

The Changing Face of Connecticut Agriculture



FB CONNECTICUT
FARM BUREAU

About Connecticut Farm Bureau

- Private non-profit 501c-5 Association
- Represent over 5,000 Connecticut farm families
- Advocate and educate on issues that help keep farm families in production agriculture
- *The Voice of Connecticut Agriculture*



The CT Farm Bureau is a grass-roots organization.

The picture on left is a 2009 rally at the State Capitol in Hartford in support of the Dairy Bill.

The picture on right is a Windham County Policy Development Meeting at Blackmer's Farm in Thompson, CT.

What is Agriculture?

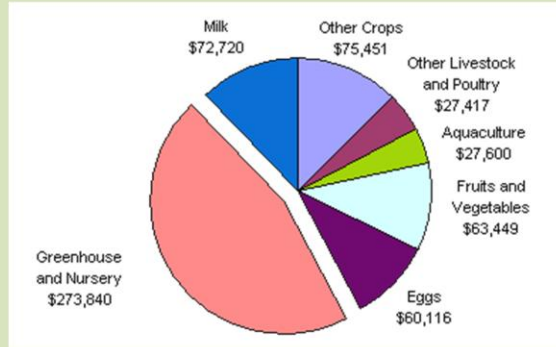
"Agriculture" and "Farming" are defined under CGS 1-1q



Agriculture in CT includes: crop land, livestock, forestry and forest products, the "Green" industry, bees, poultry, Christmas trees, vineyards, maple syrup, aquaculture, and orchards.

Agriculture is a Business Enterprise

Connecticut Cash Receipts – 2008
by Commodity in 1,000 Dollars



Connecticut Total = \$600.6 Million

Chart may not add to 100 percent due to rounding

Other Livestock and Poultry = Total Livestock - Milk - Eggs - Aquaculture

Fruits and Vegetables = Sweet Corn + Other Vegetables + Apples + Peaches + Berries + Other Fruit

Other Crops = Hay + Tobacco + Maple Syrup + All Other Crops

Agriculture is a very large business in Connecticut.

Changing Face of Agriculture

Suburban/Rural Interface



Residential development represents a land-use that is often in conflict with existing agricultural activities. The photo on left is roadside sign advertising lots for sale in Columbia, CT using the image of a barn while the photo on right is farmland and a subdivision in close proximity.

Smaller/More Diverse Farms

- 1991-2008: www.agcensus.gov
- Average farm size has decreased from 87 acres to 82 acres
- Number of *farms has increased from 4,250 farms to 4,900 farms
- 1,232....< 10 acres
- 1,894....< 10-49 acres

* farm: any place producing \$1,000 worth of agricultural product in one calendar year

Farms are getting smaller but increasing in number. The size of the increase may be influenced by the sampling method used by the government.

*Gresczyk Farm
New Hartford, CT*



Producers are investing in diversification of their product lines. In New Hartford, this farm has invested in a hydroponic lettuce operation for local distribution.



Photos showing diversity of CT agriculture...

Cow Pots: Freund's Farm East Canaan, CT

Wool and Fiber Show, UCONN Extension Center, Tolland, CT

Bottom photos: Hindinger Farm, Hamden, CT

Fiber and Fruits and Vegetables

Farmers Markets



*2009: 123 Farmers
Markets statewide*



Locally Grown Foods



Farm to School Program

- 45 CT farmers providing foods
- 84 CT schools or school systems

CT agricultural producers are experimenting with new forms of sales and distribution. CT farmers are supplying food directly to CT schools and the Farmer's Cow group is selling milk products in local grocery stores like Stop and Shop using their image of local and humane production.

Destination Farms



*Blue Slope Farm Museum
Franklin, CT*

The Blue Slope Farm Museum in Franklin, CT is an example of social agriculture where the producers reach out to the community for education and outreach while providing themselves with additional revenue.



*Blue Slope Farm Museum
Franklin, CT*

*Freund's Farm
East Canaan, CT*



At Blue Slope Farm they teach and educate people on agricultural skills such as learning how to milk a cow.

As part of their plan to reach out to the local public, farms provide social experiences such as the luncheon at Freund's Farm.

