or has been identified by a municipal elderly agent as being at nutritional risk. The program is designed to provide both a supplemental source of fresh produce for the dietary needs of seniors who are [judged]determined to be at nutritional risk and to stimulate an increased demand for Connecticut-grown produce at Connecticut farmers' markets. For purposes of this section, "fresh produce" means fruits and vegetables that have not been processed in any manner and chicken eggs.

(b) The program shall be administered by the Commissioner of Agriculture who shall maintain all conditions for its operations.

Section 12. 22-33, 22-50, 22-51, 22-52, 22-53, 22-54 and subsection (b) of 22-26k of the general statutes are repealed (Effective from passage).



Agency Legislative Proposal

2026 Session

General Information

Agency	Dept. of Agriculture
Proposal Name	An Act Concerning Aquaculture
Legislative Liaison	Kayleigh Royston
Division Requesting Proposal	Bureau of Aquaculture
Drafter	Kayleigh Royston

Overview

Brief Summary of Proposal

Makes various revisions to aquaculture statutes

What problem is this proposal looking to solve?

Technical revisions and clean-ups to statutes surrounding aquaculture

Section by section summary:

Section #(s)	Section Summary
1	26-192e- Updates communication methods for shellfish area closures done by the department. As newspaper circulation is becoming less effective, the bureau and municipalities have been utilizing the state website to post and confirm closures. This would remove the requirement, and subsequent minimal cost to the agency, to post shellfish area closures in a newspaper and would require posting on the agency website and electronic notification to the town.
2	26-206- Repeals the Shellfish Police from statute, which have not been active for > 25 years.

Statutory Reference:

26-192e, 26-206

Background

New Proposal Resubmission

Have there been any changes in federal laws or regulations that make this legislation necessary?

No

Have there been any changes in state laws or regulations that make this legislation necessary?

No

Has this proposal or a similar proposal been implemented in other states?

No

Have certain constituencies called for this proposal?

No

Interagency Impact

Check here if this proposal does NOT impact other agencies

Agency	N/A
Contact	N/A
Date Contacted	N/A
Status	N/A
Open Issues	N/A

Fiscal Impact

- No Fiscal Impact
- Budget Option Submitted

Include the section number(s) which have a fiscal impact and the anticipated impact:

State	Section 1- minimal fiscal savings to the state due to cost of newspaper notices.
Municipal	No
Federal	No

Other Information

If there is any additional information we should know, please detail below: N/A

Legislative Language

Insert fully drafted bill below. Please use standard legislative drafting considerations, as published by LCO [here](#).

Section 1 Sec. 26-192e of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective from passage):

(a) The Department of Agriculture may prohibit the taking or harvesting of shellfish from designated areas in tidal flats, shores and coastal waters whenever it finds by examinations or surveys that such flats, shores or coastal waters are contaminated or polluted to the extent that the waters do not meet standards of purity established by said department, in conjunction with the Department of Public Health, or that shellfish obtained therefrom may be unfit for food or dangerous to the public health. The Department of Agriculture shall classify the coastal waters, shores and tidal flats for the taking of shellfish. The classifications shall be: Approved, conditional, restricted, conditionally restricted, and prohibited. The conditional classification shall include conditional-open and conditional-closed. Any person aggrieved by a classification decision pursuant to this section may appeal such decision in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54. An area may be classified as prohibited for the taking or harvesting of shellfish unless it conforms to the standards established by the department for classifications other than prohibited. The department may specify the activities which may occur within each classified area. Such activities shall be listed on a shellfish license issued by the department. Waters and areas classified as approved or conditional-open shall conform to standards of purity, shall be free from discharge of sewage or other deleterious substances, and the shellfish obtained therefrom shall not be so polluted or contaminated as to be dangerous to the public health. The Department of Agriculture may delegate its authority for the classification of tidal flats, shores and coastal waters for the taking of shellfish pursuant to this section to other state agencies and local agencies.

(b) The department shall, [by written order], promulgate definite bounds of the area or areas closed to shellfishing when classified as conditional-closed, conditionally restricted, restricted or prohibited. Such order shall become effective when (1) [the closure classification is published in a newspaper having circulation in towns, cities and boroughs in which or adjacent to which any such area is situated; (2)] the classification is filed written or electronically in the offices of the clerk and the director of health in each such town, city or borough, [and (3)](2) signs are posted at points on or near every such classified area , and (3) posted on the department's website.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, when the Commissioner of Agriculture, after consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health, finds that tidal flats, shores or coastal waters which may contain shellfish are so contaminated or polluted that a health emergency exists, he may close such area for the duration of such emergency by giving notice of such emergency closure [(1)] in writing to the municipal or district health authority[, and (2) to the general public by publication in a newspaper having general circulation in the town, city or borough within which such area lies]. Such notice shall state when the closing shall take effect.

(d) No person shall take or harvest shellfish from areas classified as conditional-closed, restricted, conditionally restricted or prohibited pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of this section or closed because of a health emergency pursuant to subsection (c) of this section or from areas or parts of areas where shellfish have been transplanted or relayed except in accordance with the terms and conditions of a license issued pursuant to section [26-192c](#) or section [26-192h](#). The Department of Agriculture may delegate its authority for the classification of coastal waters, shores, and tidal flats for the taking of shellfish pursuant to this section to other state agencies and local agencies.

Section 2 Section 26-206 of the general statutes is repealed (Effective from Passage).