



Connecticut Department of Agriculture

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Marketing & Technology Bureau, (860) 713-2503

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Wednesday, November 17, 2010

NOTES from the DEPARTMENT . . .

CROP TREE MANAGEMENT IN FARM WOODLOTS

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Approximately 154,000 of Connecticut's 1,383,000 acres of privately owned forest are part of family farms scattered throughout the state. In addition to providing non-commodity services such as riparian protection, privacy, and wildlife habitat, these forests, if properly managed, can provide a periodic source of income to offset land ownership costs such as property taxes and insurance. However, in all too many instances, the most valuable trees are harvested for immediate cash without considering the impact on current forest health and potential future growth.

Crop tree management is a technique that can simultaneously retain non-commodity amenities, provide periodic income, and increase the forest's value over time. The rationale of crop tree management is that limited resources are best allocated to higher quality trees. Our research has shown that 90% of a forest's value is typically concentrated on only fifty trees per acre. Crop tree management increases the value of the future forest by concentrating growth on those high value trees. This optimizes the return on investment of time and resources. In addition to enhancing the potential economic value of a stand, crop tree management can increase the esthetic appeal of a forest and benefit wildlife by increasing mast production.

The concept behind crop tree management is similar to weeding in a garden. Weeding increases growth of flowers and vegetables by releasing moisture, nutrients, and light that had been utilized by weeds. Similarly, crop tree management increases growth of selected trees by releasing moisture, nutrients, and light that had been utilized by less desirable trees.

Crop tree management differs from conventional thinning in two important ways: 1) the emphasis is on selecting what trees will be left in the stand after harvest rather than on what trees will be cut and 2) selected crop trees are more thoroughly released by removing competitors on all sides, rather than traditional thinning that only removes competitors on one or two sides. Crop tree release is riskier than traditional management because effort is concentrated on relatively few stems. Therefore, care should be taken in selecting healthy, high quality trees. Selecting more than fifty crop trees per acre, especially in younger forests, can provide a hedge against the inevitable loss of some crop trees over time to insects, disease, or storms.

Implementation of crop tree management is straightforward. Selection criteria for crop trees are developed to accomplish landowner objectives for the stand (e.g., timber, wildlife). Crop trees are selected in the forest and all trees competing with crop trees are harvested for timber or firewood. For

example, Stony Hillside Farm has a 20-acre woodlot of 60-year-old mixed hardwoods. The owner has the management goal of growing high-quality timber, producing firewood to heat his house, and improving wildlife habitat. Selection criteria for crop trees would include high value timber species, such as oak and sugar maple; and some pines, shadbush, and hickory to improve wildlife habitat. Each year the trees competing with the crop trees could be cut on a couple of acres to provide firewood. Because trees continue to grow, the process can be repeated at 10 to 15-year intervals starting on the original couple of acres. Alternatively, the entire stand could be marked for a commercial harvest and the tops used for firewood.

Since 1989, scientists at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station have established five research studies with twenty-six plots across Connecticut to examine crop tree management in cooperation with CT Department of Environmental Protection, Northeast Utilities, and several water companies. These studies have shown that with crop tree management, diameter growth is increased by 50% or more for red oaks ranging from 7 to 115-years-old without a loss of stem quality. It is important to note that these results apply to oaks growing in the upper canopy before crop tree management, i.e., those oaks with tops and at least two sides exposed to full sunlight. Oaks growing in the understory or with only their tops exposed to full sunlight also had higher growth rates, but developed many epicormic branches that permanently lower stem quality.

By reducing competition for growing space and limited resources from neighboring trees, crop tree management can increase survival and diameter growth of oak and other valuable species. While forest owners may be reluctant to implement crop tree management because of the long time interval before another commercial harvest, we found that following crop tree management, the annual rate of board-foot volume growth ranged 3.5% to 5.2% for diameters of 16 and 11 inches, respectively. This is a rate of return that far exceeds current investment opportunities.

Bottom line – the rotation period for oak can be dramatically reduced by crop tree management. Oaks in unmanaged stands can take 105 years to reach an average diameter of 16 inches compared to only 68 years using crop tree management. For shorter management horizons, crop tree management can add nearly two inches of extra diameter growth over a twenty-year period. This is especially important in stands with small oak sawtimber (11 inches diameter). Over twenty years, the average oak can be expected to grow to only 14.5 inches in diameter in unmanaged stands compared with 16.3 inches using crop tree management. Because there is a large price difference between oaks with diameters less than or greater than 16 inches, often 50% or more, those added inches can increase the value of a stand by 50% or more.

