

Connecticut Department of  
Agriculture  
*Bureau of Agricultural  
Development and Resource  
Preservation*  
**Programs & Services**



[www.ctgrown.gov](http://www.ctgrown.gov)

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Hartford, CT 06106  
860-713-2503  
860-713-2516 (fax)

**Connecticut Weekly Agriculture Report**  
A weekly newsletter published since 1920, the report contains agricultural articles, price reports, meeting notices, and classified advertisements. The report is published 48 times per year. USPS mailed subscriptions run 1/1/12 through 12/31/13 and cost \$40. The report is also available by email for free. Info is available on [www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov) or contact us at 860-713-2503 to place an ad, subscribe, or submit a notice.

**Export Assistance**  
Through cooperative efforts with Food Export USA Northeast, the department offers both educational and cost share programs to help Connecticut food businesses start or continue exporting. Services include determining if exporting is right for you, finding countries for your product, covering expenses to modifying product labels, shipping samples, attending trade shows, and meeting with buyers one-on-one. For more information contact Jaime Smith at [jaime.smith@ct.gov](mailto:jaime.smith@ct.gov) or 860-713-2559.



**Farm-to-Chef**  
This program helps connect producers and distributors of CT Grown ingredients with chefs and other foodservice professionals, through a variety of educational and networking initiatives and through one-on-one consultation. It also helps the public locate restaurants and other venues that serve CT Grown foods. There is no cost to join. Contact Linda Piotrowicz at [linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov](mailto:linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov) or 860-713-2558 for more info.



**The CT Grown Program**  
was developed in 1986  
to distinguish  
Connecticut products  
through the use of a  
logo.  
The program's mission  
is to market Connecticut  
agricultural products in  
as many different  
avenues as possible.  
For additional  
information please call  
860-713-2503 or visit our  
website at  
[www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov)



**Farm-to-School**  
A program designed to help farmers sell their products and encourage pre-k to high school foodservice directors to use CT Grown products in school meals. We invest the time to create markets with wholesalers and other state and federal contracts to help our farmers sell more CT Grown! Visit our website under Programs and Services, or call Jane Slupecki at [jane.slupecki@ct.gov](mailto:jane.slupecki@ct.gov) or 860-713-2588 or to enroll.



**Farm Reinvestment Grant**  
The Farm Reinvestment Grant was developed to ensure future viability of agriculture in our state. By providing money for capital enhancement to farms, it is the department's hope to help preserve Connecticut's agricultural base and improve farm production. Things to know about this grant: • Open only to existing agricultural producers in business three years or more. • Applicants must provide a business plan. • A maximum of \$40,000 will be awarded. • This is a matching grant that may only be used for capital projects. Questions can be directed to Ron Olsen at [ronald.olsen@ct.gov](mailto:ronald.olsen@ct.gov) or 860-713-2550.

**Farm Transition Grant**  
The Farm Transition Grant is used to strengthen the economic viability of Connecticut farmers and agricultural cooperatives. Things to know about this grant: • Producer and agricultural cooperative matches must be at least 50%. • A max of \$49,999 can be requested. • Funds may be used for capital projects, equipment, marketing strategies, educational activities, and more. • The state monies for this program are set aside in Public Act 05-228. • Applicants may apply multiple times even if they have received previous grant dollars. Questions? Call Ron Olsen at [ronald.olsen@ct.gov](mailto:ronald.olsen@ct.gov) or 860-713-2550.

**CT Farm Map**

Visit Connecticut's farms, courtesy of our Connecticut Farm Map and Website that lists over 200 agricultural destinations. The Farm Map Website is a web-based version of our printed map with easy access to participating farms' websites. The map is updated and reprinted approx. every two years. Contact Jane Slupecki at [jane.slupecki@ct.gov](mailto:jane.slupecki@ct.gov) or 860-713-2588 for more information.

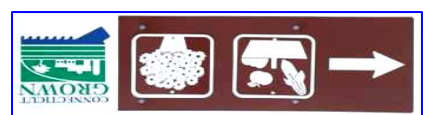


**CT Grown Mascots**

Colorful animal and produce costumes are available for events that encourage children and adults to eat and buy CT Grown fruits and veggies. To reserve costume(s) April 1 to Nov. 1 contact Jane Slupecki at [jane.slupecki@ct.gov](mailto:jane.slupecki@ct.gov) or 860-713-2588.

**Agritourism Brochure Distribution**

Agritourism business brochures are distributed year round by the Department of Agriculture to five state welcome centers for a monthly fee. Space in the program is limited and applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis during the annual sign-up period in March. Contact Linda Piotrowicz at [linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov](mailto:linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov) or 860-713-2558 for more info.



