

Agricultural Report

Connecticut Department of Agriculture

M. Jodi Rell, Governor
F. Philip Prelli, Commissioner
Robert R. Pellegrino, Bureau Director



Marketing & Technology Bureau, (860) 713-2503

Jessey Ina-Lee, Editor

Wednesday, June 23, 2010

NOTES from the DEPARTMENT . . .

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANTS AWARDED TO CONNECTICUT

by Ron Olsen, Marketing Representative

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has awarded \$442,964.50 to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture under the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program for 9 projects that will enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture will use some of the funds to partner with the state's Maple Syrup Producers Association and test the validity of a three-pronged approach to grow the maple products industry through sustainable forest management to increase the number of maple trees tapped, enhancing current equipment to increase productivity, and developing a marketing model to increase traffic to retail and direct market outlets. Other funding will go towards expanding consumer recognition of the CT wine industry. The CT Vineyard & Winery Association through a two-year statewide marketing campaign plan to increase adult consumption of Connecticut's specialty crops of grapes and other fruits for winemaking. Deep Zone Tillage (DZT) to CT & New England vegetable farms is another project being funded and used by the University of Connecticut, Cooperative Extension System. This project would consist of soil health surveys, DZT research, and a sequence of outreach meetings and articles, all with the goal of hastening the adoption of DZT in Connecticut and New England. The Connecticut Beekeeper's Association and Massaro Community Farm will collaborate to establish an apiary at the Massaro Farm in Woodbridge, CT. The apiary will provide, among other things, educational programs to the community, research opportunities for the industry, and potentially increase the pollination and production of honey in Connecticut.

Others receiving grants include the Northeast Organic Farming Association of CT, the CT Christmas Tree Growers Association, and the University of CT, Department of Plant Science.

Grants are awarded to state departments of agriculture within the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. In order to receive the grant funds, a state must submit an application which is reviewed by AMS staff to determine the eligibility of the proposed projects and their costs. These projects can last as long as three years and at the end of the project all applicants must produce a final report demonstrating any impact and any measurable outcome that was achieved.

Specialty crops are defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, nursery crops, including floriculture. Block grants are authorized under Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621

note.) and amended under Section 10109 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, Public Law 110-246 (the Farm Bill). This program is currently implemented under 7 CFR Part 1291.

ASPARAGUS IN CONNECTICUT AND DISEASES TO WATCH OUT FOR

Dr. Wade H. Elmer

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven, CT

In Connecticut, May marks asparagus season. Asparagus (Greek for "shoot") is a coveted, highly nutritious vegetable that has medicinal properties. It is reported to act as a strong diuretic, benefits people with heart problems, and some claim it is an aphrodisiac. Alexander the Great has been credited with discovering asparagus during his exploits and introducing it to Greece. Romans rapidly adopted the crop. Asparagus was introduced to the US with early settlers. Although acreage in the US is now concentrated in California, Washington, and Michigan, Connecticut had a sizeable asparagus industry until the 1950's, when a sharp decline in acreage occurred. The loss was attributed to diseases, mostly Fusarium crown and root rot. However, increased demand and new cultivars revived interest in the crop in New England during the 1990's and today, we currently have between 45 and 50 acres of asparagus being grown. One grower in Oneco, CT (Falls Creek Farm) is our largest producer and has more than 25 acres.

Although demand is still high in the US, acreage has shown an alarming decline due to imports from Peru. The ability of exporting countries to cheaply produce the crop year-round has had a serious impact on US production. Although labor costs still remain the major obstacle for Connecticut's growers, fresh asparagus production can benefit local farms stands by allowing markets to open earlier in the spring. Today, growers interested in asparagus have many options for managing diseases that were not available in the 1950's. Below is an overview of the some of the factors associated with growing asparagus in Connecticut, the major yield limiting diseases, and their management.