TREES CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

NORTHEAST EGG PRICES U.S.D.A.
November 15, 2010

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

EXTRA LARGE	134-136
LARGE	132-136
MEDIUM	95-97

MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION

Middlefield, CT, November 15, 2010

Live animals brought the following average prices
per cwt.:

	Low	High
Bob Calves:		
45-60 lbs.	20.00	24.00
61-75 lbs.	25.00	28.00
76-90 lbs.	30.00	35.00
91-105 lbs.	40.00	42.00
106 lbs. & up	45.00	50.00
Farm Calves	52.50	55.00
Started Calves	25.00	32.00
Veal Calves	55.00	95.00
Open Heifers	55.00	73.00
Beef Heifers	50.00	58.50
Feeder Steers	50.00	75.00
Beef Steers	60.00	102.00
Stock Bulls	54.00	85.00
Beef Bulls	66.00	86.00
Feeder Pigs each	15.00	80.00
Sheep each	90.00	170.00
Lambs each	75.00	255.00
Goats each	60.00	190.00
Kid Goats each	50.00	220.00
Canners	Up to	49.50
Cutters	50.00	54.00
Utility Grade Cows	55.00	58.00
Rabbits each	3.00	25.00
Chickens each	4.00	46.00
Ducks each	5.00	25.00

Provided by Middlesex Livestock Auction.

NEW HOLLAND LIVESTOCK AUCTION

MONDAY, November 15, 2010

Bulk/High/Low Dressing

SLAUGHTER COWS:

Breakers	75-80% lean		
54.00-58.00	59.50-60.50	51.00-53.50	
Boners	80-85% lean		
53.00-56.00	50.00-53.00		
Lean	85-90% lean		
49.00-53.00	53.50-56.50	44.00-48.50	

SLAUGHTER BULLS: Yield Grade 1

1120-1785 lbs 68.00-70.00

Calves: All prices per cwt.

Holstein Bull Calves: Number 1

100-125 lbs	120.00-135.00
95 lbs	112.00-127.00
80-90 lbs	55.00-75.00

SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Non-Traditional Markets:

Woolled & Shorn Choice and Prime 2-3

40-60 lbs	187.00-206.00
60-80 lbs	178.00-199.00
80-90 lbs	174.00-197.00
90-110 lbs	170.00-188.00
110-130 lbs	152.00-168.00

Woolled & Shorn Choice 2-3

40-60 lbs	160.00-184.00
60-80 lbs	158.00-174.00
90-110 lbs	154.00-166.00

FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES

NEW ENGLAND GROWN

APPLE CIDER, 4- one gallon	13.00	13.00
APPLE CIDER, 9 half-gallons	15.00	15.00
APPLES, Cortland 100ct xfcy	21.00	22.00
APPLES, Delicious Golden,loose bu,no grade	17.00	17.00
APPLES, Delicious Red 12-3lb 2-1/2" xfcy	18.00	18.00
APPLES, Empire , 80ct xfcy	22.00	23.00
APPLES, Empire, bu no grade	17.00	18.00
APPLES, Macintosh 120ct US#1	12.00	13.00
APPLES, Macintosh 96ct ,fcy	21.00	21.00
APPLES, Macintosh 12-3lb 2-1/2" U.S.1	14.00	14.00
APPLES, Cortland 12/3lb US#1	13.00	13.00
APPLES, Pink Lady, 100ct xfcy	30.00	30.00
BEAN SPROUTS, 10lb film bags	4.50	5.00
BEETS, 25lb bag,loose	6.00	6.00
CAULIFLOWER, 12 ct	12.00	12.00
COLLARD GREENS, Crate	10.00	11.00
CRANBERRIES, 24/12oz	33.00	34.00
KALE, crates	10.00	11.00
PARSNIPS, 25lb bag	21.00	21.00
PARSNIPS, 18-1lb	21.00	21.00
PEAR, Bosc 4/5 bu US 1, 2-3/4"	25.00	25.00
POTATOES, 10lb bag	1.80	2.10
POTATOES, 50lb,sz a	10.00	11.00
POTATOES, White Chef 50lb	11.00	13.00
PUMPKINS, 1 1/9 bu pie type	7.00	10.00
PUMPKIN,1 1/9 bu,mini	7.00	8.00
SQUASH, Acorn 1-1/9 bu med	10.00	11.00
SQUASH, Blue Hubbard 50lb	12.00	14.00
SQUASH, Buttercup 1-1/9 bu	10.00	11.00
SQUASH, Butternut 1-1/9 bu	8.00	11.00
SQUASH, Butternut, bin ,per pound	.20	.20
TOMATOES, Cherry 5lb flat ,on vine	11.00	11.00
TOMATOES, Greenhouse 25lb loose	14.00	14.00
TOMATOES, Greenhouse 15lb flat	26.00	26.00
TURNIP, White Cape 1-1/9bu	23.00	23.00

