

# Department of Agriculture



## *At a Glance*

**STEVEN K. REVICZKY, Commissioner**

*Established 1925*

*Statutory Authority CGS Sec. 22-1*

*Central Office - 165 Capitol Avenue*

*Hartford, Connecticut 06106*

*Average number of full-time employees – 58*

*Recurring operating expenses – \$5,410,350*

*Capital purchases - \$14,609.15*

*Organizational structure – Office of the Commissioner, Bureau of Regulation and Inspection, Bureau of Agricultural Development and Resource Preservation, Bureau of Aquaculture, Connecticut Marketing Authority, with Business Office and Human Resource Support from the Department of Administrative Services and legal services provided by the Office of the Attorney General.*

## **Mission**

*The mission of the Department of Agriculture 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 public health, animal health and animal care; and promoting an understanding among the state's citizens of the diversity of Connecticut's agriculture, its cultural heritage and its contribution to the state's economy.*

## **Statutory Authority**

Statutory authority for the Department of Agriculture are found in Sections 12, 22, 26 and other sections of the Connecticut General Statutes.

## **Public Service**

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture worked during FY 2012-13 to facilitate the Governor's Council for Agricultural Development, with Commissioner Reviczky chairing the council and agency staff providing administrative support to the council itself and to its 12 working groups. From July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013, as part of its unprecedented strategic planning effort to grow Connecticut farms, the council met nine times. It also conducted 12 additional meetings with topic-specific working groups, to which 112 representatives from Connecticut's diverse agricultural industry were invited to provide input and ideas.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture continued during FY 2012-13 to inform the public; media representatives; and local, state, and federal government officials about various aspects of Connecticut agriculture through its Connecticut Weekly Agricultural Report, news releases, interviews, and radio and television appearances featuring Commissioner Reviczky and other key agency staff.

The Department, through the Bureau of Regulation and Inspection, continued the process of updating its traditional licensing system to the e-license system. Approximately 80% of the agency's licenses, permits and product registrations are now accessible in the elicense system. The elicense system provides a web based interface available to the public in which the status of licenses can be determined and lists of licenses and permits can be downloaded facilitating access to information that would otherwise only be available to the public by submitting a more time consuming request pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

## **BUREAU OF AQUACULTURE**

- Collected and analyzed over 7500 seawater samples for fecal coliform bacteria, examined 230 phytoplankton samples for harmful algal blooms, 35 samples for paralytic shellfish poisoning, 283 shellfish tissues for fecal coliform bacteria analysis, 24 shellfish tissue samples tested for total *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* and total *Vibrio vulnificus* and 8 histopathology samples were processed. In addition, 21 shellfish tissue and municipal wastewater samples were analyzed for MSB (Male-Specific Bacteriophage) levels, used to evaluate viral impacts after sewage bypass events.
- Bureau of Aquaculture staff improved the tracking system for meeting the National Shellfish Standardization Program's (NSSP) minimum sampling requirements for each of the state's shellfish growing areas as set forth in the NSSP Model Ordinance (NSSP-MO). This real-time tracking system creates an automated count of samples collected as they are entered into the database.

- Bureau of Aquaculture streamlined and standardized Annual, Triennial, and Twelve Year growing area reports by creating templates for reports and data presentation so that there is uniformity between the Western and Eastern region town reports. These templates will also ensure that reports meet the requirements set forth in the NSSP-MO, and the state's compliance with the program.
- Bureau of Aquaculture completed Twelve Year Shoreline Pollution Source Surveys in the Town of Westport and the City of Stamford in the Western Region and the town of Waterford in the Eastern Region. Data collected during the surveys is used to compile a Comprehensive Pollution source GIS database, with the goal of having a comprehensive pollution source database for the entire CT shoreline. Pollution sources (such as sewage infiltration to stormwater outfalls) discovered during the surveys are investigated to determine where the contamination is originating and are referred back to the town for correction. Investigation of these sources requires a cooperative effort between the Bureau of Aquaculture, town health officials, public works departments, local environmental groups, and US Environmental Protection Agency.
- The Bureau of Aquaculture continued to expand the use of testing shellfish, seawater, and municipal wastewater effluent samples to determine levels of Male-Specific Bacteriophage (MSB). MSB is an indicator organism that has been accepted by the NSSP for detecting levels of enteric viruses that may be present in growing areas or shellfish tissues. Bacteriophages (also referred to as coliphages) are bacterial viruses that infect and replicate in *Escherichia coli*, and are often found in high concentrations in municipal wastewater and to a lesser degree in human and animal feces. Because traditional bacterial monitoring does not accurately indicate the presence of non-bacterial organisms such as human pathogenic viruses, coliphages are potentially important microorganisms for monitoring the microbial quality of waters. It also provides a safe way look for threatening viruses such as the Norovirus by using the MSB as an indicator organism. Because human virus detection can be expensive and beyond the capabilities of most water laboratories, MSB testing provides a relatively easy way to test for human pathogenic viruses in a timely fashion. MSB has been shown to be present in most municipal wastewater treatment facilities in Connecticut but testing has shown that sufficient treatment of the influent waste has effectively controlled bacteriophage levels in the effluent. This procedure has proven to be a useful tool in assessing and monitoring viral levels in both seawater and shellfish.

