



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of Steven K. Reviczky
Commissioner



Date: 10/7/2014
To: Jay Yasensky, DAS Budget Analyst
Chris LeMay, OPM Budget Analyst
From: Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner
Re: Biennium Budget Options – Fiscal Years 2016 & 2017

Below, please find the request from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture regarding budget reduction options impacting the agency in FY 2016 and 2017. The Department of Agriculture maintains that budget reductions over time have limited resources available to the agency to meet statutory requirements. The department also has a long history of offering budget reduction options that assist the state in reducing costs where possible. Examples of reductions offered by the Department of Agriculture over the past several years total \$989,887 and includes:

2010

Table with 2 columns: Item, Amount. Rows: Ag Marketing and Inspection Representative (\$ 71,295), Other Expenses (\$ 50,000), Senior Food Vouchers (\$ 200,000)

2011

Table with 2 columns: Item, Amount. Rows: Connecticut Grown Promotion (\$ 10,000), Other Expenses (\$ 250,000), Senior Food Vouchers (\$ 82,125), WIC (\$ 37,375), Ag Marketing and Inspection Representative (\$ 63,500), 2 Ag Workers (\$ 50,000)

2013

Table with 2 columns: Item, Amount. Rows: Environmental Conservation (\$ 85,500), Senior Food Vouchers (\$ 72,603), WIC (\$ 17,489)

Reduction Options

The Department of Agriculture has thoroughly reviewed Fund 11000 and does not have reduction opportunities available at this time. The department does recognize the goal of reducing expenses and capturing revenue and has reviewed the agency budget in its entirety. The department is suggesting a reduction to the Animal Population Control Account (Fund 12060, SID 35127) of \$300,000. This is based on an FY 2014 program balance report showing total expenses for the program of \$715,860. The FY 15

165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-713-2501 Fax: 860-713-2514
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“net adjusted appropriation/grant” is \$1,213,180. By reducing the SID by \$300,000, the department would have \$913,180 available for the Animal Population Control Program and anticipates that the program could continue to run at comparable levels to previous years.

Reallocation Options

The Department of Agriculture believes that overall savings to the State of Connecticut would be realized by reallocating from the Department of Administrative Services costs associated with the Small Agency Resource Team assigned to provide business office and human resource functions to the Department of Agriculture. In 2006, position counts and funding associated with budget analysis, purchasing, payroll, and human resources were removed from the Department of Agriculture and placed in the Department of Administrative Services. While that reallocation was intended to be a cost consolidation, the practical result has been that the position count and funding were moved, but considerable amounts of work pertaining to each of those functions continue to be performed by DoAg personnel, creating unnecessary redundancy. By shifting the personnel and funding associated with these functions back to the Department of Agriculture, duplication would be reduced or eliminated and business office and human resource functions would be streamlined.

Revenue Options

None at this time.

Expansion Options

There is a strong need within the Department of Agriculture for a dedicated staff attorney. The department has considerable legal work associated with administrative hearings conducted in accordance with CGS 22-358(c) and the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, and providing the agency with ongoing and necessary legal advice. The cost to the agency of hiring a staff attorney at the level of Staff Attorney 1 at the AR-25 pay level would be approximately \$70,666.

Conclusion

The Department of Agriculture has seen significant staffing and budgetary reductions over time. The department has continued to meet the core of its statutory mission with diminishing funding. In the submission for FY15, the agency is offering a reduction plan of \$300,000 and is asking for an expansion of one specialized staff position with an anticipated cost to the agency of \$70,633. The net savings to the state of Connecticut would be \$229,334.