Community Supported Agriculture

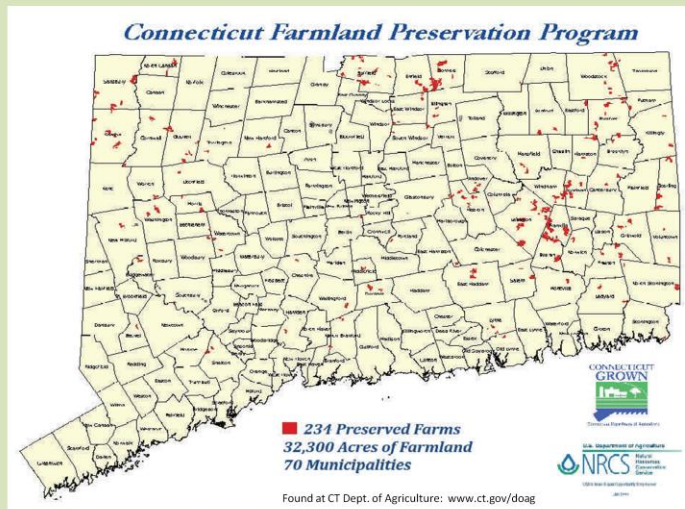
- What is CSA?
- Community Supported Agriculture, often shortened to CSA, is a prepaid subscription to a farm's produce for the season. Most CSAs give shareholders a weekly supply of veggies, herbs, fruits and sometimes even eggs and meat. You know it's fresh and you get to meet the farm and people who grew your food! The prepaid CSA arrangements also makes it a source of financial security for the farmer. Some CSAs also incorporate farm workdays for shareholders
- www.farmfresh.org

Funding for Agriculture

- National, State and local level
- CT: Agriculture Viability Grants through Community Investment Act
- Sustained financial commitment for Farmland Preservation Programs



Farmland Preservation



Farmland preservation is an ongoing process in CT and supported by CT and the NRCS.

Goal of Farmland Preservation Program

- Preserve 130,000 acres of farmland, with 85,000 in cropland

Main Objective... *WHY?*

- To secure a food and fiber production land resource base,
- Consisting primarily of prime and important farmland soils,

***For the future of agriculture in
Connecticut.***

Right to Farm Law

- CGS Sec. 19A-341 (since 1981)
 1. Odor
 2. Noise
 3. Dust
 4. Use of chemicals
 5. Water pollution



Provided such operations follow accepted agricultural practices.

Right to Farm Law (cont'd)

- Inspection and approval of the agricultural or farming operation, place, establishment or facility by the Commissioner of Agriculture or his designee shall be prima facie evidence that such operation follows generally accepted agricultural practices.
- ...shall not apply whenever a nuisance results from negligence or willful or reckless misconduct in the operation of any such agricultural or farming operation...

Storm Water Runoff

- Loss of topsoil
- Loss of productivity
- Loss of seed
- Loss of marketable product
- Financial hardship to the producer



Land-use change and residential development changes local runoff and hydrology patterns around long established agricultural operations. Often farmland is used as a “dumping ground” for excess water and stormwater runoff from impervious cover.

Contact Information

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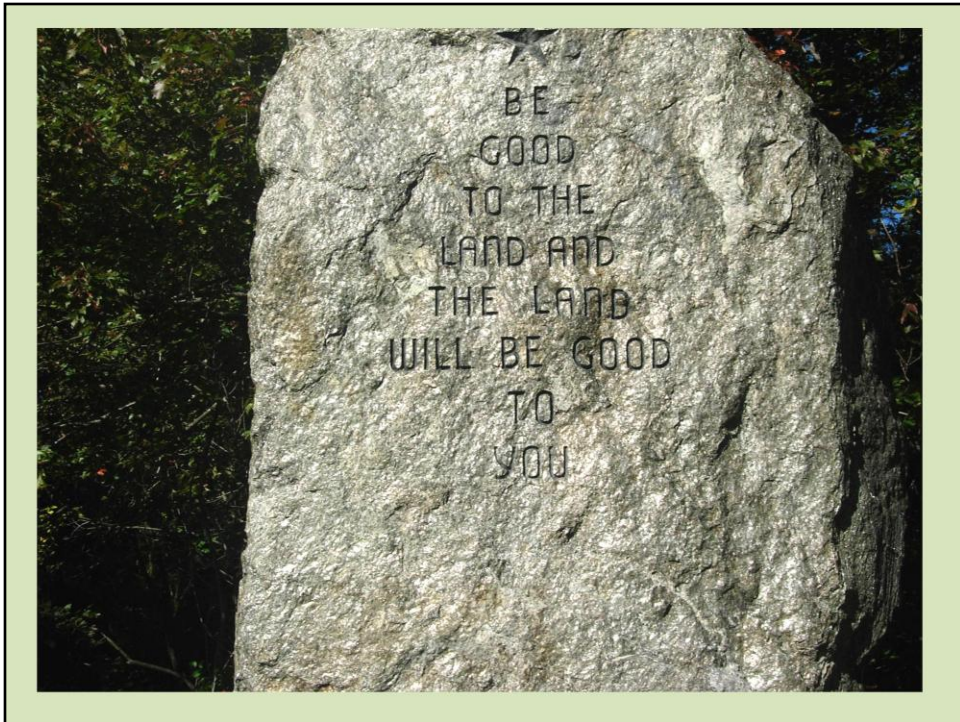
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Stone on Jone's Farm in Shelton, CT. Phrase says, "Be good to the land and the land will be good to you."