Last year the Bureau was able to use this method to modify long standing shellfish growing water closure protocols in Fairfield. This change has resulted in significantly fewer closures to Fairfield due to bypasses from the Bridgeport West Side Wastewater Pollution Control Facility (WPCF), allowing productive commercial and recreational shellfishing beds to remain open when in prior years they would have been required to be closed. The Bureau of Aquaculture will continue to sample to determine if the trigger can be raised again.

The Bureau of Aquaculture is also using MSB sampling in the Housatonic River to determine if an upgrade from a Prohibited to a Restricted classification would be

appropriate. This would benefit commercial operations as harvesters are currently not allowed to remove market size oysters or hard clams of any size from areas classified as Prohibited. The industry would also benefit as potentially disease-causing shellfish could be removed.

MSB testing has also been used to reopen shellfish growing areas following raw sewage discharges from WPCFs. The NSSP-MO requires a 21 day closure following large raw sewage spills, unless MSB testing is used to determine the level of pathogenic viruses. These tests have allowed the Bureau of Aquaculture to re-open areas impacted by these events more rapidly than 21 days.

- Staff performed sanitary and record inspections of the 104 shellfish harvest vessels, 44 harvest operations and 29 wholesale dealer/distributors as required and numerous follow-up inspections throughout the year.
- Issued 115 Conch Licenses and 130 Personal Seed Oyster Licenses and 26 Seed Boat Licenses.
- The Bureau of Aquaculture was able to acquire, through state surplus, a larger boat for sampling. The larger boat allows staff to sample during rough weather, and during times when the Harbor freezes over. Before the acquisition of this vessel, the Bureau of Aquaculture had to remove sampling boats from the water so they would not be frozen in and was unable to sample due to weather constraints. The larger boat does not need to come out of the water in the winter months.
- Bureau staff continued to collect shellfish water and tissue samples for Conditional Area Verification Studies. These verification studies help Analysts determine whether a seven day closure period is adequate to achieve reduction of fecal coliform levels in the shellstock to pre-closure (background) levels, and establish criteria for reopening based on coliform levels in the water. Water and shellstock tissue samples are collected from Conditionally Approved areas for bacteriological analysis 3-5 days (or longer) after sewage or rain related closures. Prior to reopening, water samples at all routine stations must contain less than or equal to 14 CFU/ 100ml of water and tissue samples must contain no more than the number of fecal coliforms found in background samples. No Conditionally Approved growing area shall be reopened automatically following a closure event until the Verification Study for that area is complete. Shellfish tissue sampling may be removed from area management plans when the studies verify that there is a direct correlation between fecal coliforms in shellfish tissue and the overlying waters and that a decrease in fecal coliforms in seawater results in a corresponding decrease of coliforms in shellfish tissue.
- The bureau held a mandatory shellstock shipper educational seminar on April 30, 2013 to review and outline recently adopted changes to the NSSP Model Ordinance and new mandatory time temperature requirements for oyster harvest. At least one representative from each harvesting or wholesale dealer operation attended the training held by the

Bureau of Aquaculture. This training included basic shellfish sanitation and new HACCP requirements, as well as information on upcoming concerns, focusing on the control of Vibrios. Vibrios are naturally occurring pathogens that can cause illness from consumption of molluscan shellfish. Due to recent warming trends in many shellfish growing areas, *Vibrios* are the species of most concern. Higher water temperatures cause these organisms to proliferate. In order to minimize illness the NSSP-MO includes both suggested and mandatory controls to limit shellfish exposure to warm temperatures. The controls begin at harvest and are applied at every level of processing and handling. The Bureau of Aquaculture developed new time and temperature requirements for Connecticut harvesters in order to minimize the risk of a *Vibrio* outbreak. Oyster harvesters were required to sign a *Vibrio* control plan that limited the time of harvest to five hours between the months of June to September.