SHIPPED IN

BRUSSELS SPROUTS, 25lbs CA	22.00	25.00
CARDOON, 38lb CA	28.00	28.00

Above quotations are based on Boston Terminal Prices

SLAUGHTER EWES: Good 2-3: Medium Flesh

120-160 lbs	80.00-98.00
160-200 lbs	74.00-96.00

Slaughter Ewes Utility 1-2:

Thin Fleshed	120-160 lbs 62.00-82.00;
	160-200 lbs 60.00-72.00

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

Kids:	40-60 lbs 78.00-112.00
	60-80 lbs 110.00-128.00
	80-100 lbs 120.00-142.00
	100-120 lbs 130.00-146.00
Nannies/Does:	80-130 lbs 100.00-116.00
	130-180 lbs 115.00-130.00
Bucks/Billies:	100-150 lbs 172.00-186.00
	150-250 lbs 192.00-207.00

NEW HOLLAND,PA HOG AUCTION

FOR Mon November 15, 2010 - Hogs sold by
actual weights, prices quoted by hundred weight.

49-54	220-270 lbs	53.00-56.00
	270-300 lbs	52.00-55.00
	300-400 lbs	51.00-54.00
45-49	200-300 lbs	50.00-53.00
Sows: US 1-3	300-500 lbs	40.00-42.00
	500-700 lbs	44.00-47.00

**METROPOLITAN AREA
U.S.D.A.**

NEW YORK PRICES

**WHITE EGGS
TO RETAILERS**

For 1 dozen,
Grade A eggs on:

November 15, 2010

EXTRA LARGE	141-145
LARGE	139-143
MEDIUM	102-106

Above quotations based on
CARTON sales to retailers.



**PENNSYLVANIA WEEKLY
HAY REPORT**

Monday November 15, 2010

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

	Premium
Alfalfa	140.00-170.00
Mixed Hay	140.00-150.00
Timothy	120.00-140.00
	Good
Alfalfa	110.00-140.00
Mixed Hay	100.00-140.00
Timothy	120.00-130.00
Straw	110.00-120.00
	Fair
Alfalfa	100.00-110.00
Mixed Hay	90.00-100.00
Timothy	100.00-110.00
Straw	65.00-100.00

ORGANIC FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

APPLES, Fuji 80 ct WA	40.00	40.00
APPLES, Red Delicious		
80ct xfcy WA	38.00	38.00
ASPARAGUS, 11 lbs lge Peru	53.00	53.00
BANANAS, 40lb CR	22.00	24.00
BASIL, 1lb bag COLUMBIA	10.00	10.00
KALE, 12's CA	26.00	26.00
LEMONS, 7/10bu 140ct GA	68.00	68.00
LETTUCE, Romaine 12,		
18oz pack GA	38.00	38.00
MESCALIN MIX, 3lb CA	7.00	8.00
MUSHROOMS, White 10lb lge	21.00	23.00
MUSHROOMS, Shittake		
3lb med/lge PA	22.00	23.00
ORANGES, Valencia 7/10bu CA	34.00	34.00
PEAR, D'Anjou 4/5 bu 90ct OR	42.00	42.00
PEAR, Bosc 4/5bu 90ct WA	48.00	48.00
PEPPER, Red Bell 11lbs Neth.		
Greenhouse	60.00	60.00
POTATOES, Red 50lb		
US#1 Sz A WA	69.00	69.00
SPINACH, Baby 4lb Flat CA	10.00	12.00
SWEET POTATOES,		
40lb med CA	54.00	54.00
TOMATOES, Greenhse 15lb CAN	53.00	53.00

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.

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

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

170. Christmas greens, balsam and mixed wreaths, roping, kissing balls, samples gladly shown. 203-457-1344.

174-R. Round 4x4 hay bales. Premium, silage alfalfa or grass. Tightly plastic wrapped. Starting \$40. 860-884-2889.

188. Rye straw, seedless strawberry grade - \$6.00 per bale, \$5.50 per bale for 100 or more. Call 860-289-5188.

195-R. Christmas trees - CT Grown Fraser fir, Balsam, Blue Spruce, White Spruce, Douglas Fir. Superior quality, various grades and prices. Dzen Brothers Farm (860) 648-1355.

199-R. Hay - excellent 1st cut, plastic wrapped round bales \$40. Call 860-886-0716.

200-R. Feeder calves - weaned 6 m/o 600lb, performance bred Herfords, Galloways, blacks. Join our annual mailing list. 860-886-0716.