**Ag Directional Signage**

The Agriculture Directional Signage Program is designed to direct tourists and consumers off state roadways to local roads where farms are established. There are currently over 175 ag directional signs in CT. Contact Richard Macuga at [richard.macuga@ct.gov](mailto:richard.macuga@ct.gov) or 860-713-2544 for an application.

**Farm Viability Grant**

A competitive matching grant program that may be used for capital projects, agriculture friendly land use regulations, planning projects or initiatives to support agriculture. Things to know about this grant: • May only be used by municipalities, regional planning agencies, agricultural 501c(3) nonprofits, and assoc. of municipalities. • A maximum grant award is \$49,999. • A 50% match is required, 40% for nonprofits, and may include "in-kind". • Applicants may apply more than one time even if they have previously received grant dollars. • The state monies for this program are specifically set aside with the passage of Public Act 05-228. Questions should be directed to Ron Olsen at [ronald.olsen@ct.gov](mailto:ronald.olsen@ct.gov) or 860-713-2550.



**FarmLink**  
A program developed in response to the demand by new farmers searching for farmland. Young and old farmers use this site to find new/additional farmland to start or grow their farms. The site has information on how to start a farm in Connecticut, how to begin the process of farm transfer, and has list of partners in the state who can assist you through the process. An average of 40 properties are listed. Visit [www.farmlink.uconn.edu](http://www.farmlink.uconn.edu) or call Jane Slupecki at 860-713-2588.

*For more information about other programs within the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, visit [www.ctgrown.gov](http://www.ctgrown.gov)*



## Farmers' Markets

Farmers' markets provide weekly community events while celebrating the state's rich agricultural heritage and supporting the local economy. Over 400 farmers and local producers reap the rewards of having a direct sales marketplace. A large supporter of these markets is the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). The FMNP provides vouchers to nutritionally-at-risk women, infants, and children (WIC) and low-income seniors while supporting local agriculture. The vouchers can be used to purchase CT Grown fruits and vegetables at participating farmers' markets. • Farmers' Market Price Survey - The Connecticut Department of Agriculture representatives perform weekly market visits that include recording prices. Retail commodity prices are emailed weekly to farmers, allowing them to track ever-changing market prices. • The Farmers' Market Reference Guide is an updatable publication that provides guidance for those who want to start a farmers' market, expand on an existing market, or participate in a market as a vendor. A general overview of common market rules is covered as well as applicable codes and laws of governing state and local agencies. This guide was developed specifically for the enhancement of farmers' markets and farms/businesses that participate in Connecticut farmers' markets. For more information on the above farmers' market programs, contact Richard Macsuga at 860-713-2544 or [richard.macsuga@ct.gov](mailto:richard.macsuga@ct.gov) or Mark Zotti at [mark.zotti@ct.gov](mailto:mark.zotti@ct.gov) or 860-713-2538.

## Informational Listings and Brochures

Agricultural producers and businesses can sign up to be included on one or more of the Department of Agriculture's online informational listings or printed brochures. These include apple, dairy, honey, meat, and wholesale vegetable producers; farmers' markets and farm stands/stores; and agritourism and pick-your-own farms. Download an application at [www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov) (click on "Publications").



## Joint Venture Grant

The Joint Venture Grant was developed to help market and create demand for Connecticut agricultural products through the use of the CT Grown logo or slogan. Things to know about this grant: • Projects must use the slogan "CT Grown" or the CT Grown logo. • Applications are accepted from Jan. 1st to Jan. 30th annually. • Funds shall be used to promote CT Grown products only. • A maximum grant of \$5,000 for associations and \$2,000 for producers and businesses will be allowed. • A 50% cash match is required of the applicant. • Funds shall only be used for programs that are directly related to marketing or promotion of CT Grown products. For more information call 860-713-2503.



## New Farmer Assistance

New and beginning farmers can receive start-up farm and agribusiness assistance. Information about state statutes pertaining to agriculture, loan and grant programs available, farm exemptions, farm taxes, and organizational contact information will be provided. A new farmer packet (sent via email) is the starting point for this assistance. Contact Ronald Olsen at [ronald.olsen@ct.gov](mailto:ronald.olsen@ct.gov) or 860-713-2550.

## Organic Certification Cost Share

A program offered through USDA Agriculture Marketing Service authorizes the Connecticut Department of Agriculture to provide cost-share assistance to Connecticut's certified organic crop and livestock producers. All producers certified to meet the National Organic Program (NOP) standards by accredited certifying agents may apply for funds. Cost-share payments to eligible producers are limited to 75% of the producers' certification costs up to a maximum of \$750. For more info, contact Rick Macsuga [richard.macsuga@ct.gov](mailto:richard.macsuga@ct.gov) or 860-713-2544.