The plans require shading shellfish on the deck of harvest boats, a five hour limit from first harvest to refrigeration, spraying shellfish with water from approved growing areas to keep them cool, and the monitoring of shellstock temperatures once on board. Connecticut harvesters now have 5 hours from the time when the first shellfish are exposed to air until product must be placed under temperature control at 45°F or less. Additionally there are new temperature record keeping requirements that must be adhered to by harvesters and dealers. The Bureau of Aquaculture continues to work with aquaculture producers to ensure an understanding of the new regulations as well as educate harvesters that the warmer waters and unseasonable weather patterns must be considered while adopting strategies to eliminate the possibility of shellfish-related illnesses.

## **BUREAU OF REGULATION AND INSPECTION**

The Bureau of Regulation and Inspection coordinated the Department's emergency response activities associated with Super Storm Sandy in October 2012 followed closely by a severe snow storm in November 2012. The response included: issuing protective actions concerning shell fishing, inspecting growers and wholesalers to ensure that flooded crops were not offered for sale; collecting information to support an emergency disaster declaration; in coordination with DCP and DPH, provided extensive outreach to the agricultural community and pet owners on hazard mitigation, food safety and animal welfare.

- Funded by a grant from the Department, assisted the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association with preparation of Emergency Preparedness guidance and a survey of available resources within the agricultural community.
- With USDA cooperative agreement funding support, the bureau continued animal disease surveillance and outreach activities for Avian Influenza, Scrapie and other reportable animal diseases; continued implementation of the National Animal Disease Traceability Program; and partially funded two positions associated with the cooperative agreement programs. The Bureau provided funding to the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory at the University of Connecticut to conduct the essential

diagnostic services and to support personnel needed to accomplish surveillance goals and to assist in animal disease investigations and disease-free status certifications i.e. National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP). State animal health surveillance information is coordinated by the State Veterinarian and shared with USDA through quarterly accomplishment reports and participation in the National Animal Health Reporting System (NAHRS) and the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN).

- o Avian Influenza Surveillance Activities – 5,531 birds were tested from 14 commercial and 215 backyard poultry flocks; 200 avian necropsy cases were examined for AI and financially supported by the 2012 NAI cooperative agreement; and 127 poultry outreach visits occurred, distributing over 3,500 pieces of USDA AI and *Biosecurity for Birds* literature and calendars.
  - o Scrapie Surveillance Activities - 48 sheep and 29 goats, were necropsied at the Connecticut Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory and tested negative for Scrapie. The 2012 Scrapie Surveillance cooperative agreement partially subsidized the necropsy evaluation for owners to encourage laboratory submissions and to meet surveillance goals set by USDA.
  - o The Bureau continued to implement and expand its Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) program through support by a USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services cooperative agreement. The ADT agreement requires states to meet USDA performance standards for official animal identification and for monitoring and reporting interstate animal movement activities based on data generated from Interstate Certificates -of- Veterinary Inspection (ICVI), Exhibition and Import Permits as well as investigations of illegal importation of targeted species. Official animal identification and animal interstate movement data is entered into the Standardized Premise Registration System (SPRS); the Animal Health and Surveillance Management (AHSM) database; the Animal Identification Numbering Management System(AINMS); and the Veterinary Services Process Streamlining System (VSPS). The Bureau has greatly improved its ability to archive and retrieve data to better identify animals and animal movement. The Bureau has enhanced its capability to conduct a rapid response to a zoonotic or foreign animal disease event or natural disaster event by increasing the levels of official animal identification through unique location identifier process and migrating traceability information into electronic systems.
- The bureau issued \$6,041,223 in Dairy Sustainability Grants to 126 dairy farms pursuant to the provisions of Public Act 09-229.
  - The Animal Population Control Program (APCP) issued 4,766 vouchers (3190 dogs/1576 cats) for the vaccination and sterilization of dogs/cats from municipal impound facilities, feral cat organizations and pets owned by low-income CT residents. Dog and cat sterilization vouchers were provided for 3,359 animals (2288 dogs/72% and 1071 cats/68%) for a 71% overall voucher redemption rate. In addition, 6,718 pre-surgical vaccination vouchers were distributed of which one-half were rabies vaccinations.