Asparagus is usually established with 1-year-old plants, commonly referred to as crowns, which include buds and fleshy storage roots. All-male hybrids (Jersey hybrids) have repeatedly been shown by the author to be superior to open-pollinated cultivars (Mary Washington). Sandy, well-drained soils are best suited for asparagus production. Growers should check soil pH and ensure that pH is between 6.5 and 7.0. Crowns are buried approximately 10 inches deep in trenches in the spring. The first marketable spears are harvested after 2 years, cut to 7-8 inches in length

MORE ASPARAGUS ON PAGE 3

NORTHEAST EGG PRICES U.S.D.A.
June 21, 2010

Prices To Retailers, Sales To Volume Buyers,
USDA Grade A and Grade A, White Eggs In
Cartons, Warehouse, Cents Per Dozen

EXTRA LARGE	68-71
LARGE	62-66
MEDIUM	51-53

MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION

Middlefield, CT - June 21, 2010

Live animals brought the following average
prices per cwt.:

	Low	High
Bob Calves:		
61-75 lbs.	12.00	15.00
76-90 lbs.	16.00	18.00
91-105 lbs.	20.00	25.00
106 lbs. & up	30.00	35.00
Farm Calves	40.00	67.50
Veal Calves	50.00	85.00
Open Heifers	77.50	82.00
Beef Heifers	52.00	66.00
Feeder Steers	59.00	75.00
Beef Steers	55.00	65.00
Stock Bulls	65.00	97.50
Beef Bulls	64.00	77.50
Boars	5.00	13.00
Sows each	20.00	30.00
Feeder Pigs each	50.00	50.00
Sheep each	35.00	65.00
Lambs each	50.00	140.00
Goats each	55.00	175.00
Kid Goats each	20.00	50.00
Canners	Up to	54.50
Cutters	55.00	57.00
Utility Grade Cows	58.50	61.00
Rabbits each	8.00	14.00
Chickens each	4.00	25.00
Ducks each	10.00	28.00

Provided by Middlesex Livestock Auction. Auction will be held on Monday, July 5, as usual.

NEW HOLLAND LIVESTOCK AUCTION

MONDAY, June 21, 2010

Bulk/	High/	Low Dressing
SLAUGHTER COWS:		
Premium White	65-75% lean	
61.50-65.00	66.00-68.00	-----
Breakers	75-80% lean	
58.00-61.00	61.50-63.00	-----
Boners	80-85% lean	
55.50-58.00	-----	52.00-54.00
Lean	85-90% lean	
52.00-55.50	56.00-57.50	48.00-51.50
SLAUGHTER BULLS: Yield Grade 1		
1390-1695 lbs	67.00-70.00	
Bullocks: 820-1315 lbs	72.00-75.00	
high dress	79.00-82.00	
low dress	67.00-69.00	
SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Woolled & Shorn		
Choice and Prime 2-3		
50-60 lbs	148.00-160.00	
60-80 lbs	132.00-150.00	
90-110 lbs	136.00-148.00	
110-130 lbs	135.00-150.00	
Choice 2-3	40-60 lbs	130.00-142.00
	60-80 lbs	124.00-139.00
	90-110 lbs	130.00-142.00

FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES

NEW ENGLAND GROWN

APPLE CIDER, 9 - 1/2 gal	15.00	15.00
APPLES, McIntosh, us xfcy 80ct	21.00	21.00
BEANS, Green bu handpicked	25.00	25.00
BEETS, Red 12's CT	9.00	9.00
CABBAGE, Green box	8.00	10.00
CHERRIES, Bing 20lb box	48.00	48.00
CHERRIES, Yellow Rainer 20lb	55.00	55.00
CHIVES, 1-lb bag	5.00	5.00
COLLARD GREENS, Crate	11.00	11.00
CORN, 5 dz	20.00	22.00
LETTUCE, Green Leaf 24ct CT	10.00	12.00
LETTUCE, Red Leaf 24ct CT	10.00	12.00
LETTUCE, Romaine 24ct CT	10.00	12.00
MINT, 1/2 bu	10.00	10.00
NECTARINES, 20lb box 2-1/2 up	24.00	26.00
PEACHES, 25lb box 2-1/2 up	22.00	24.00
PEAS, English, bu CT	22.00	25.00
PEAS, Snow 10lb	35.00	35.00
PEAS, Sugar Snap 10lb CT	22.00	25.00
RASPBERRIES, 18 - 1/2pts	36.00	36.00
RHUBARB, 20lb	32.00	34.00
SQUASH, Green 1/2bu med CT	8.00	10.00
SQUASH, Yellow med CT	10.00	12.00
SWISS CHARD, 12's	10.00	14.00
TOMATOES, 15lb Flat med, ghouse	22.00	22.00
TOMATOES, Vine Ripes 25lb box med, ghouse	12.00	12.00