## Outreach and Education

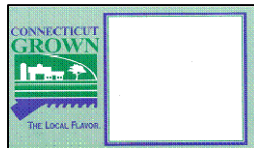
The Marketing Bureau provides outreach and education on agency programs, information about Connecticut agriculture, and educational seminars on current agricultural topics. Information about CT Grown products, producers, and events are disseminated regularly to the media. For more information about outreach and education, please call the Marketing Bureau at 860-713-2503.

## PA 490 & Agricultural Land Use

The Marketing Bureau will provide assistance to land owners, town assessors, and land use officials explaining the often unclear association between farming, property taxes, and farming exemptions that may be available to eligible production farmers. For more information about PA 490 and the established land use values, visit [www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov) or contact Ronald Olsen at [ronald.olsen@ct.gov](mailto:ronald.olsen@ct.gov) or 860-713-2550.

## POP Cards & Crop Availability Calendar

These free point-of-purchase materials are available to producers to advertise CT Grown products. Also available, seasonal crop availability calendar! Call 860-713-2503 to order.



## Hartford Regional Market

The Hartford Regional Market is a statutorily authorized facility located at 101 Reserve Road in Hartford. Its purpose is to provide a central location for farmers and wholesalers to sell and distribute food and other agricultural products. It is the largest perishable food distribution facility between Boston and New York. The market is operated by the state as a self-sustaining nonprofit venture which is fully funded by fees generated from the operation of the market. For more information email [ctregmkt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ctregmkt@sbcglobal.net) or call 860-527-5047.

## Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCGB)

The SCBG Program, whose funds originate from the USDA Agriculture Marketing Service, is designed to "solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops." Specialty crops are defined by the USDA as fruits, vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, maple syrup, honey, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture). Things to know about this grant: • Applications are accepted annually in spring/early summer. • Projects must impact and produce measurable outcomes for the specialty crop industry and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, or individual. • Projects are awarded for up to \$75,000. • Projects cannot exceed three years. • No match is required. For more information about Connecticut's SCBG Program, contact Jaime Smith at [jaime.smith@ct.gov](mailto:jaime.smith@ct.gov) or 860-713-2559.

## Third-Party Food Safety Audit Cost Share

Any grower/processor in Connecticut that has successfully passed an industry-recognized third-party food safety audit is eligible to apply for these funds. Eligible growers may apply once per year. The funds will cover 50% of the cost of audit, up to \$750. The funds will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis until the funds are exhausted. For more information, contact Rick Macsuga [richard.macsuga@ct.gov](mailto:richard.macsuga@ct.gov) or 860-713-2544.

## USDA GAP/GHP Food Safety Audits

USDA Good Agriculture Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) Audits are offered through the Connecticut Department of Agriculture. This audit-based, fresh fruit and vegetable food safety program verifies adherence to recommendations made in the FDA's Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables. The voluntary program provides Connecticut farmers an accredited USDA audit program, should an institution, wholesale house, or other retail operation require a third-party audit. Upon successful completion, the farm receives a certificate and is placed on the USDA website. Questions can be directed to Mark Zotti [mark.zotti@ct.gov](mailto:mark.zotti@ct.gov) or 860-713-2538.

Website for the Department of Agriculture - [www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov)

The Agency's most current source for information [www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov) or [www.ct.gov/doag](http://www.ct.gov/doag). Details on agency programs and services, staff, latest news, and grant information is available for producers. For the public, information on the animal population control program, rabies prevention, finding a farm or agricultural fair, and much more is available. Information is added regularly. For questions or comments on the agency website contact Jaime Smith, [jaime.smith@ct.gov](mailto:jaime.smith@ct.gov) or 860-713-2559.

## The Farmland Preservation Program

The Farmland Preservation Program is a program within the Department of Agriculture. Its mission is to help preserve Connecticut's local food security, agricultural heritage, and farmland economy through the purchase of development rights on farms with the most productive soils in agricultural communities.

Farm owners voluntarily apply to the Farmland Preservation Program and offers are negotiated. Once approved and enrolled, an easement that runs in perpetuity is placed on the property. The perpetual easement limits the future use of the land to agricultural purposes, prohibiting its subdivision and development.

Farms that qualify for the program consist of lands classified as prime and important farmland soils, are typically in cropland, but may include adjacent pastures, wooded land and other open areas. Farmland must achieve a minimum score of 65 or higher before being considered by the Commissioner of Agriculture. To meet the minimum score, farms must generally be in active food and/or fiber production, contain a high percentage of prime and important farmland soils with at least 30 acres of cropland, and be located in an agricultural community.

The program works with cost-sharing partners to achieve the program's mission. These partners may include the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, local municipalities, or statewide agricultural land trusts whenever possible.

For more information, visit the program website at [www.CTGrown.gov](http://www.CTGrown.gov) or [www.ct.gov/doag](http://www.ct.gov/doag) (under *Programs and Services*). You can also contact the Farmland Preservation Program Unit at 860-713-2511.