- Complaint Investigations conducted: twenty three (23) consumer complaints (product defects or illness that involved milk, milk products, pet food or livestock feeds); twenty six (26) complaints of poultry or livestock neglect; eighteen (18) complaints of nuisances caused by agricultural operations.
- Orders/Warnings issued: one (1) stop sale due to the confirmed presence of a human pathogen in retail raw milk originating from a licensed facility (no known illnesses reported); one (1) stop sale and warning due to the confirmed presence of a human pathogen in retail raw milk originating from an unlicensed facility (3 confirmed illnesses); twelve (12) quarantine orders due to the detection of parvovirus in dogs; one (1) quarantine order due to illegal importation of cattle; nine (9) stop sale (milk products) due to product quality violations; twenty eight (28) milk quality violation warnings
- The Licensing Unit processed applications and issued licenses and registrations during FY 2013 as follows: 129 Animal Importers, 68 Bulk Milk Pickup Tankers, 25 Cheese Manufacturers, 274 Commercial Kennels, 1 Commission Sales Stables, 127 Dog Training Facilities, 4 Egg Processing Plants, 1 Equine Auctions, 552 Feed companies (>10,000 labels reviewed), 275 Fertilizer companies (>4,000 formulas), 1 Fur Breeders, 374 Grooming Facilities, 80 Poultry Dealers, 33 Livestock Dealers/Brokers, 82 Milk Dealers, 134 Milk Examiners, 125 Milk Producers, 98 Milk Sub dealers, 103 Pet Shops, 2 Poultry Slaughter Facilities, 6 Raw Milk/Cheese Manufacturers, 2984 Retail Dairy Stores, 18 Retail Raw Milk Producers, 82 Seed labelers and 3 Swine Garbage Feeders. Licensing revenues totaled 1,704,385.48.
- Samples collected and submitted to UConn's CVMDL for livestock and poultry disease surveillance testing included: 2,967 milk samples for mastitis testing; 464 samples for swine brucellosis and pseudorabies testing; 6,844 samples for Avian disease testing; conducted T.B. (tuberculosis) surveillance testing on 6,024 dairy cows as required by the Milk Safety Program.
- Conducted twenty one (21) inspections of four (4) registered Shell Egg producers.
- Conducted 4 poultry processor (slaughter) inspections of two (2) registered facilities.
- Conducted one hundred one (101) inspections and seven (7) certifications of five (5) registered Controlled Atmosphere apple storage facilities.
- Collected 368 samples of seed, 122 samples of livestock feed and 111 samples of fertilizer for laboratory analysis conducted by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.
- Collected and analyzed 901 samples of processed milk, milk products and cheese, 53 samples of producer raw milk for pasteurization and 264 samples of retail raw milk for compliance with milk safety regulations including the presence of pathogens and animal drug residues.

- Conducted 521 routine and follow-up inspections of facilities producing, transporting, processing or storing milk and milk products and 2 commissioning inspections of new processing facilities.
- Through funding from a Federal-State agreement with the USDA-Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) Specialty Crops Inspection Division, a Department staff member, licensed as a USDA auditor and under the direction of the Bureau, provides USDA food safety audits that include Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)/Good Handling Practices (GHP) Audits, Produce GAP Harmonized Audits, and commodity specific audits. These are voluntary food safety audits that verify adherence to the recommendations made in the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables. Requesting farms/businesses that meet the minimum requirements receive a certificate from the USDA and are listed on the USDA-AMS website. In 2012, 16 Connecticut farms/businesses were audited and met the minimum audit requirements outlined by USDA-AMS. This program will continue to assist Connecticut farmers, re-packers, and wholesalers in remaining competitive nationwide and worldwide as the demand for food safety programs continues to grow.
- Pursuant to the provisions of C.G.S. §22-126a, *Testing of Animals in Drawing Contests*, obtained samples from 18 animals entered in draft pulling contests held at Connecticut fairs that were submitted to the University of Florida Racing Laboratory for analysis for the presence of drugs. All animals sampled during the 2012 fair season tested negative for the presence of drugs.
- In cooperation with the Department of Correction, the bureau continued to operate a large animal rescue/rehabilitation facility at the York Correctional Center in Niantic. A new 22-stall barn was constructed at the York facility with the project directed by the Division of Construction Services of the Department of Administrative Services. This past fiscal year the State Animal Control Division seized a number of horses and other farm animals from abusive situations and they were added to the horse population at the facility. After extensive rehabilitation, the Bureau auctioned 2 horses at the UConn College of Agriculture's Annual Horse sale. The Bureau also continued to work with the farm program at the Corrigan - Radgowski Correctional Center in Montville housing two horses at that facility.
- The Bureau of Regulation and Inspection's Animal Control Division inspected 104 dog pounds, 146 pet shops, 381 pet grooming facilities, 228 commercial kennels, 107 dog training facilities, and processed 208 rabies cases where humans or domestic animals were exposed to a rabid animal. The Division investigated 224 complaints, 2 livestock damage complaints, issued 84 written warnings, 19 infractions, 4 misdemeanor summons, and issued 14 summons for arrest.