SHIPPED IN

APRICOTS, 80ct CA	22.00	24.00
BLUEBERRIES, 12/1-pint NJ	15.000	16.00
BOK CHOY, 50lb NJ	18.00	18.00
CUCUMBERS, 1-1/9 bu med NJ	16.00	18.00
DANDELION GREENS, 12's NJ	15.00	15.00
GRAPES, Flame SL 18lb CA	18.00	18.00
ONION, Vidalia jbo 40lb GA	29.00	30.00
PEACHES, 1/2 bu 2-1/2 min SC	13.00	14.00
PEPPER, Bell xlg ,1-1/9 bu Green GA	12.00	14.00
SPINACH, 4-lb NJ	9.00	10.00

Above quotations are based on Boston Terminal Prices

SLAUGHTER EWES: Good 2-3: Medium Flesh

120-160 lbs	62.00-71.00
160-200 lbs	56.00-68.00
200-300 lbs	46.00-54.00

Utility 1-2: Thin Fleshed

120-160 lbs	54.00-62.00
160-200 lbs	49.00-54.00

SLAUGHTER GOATS: All goats are Selection 1, sold by the head, estimated weights.

Kids:	40-60 lbs	90.00-106.00
	60-80 lbs	100.00-118.00
	80-100 lbs	108.00-126.00
Nannies/Does:	80-130 lbs	92.00-106.00
	130-180 lbs	98.00-110.00
Bucks/Billies:	100-150 lbs	158.00-172.00
	150-250 lbs	180.00-194.00

NEW HOLLAND, PA HOG AUCTION FOR MON JUNE 21, 2010

Hogs sold by actual weights, prices quoted by hundred weight.

49-54	220-270 lbs	62.00-64.50
45-49	220-270 lbs	57.50-60.00
Sows: US 1-3	300-500 lbs	45.00-50.00
	500-700 lbs	50.00-51.00
Boars:	300-700 lbs	32.00-33.00

METROPOLITAN AREA U.S.D.A.

NEW YORK PRICES WHITE EGGS TO RETAILERS

For 1 dozen,
Grade A eggs on:
June 21, 2010

EXTRA LARGE	71-75
LARGE	69-73
MEDIUM	58-62

Above quotations based on
CARTON sales to retailers.



PENNSYLVANIA WEEKLY HAY REPORT

Monday June 21, 2010

Hay and Straw Market for Eastern
Pennsylvania. All hay prices paid
by dealers at the farm and per ton.

	Premium
Alfalfa	140.00-145.00
Mixed Hay	140.00-150.00
	Good
Timothy	100.00-140.00
Straw	90.00-125.00

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE RETAIL REPORT

Retail Prices at Grocery Stores
in the Northeast

Week of June 18, 2010

Prices are in dollars per pound
unless otherwise stated.

VEGETABLES

Asparagus	2.99 - 2.99
Broccoli	2.00 - 2.00 per bunch
Cabbage	0.49 - 0.69
Carrots, Baby organic	1.69 - 2.49 1lb bag
Celery	1.50 - 1.69 each
Cucumbers	0.33 - 0.75 each
Lettuce, Romaine	0.98 - 1.69 each
Mushrooms, White	1.50 - 2.29 8oz pkg
Peppers, Bell green	0.98 - 1.69
Peppers, Bell red	1.99 - 3.49
Potatoes, Russet	0.79 - 2.50 5lb bag
Squash, Zucchini	0.98 - 1.69
Tomatoes on the vine	1.49 - 2.50

FRUITS

Apples, Red delicious	0.98 - 1.49
Avocados, Haas	0.88 - 1.50 each
Cantaloup	0.99 - 2.99 each
Grapes, Green/Red	0.99 - 2.99
Lemons	0.33 - 0.66 each
Mangoes	0.49 - 1.88 each
Nectarines	0.99 - 2.99
Oranges, Navel	0.34 - 1.25 each
Peaches	0.79 - 2.99
Strawberries	1.66 - 3.00 16oz pkg
Strawberries organic	2.99 - 3.99 16 oz pkg

ADVERTISEMENT

FOR SALE

1-R. CT. Christmas Tree Growers, CT. Sheep Breeders and CT. Beekeepers Associations Special Insurance Packages available through Blumenthal/Donahue Insurance Agency--Toll Free 1-800-554-8049, 1-877-267-8323, 1-888-526-8815, ddonahue01@comcast.net or www.hobbyfarmusa.com.. Farm Commercial Auto Coverage now available.

2-R. Farm Insurance for all types of farming at very competitive rates. 1-800-554-8049, 1-877-267-8323, ddonahue01@comcast.net or www.hobbyfarmusa.com., Blumenthal/Donahue Insurance Agency. Farm Commercial Auto Coverage now available.

4-R. Gallagher High Tensile and portable electric fencing for farms, deer control, gardens. Sonpal's Power Fence 860-491-2290.0

6-R. Packaging for egg sales. New egg cartons, flats, egg cases, 30 doz and 15 doz. Polinsky Farm 860-376-2227.

85-R. Tomato stakes, tree stakes, fence boards, custom cut lumber. Staehly Products Co., LLC 860-873-9774.

92-R. Rough sawn lumber, fence boards, trailer planks, tomato stakes, custom and portable sawing 203-788-2430.

97-R. 1999 Featherlite Model 8120 20' Gooseneck cattle trailer, electric brakes, excellent condition - \$9,000 OBO. 203-265-4588.

102. Parts for Grimm hay tedders for sale, also rough lumber. 860-684-3450.

105-R. Battery powered price computing scales CAS 60lb \$328. (CT state compliant). Battery powered cash registers, \$280. 800-403-5919.

108-R. Model A.J.D. styled, all restored, new rubber. Model H.J.D. all restored, new rubber, electric start, tags on tractors. 860-871-0171; 860-559-5031.

111-R. Goat kids. Toggenburg & Saanen. Disbudded w/registration application. Bill 860-625-6813. Old Mystic.

114-R. Two registered male llamas for Sale – Medium Fiber, Brown, Great pets, Easy to keep. Will keep out dogs and coyotes. Price for two, \$290. OBO Westview Farm Monroe, Ct. @ 203-880-6814.

115-R. Quality hay, 1st cutting new hay \$4.50 per bale. Telephone 860-642-6856.

116-R. Reg Alpine kid goats F/M castrated, dehorned, milk fed 40lbs, starting at \$40 each. 203-272-6389.

117-R. Tractor bucket loader attachments, INT 1850 @ \$500., JD146 @ \$2,000., Hereford heifer, 1 yr. old, \$600., goats Boer cross, \$75./ea. 860-537-1974.

119-R. Farmall SM, WF in real good condition, good paint and good tin. Would make a good one for a pulling tractor. Telephone 860-354-4659.

WANTED

35-R. All standing timber wanted. Highest prices paid. Free appraisals. Call New England Timber, LLC at 860-662-2412.

118-R. 3PH disc mower, 6 or 7 foot bar wanted. Working or nonworking. Call 860-274-8473.

MISCELLANEOUS

7-R. Farm/Land Specializing in land, farms, and all types of Real Estate. Established Broker with a lifetime of agricultural experience and 40 years of finance. Representing both Buyers and Sellers. Call Clint Charter of Wallace-Tustin Realty (860) 644-5667.