## **BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE PRESERVATION**

- Continued to work on cooperative joint municipal farmland preservation projects with the towns of Suffield, Lebanon, New Milford, Woodstock, Ellington, Columbia, and Coventry, and on joint acquisition projects with the Connecticut Farmland Trust.
- \$10 million in bond funds were authorized by the legislature and allocated in lump sum funding by the State Bond Commission for the Farmland Preservation Program to fund the purchase development rights.
- Development rights were acquired on seven farms totaling 860 acres at a total cost of \$6,005,578, bringing the total number of farms protected to 296 farms and 38,576 acres. Two of the farms included municipal partnerships contributing \$600,000.
- 17 additional farm development rights projects are pending, totaling 1,674 acres for \$10,322,000.
- Four farms have development rights contract offers extended on 419 acres for \$2,664,212, which include two municipalities and land trust partnerships.
- Continued cooperative farmland protection efforts with established municipal programs including the permanent protection of farms located in at least 15 municipalities.
- Bureau continued to assist other agencies with the administration of leasing State owned farmlands.
- Legislation passed transferring custody and control of approximately 825 acres of farmland at the Southbury Training School farm in Southbury to the Department with the development rights to be conveyed to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, the Southbury Land Trust.
- The pilot of the Community Farms Preservation Program (CFPP) is well underway with two farms under contract, and appraisals completed on an additional five farms. Two farms have withdrawn. The purpose of the Community Farms Program is to encourage locally supported farmland preservation on smaller farms that have excellent agricultural soils and contribute to local economic activity, but which may not be eligible for other protection programs. Twenty-five municipalities have entered into cooperative agreements, a figure that has more than doubled since the announcement of the CFPP in 2011.
- Submitted an application to the Federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program that is currently pending.

- In 2013 the Farmland Restoration Program (FLRP) was created. This voluntary program provides matching grants of up to \$20,000 for restoration activities that increase the state's farmland resource base for production agriculture, with an emphasis on prime and important farmland soil and human and livestock food production. A conservation plan, or farmland restoration plan, is required for participation. Eighty Four applications located in many municipalities have been received to date proposing to restore an average of 14.9 acres per farm or 836 acres with an average cost of \$1,411 per acre and a grant average of \$15,500 per project.
- The Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Farmland Preservation Program received 40 application and information requests during this period.
- Conducted 45 site reviews of proposed state and local projects for impact on prime and important farmland soils.
- Updated five agricultural brochures and online listings promoting Connecticut agricultural producers and Connecticut Grown farm products from across the state. The agency produced 200,000 new Connecticut Farm Maps for distribution and updated the electronic farm map website. Printed brochures are distributed to five Connecticut tourism welcome centers, U.S. Department of Agriculture regional centers, and UConn Cooperative Extension offices. They are also available at department displays, trade shows, presentations, and online at [www.ctgrown.gov](http://www.ctgrown.gov).
- Continued to produce and distribute the Connecticut Weekly Agricultural Report. The report contains informational articles; price reports for fruits, vegetables, eggs, livestock, and hay; and classified advertising. In FY 2012-13, the report's e-mail and print subscriber list grew to almost 2,000. The report is also posted on the agency's website.
- Continued a positive working relationship with the Department of Economic and Community Development and its Office of Tourism through CT Open House Day, the Agri-tourism Brochure Distribution Program, and involvement running three agricultural related booths in the Connecticut Building during the 2013 Big E.
- Updated and developed new pages for the agency website which enables website visitors easier access to farmers, pertinent regulations and statutes, license and permit applications, information on farmland preservation, the Hartford Regional Farmers' market, the Hartford Regional Wholesale Market, and grant applications. The website also allows the public easier access to farm, farmers' markets, public health, animal control, pet health and aquaculture-related information.
- Continued support of the Connecticut wine industry through the Connecticut Farm Wine Development Council. Promotion of the industry took place at the state tourism conference in May 2013; the right to sell CT wine by the bottle in the Connecticut Building was successfully obtained for the 2013 Big E.