ASPARAGUS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

every 24-48 hr. Harvest periods can last up to 2 months in Connecticut, depending on the age and vigor of the field.

The major root problems in asparagus include Fusarium crown and root rot and Phytophthora rot. Fusarium crown and root rot was first noted in Massachusetts in 1908 and affects seedlings and mature plants. Symptoms include yellowing of the ferns and occasional wilt and crown rot. The Fusarium fungi associated with the disease are Fusarium oxysporum and F. proliferatum. These pathogens are seedborne, carried in on transplants and may exist at low levels in soil never planted to asparagus. The disease became economically limiting in the 1950's and caused many Connecticut growers to abandon asparagus as a crop.

Management of Fusarium crown and root rot has been difficult since the pathogens are ubiquitous. Any stress factor will increase the incidence

and severity of Fusarium crown and root rot. As a result, management programs that control insects and weeds will reduce damage from Fusarium crown and root rot.

Limited success has been made by broadcasting rock salt (NaCl) onto older, declining fields. The practice of salting asparagus beds was probably used from before 1860 to around the 1940's to control weeds and boost yields, but was discontinued after herbicides were developed in the 1940's. About this time, the number of reports of Fusarium crown and root rot in asparagus began to increase. Research has found that rates between 500-1000 lb/A (approximately 2 lb/100 ft²) will boost vigor, slow the rate of decline, and may allow growers to recoup some profits for a negligible cost. The author has also conducted and published numerous studies on the ecology of the Fusarium pathogens in Connecticut soils. Recently, we discovered that boosting earthworm densities in asparagus soil will favor plant health and suppress this disease. This research is ongoing at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

Phytophthora spear rot was first described in California in 1938, but has appeared in New England in the last decade. The fungus-like organism associated with the disease is Phytophthora asparagi. Symptoms include soft, water-soaked lesions on shoots at, slightly above, or below the soil level causing the spear to flatten and bend. The internal tissues of infected crowns may be a yellow-brown color. The damage caused by Phytophthora rot depends on rainfall and soil drainage. In wet years, new plantings may benefit from fungicide applications. Trials to identify resistance to Phytophthora rot have commenced in California, but are not yet available.

The most damaging foliar disease of asparagus is asparagus rust, caused by a fungus called Puccinia asparagi. It was originally described in France in 1805, appeared in New Jersey in 1896, and was quickly observed in Connecticut within a few years. Many rust diseases have multiple hosts, but asparagus rust is autoecious meaning it has only one host and does not require another host to complete its life cycle. Early spring infections of young spears occur with basidiospores that, in turn, produce lesions that give rise to orange spots that produce aeciospores. These give rise to the brownish-red lesions that release urediniospores, which then give rise to teliospores, which are the overwintering spores. Management of rust in the U.S. can be achieved using an integrated approach of resistant cultivars, sanitation, and fungicides. Breeders have since made great improvements in incorporating stable quantitatively inherited resistance into commercial lines. However, the current level of resistance is insufficient to completely control severe outbreaks.

Purple spot is caused by the fungus Stemphylium vesicarium, and was first reported in the U.S. in 1981. The disease has since been reported in all major asparagus-growing regions in the U.S., including Connecticut. It causes two types of symptoms: small (0.02-0.10 in), elliptical, slightly sunken, purplish spots that blemish the spears and lower marketability and damage to the fern that results in defoliation of the fern needles. Spear infections are favored by wet, cool weather and by wounding from wind-driven sand. During a harvest period in Connecticut, spears were free of purple spot until two days of wet and cold weather occurred, and then incidence increased to 100%. When weather conditions improved, new spears remained disease free. Current management of purple spot has focused on sanitation and fungicides. Removing the previous year's fern growth can reduce severity of purple spot on spears during harvest. The fungicide chlorothalonil has been effective when applied to the fern during cool wet periods.

Although asparagus is susceptible to viruses, the most important one (Asparagus virus II) causes stunting and leads to greater susceptibility to Fusarium and other seed-borne diseases. By purchasing virus-indexed cultivars, the damage from asparagus viruses is minimal.