- In June 2013, a Familiarization Tour was conducted to inform Welcome Center staff about agri-tourism destinations in Connecticut with the Department of Economic Development's Office of Tourism.
- Received \$428,912 from the United States Department of Agriculture's, Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. These funds will be used for eight projects: six by state producer associations, one in cooperation with the Department of Consumer Protection, and one conducted by the agency to solely enhance the competitiveness of Connecticut specialty crops.
- Received \$400,000 from the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to fund nine projects.
- Awarded \$373,391.79 to seven sub-grantees through the United State Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service's Specialty Crop Block Grant-Farm Bill Program to solely enhance the competitiveness of Connecticut specialty crops through September 2016.
- Awarded \$22,413.17 to 13 sub-grantees through the agency's CT Grown Joint Venture Grant program to increase the visibility of the CT Grown logo and promote Connecticut agricultural products through a 50/50 cost-share grant program.
- Continued partnering with Food Export Northeast to increase Connecticut exports to international markets. Connecticut company participation has increased significantly over the last year. The Agency was actively involved in organizing educational seminars in cooperation with the US Department of Commerce, the Northeast Buyers Mission and the Seafood Buyers Mission in Boston, MA. An intern from Eastern Connecticut State University was hired to assist staff with expanding the program's outreach to Connecticut companies.
- Provided Certificates of Free Sale to eligible food companies who wish to export products and are in need of required documentation in order to expedite shipments.
- Continued to promote farmers' markets throughout the state. The state is home to 125 certified farmers' markets, with over 600 farmers and vendors selling local products and contributing to the local economy. DoAG also administers the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). This supplemental food program provides CT Grown fruits and vegetables to WIC clients (women, infant, and children enrolled in DPH's State WIC Program), low income seniors and families with children between the ages of 5 and 18 living in Connecticut Housing and Finance Authority Housing (CHFA) sites. The FMNP serves over 50,000 WIC clients, over 32,000 low income seniors and over 1,900 CHFA families. Clients receive their benefits from the local agencies that include: local WIC offices, seniors/social services offices and CHFA housing administrators. Eligible FMNP clients purchased CT Grown fruits and vegetables valued at over \$906,000 at authorized farmers' markets throughout Connecticut in 2012.

- In conjunction with the Connecticut Agricultural Information Council hosted Ag Day at the Capitol, an event held annually. Over fifty agricultural organizations assemble in the North Lobby and Hall of Flags in the State Capitol Building to showcase Connecticut agricultural offerings and highlight the importance of agriculture in Connecticut.
- Thirty six schools and school systems reported year, and there are fifty-seven farmers and 11 wholesalers in the program. Wholesalers report working with over 100 more farmers in the state to distribute locally grown food to schools. The Department serves as the lead on two regional groups for the state.
- Continued to add listings on the Farm Link website, with 231 farm seekers and 102 farm owners who are presently or have been listed with the program. There are over 3,700 acres presently listed on the site. The Department coordinates and participates with other programs in the region in this work.
- The Farm-to-Chef Program continued in FY 2011-12 to connect Connecticut Grown producers with commercial foodservice professionals. Since the program's inception in October 2006, it has scheduled 11 tours/workshops to educate chefs, five annual meetings of members, and three Farm-to-Chef weeks to raise public awareness of Connecticut Grown ingredients and agriculture. A monthly email newsletter and other resources are distributed and posted on the website. This year, the program has been aligning itself closely with the Governor's Council for Agricultural Development to complement the council's work.
- During the reporting period, Farm Reinvestment Grants were awarded to 16 producers totaling \$466,611 with a total project value of \$1,094,896.
- Since 2005, Agriculture Viability and Farm Transition Grants have been awarded to 102 producers, 2 Agriculture Cooperatives, 77 municipalities and 37 Agricultural Non-Profits totaling over \$6,328,360 with total project values over \$16,285,989.
- Utilizing Community Investment Account funds, Agriculture Viability and Farm Transition Grants were awarded to 10 producers totaling \$320,359 with total project value of \$689,675; and to 10 Municipalities and 12 Non-Profits totaling \$497,547 with total project value of \$1,452,304.
- The Connecticut Regional Market, 101 Reserve Road in Hartford, is the largest terminal produce market between New York City and Boston. The market was established in 1950 and consists of thirty-three acres. It serves both consumers and agricultural businesses. Currently the Connecticut Regional Market consists of twenty-five tenants who sell and distribute foods including produce and meats. It also houses a Farmers Market seven days a week with over 100 farmers at different times of the year. A new roof was installed on the facility and a Market Master Plan was initiated to redevelop a new Regional Market on site.