The amount of asparagus consumed in The Connecticut has increased due to Peruvian imports, but public demand for fresh asparagus will undoubtedly increase as more and more growers provide it. The success of the all-male hybrids has been a tremendous asset to the rebirth of asparagus production in Connecticut, but attention on pests and diseases are still needed.

Mention of a trade name does not constitute an endorsement. Always read and follow the pesticide label directions.

**AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST'S
"AMERICA'S FAVORITE FARMERS MARKETS"
ONLINE CONTEST KICKS OFF JUNE 1**

American Farmland Trust (AFT) is pleased to announce its 2010 "America's Favorite Farmers Markets" online contest kicks off on June 1 at www.farmland.org/vote. The contest is a nation-wide challenge to see which farmers markets can rally the most support from its customers. The goal is to promote the connection between fresh local food and the local farms and farmland that supply it.

"Farmers markets are one of the best ways for consumers to support local farms and farmers," says Julia Freedgood, Managing Director for Farmland and Communities. "Markets are a great place to purchase seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables. And maintaining farmers markets and farms also benefits the public health and economic health of our communities," she adds. The 2007 U.S. Agricultural Census reports a 49% growth in sales from farms directly to consumers since 2002—representing \$1.2 billion that stayed in local communities. But at the same time, nearly one million acres of farmland are developed each year – most around cities where there is greatest demand for local food. "We need to make the connection: there's no local food without local farms and farmland," says Freedgood.

Many barriers stand in the way of scaling up local farm production to meet the burgeoning demand for local food. American Farmland Trust is working to support policies and programs to protect farmland, reduce barriers between farmers and consumers and encourage communities to plan for agriculture and regional food systems. "This contest is a way for consumers to show the pride they take in their local farmers' market and by extension the local farmers and communities that support them," says Freedgood.

Farmers market managers can register to join the free contest by visiting www.farmland.org/marketmanager.

Market shoppers will vote to support their favorite farmers market at www.farmland.org/vote starting

June 1 until midnight on August 31, 2010. People can vote for as many participating farmers markets as they choose, but can only vote for each market once.

At the end of the contest, one small, medium, large, and a new category, boutique, farmers market will win the title of "America's Favorite Farmers Market" for 2010. The reward for the winning market in each category will be a shipment of No Farms No Food® tote bags, along with other prizes including free printing services from iGreenprint and free graphic design services from Virginia based design firm,

SQN Communications. The categories are based on the number of vendors the local farmers market has.

Healthy Farms, Healthy Food, and Healthy Communities: It's what America needs! Find out more about American Farmland Trust's Growing Local initiative at www.farmland.org/local.

American Farmland Trust is a national organization working with communities and individuals to protect the land, plan for agriculture and keep the land healthy. AFT's national headquarters is located in Washington, DC. Phone: 202-331-7300. For more information, visit www.farmland.org.

**NO FARMS NO FOOD
BUMPER STICKERS AVAILABLE**

Are you looking for NO FARMS NO FOOD bumper stickers to give patrons at your farm stand or farmers market? These are available from American Farmland Trust, a national non-profit committed to protecting farmland and planning for agriculture.

\$20 for 100 stickers; \$35 for 250 stickers.

To order, go to www.farmland.org <<http://www.farmland.org>> and click on 'No Farms No Food'.

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Commissioner	F. Philip Prelli	(860) 713-2500
Marketing&Technology	Robert Pellegrino	(860) 713-2503
Regional Market	Robert Pellegrino	(860) 566-3699
State Veterinarian	Dr. Mary J. Lis	(860) 713-2505
Regulation&Inspection	Dr. Bruce Sherman	(860) 713-2504
Farmland Preservation	Joseph Dippel	(860) 713-2511
Aquaculture	David Carey	(203) 874-2855
FAX NUMBERS	(860) 713-2516	(860) 713--2514

E-Mail: jessey.ina-lee@ct.gov
Internet: <http://www.ct.gov/doag>

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