203. Christmas Trees -- CT Grown--Fraser Fir, Balsam Fir, Canaan Fir, Blue Spruce--High Quality--Wholesale Prices. Hartikka Tree Farms (800)508-5099

205-R. Clay barncleaner equipment - 260 feet of barncleaner chain, like new. Complete motor and transmission unit. One corner wheel complete. Various small parts. 7 starline dividers, never used. 860-537-5842. Call 7 p.m.

206-R. 550 gallon skid fuel tanks, good condition \$300 each. Wheel weights for Farmall tractor. (203) 265-6012.

207-R. Hay for sale, 1,500 bales @ \$3.50 per bale. Call for more information at 203-206-1344.

208-R. Goats, boar cross, various sizes & prices. Call 860-537-1974.

209-R. Holiday greens in bulk, cemetery pieces (many styles), Christmas items, mixed wreaths, roping, kissing balls, indoor decor, centerpieces. All made in CT. Call for list 203-393-1383.

210-R. Forklift - Yale 2,000# capacity, propane, pneumatic tires, \$1,400. (7) Wellmaster greenhouse carts, pneumatic tires \$3,000 all. Dzen Brothers Farm 860-648-1355.

WANTED

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

511-R. Wanted: Farmers for the CT Farm-to-School - The Farm-to-School Program is a statewide effort designed to incorporate CT Grown fresh fruits and vegetables into local schools cafeteria meals and snacks. This project is intended to be twofold: to support local farms and to offer more nutritious school meals as a result of buying local, fresh, produce. If you are interested in selling to one, several, or to a whole school district of schools (through a wholesaler or direct), call Jane Slupecki at (860) 713-2588 or at Jane.Slupecki@ct.gov

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.

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TREES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In summary, because the majority of the value in a mature hardwood forest is concentrated on 50 or fewer stems per acre, crop tree management should be considered as this technique not only increases diameter growth, but also increases the probability that high quality stems of desired species, such as oak, will be present in the future stands. Crop tree management provides forest owners with a tool to alter stand composition and increase tree growth either to gain higher economic returns or to develop a stand of large trees for their aesthetic beauty.

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM - USDA WEBINAR OPPORTUNITY

The USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is conducting a FREE interactive webinar presentation about this grant program on Thursday, December 16, 2010 at 2 pm.

The presentation will be geared toward potential grant applicants. The USDA will explain what the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program is and will provide a general overview of how the application process works. (Applicants must apply to their local State departments of agriculture for grant funds.)

Registration is required. To register, complete the registration form on the CT Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program page and fax to (913) 438-0690 or email to okehmeier@rbcs.com. You can also find the registration form on the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program homepage, www.ams.usda.gov/scbpgp.

For more information about this webinar, please contact Christopher Purdy with the USDAAMS Fruit and Vegetable Program at (202) 720-3209 or christopher.purdy@ams.usda.gov. Questions regarding CT's Specialty Crop Block Grant program can be directed to Jaime Smith at 860-713-2559 or jaime.smith@ct.gov.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY URGES FARMERS & RANCHERS TO VOTE IN COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Jonathan Coppess announced that the 2010 FSA county committee elections began Nov. 5, with ballots mailed to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices is Dec. 6, 2010.

"All eligible farmers and ranchers can make a difference by voting in this year's county committee elections," said Coppess. "County committee members will provide input and make important decisions on the local administration of new disaster and conservation programs under the 2008 Farm Bill. I particularly encourage minority and women producers to get involved so that county committees fairly represent the producers of a county or multi-county jurisdiction."

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and the Department of Agriculture (USDA). Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support loans and payments; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities; emergency programs and payment eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm also may be eligible to vote. Agricultural producers in each county submitted candidate nominations during the nomination period, which ended on Aug. 2.

Eligible voters who do not receive ballots can obtain ballots from their local USDA Service Center. Dec. 6, 2010, is the last day to submit ballots. Newly elected committee members and their alternates will take office Jan. 1, 2011.

Close to 7,900 FSA county committee members serve in the 2,244 FSA offices nationwide. Each committee consists of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Approximately one-third of county committee seats are up for election each year. More information on county committees, such as the new 2010 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center.

FSA LOAN FUNDS FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS

The Connecticut Farm Service Agency (FSA) announces availability of funds for Socially Disadvantaged (SDA) individuals to purchase or operate a family-size farm in fiscal year 2011.

"A SDA farmer, rancher or agricultural producer is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender inequality without regard to their individual qualities. SDA members include women, African Americans, American Indians, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders and Alaskan Natives," said Ron Clark, Farm Loan Program Manager.

In Fiscal Year 2010, which ended September 30, 2010, Connecticut Farm Loan Programs made five SDA loans totaling \$194,280.

The SDA program provides direct and guaranteed assistance in the form of farm operating and farm ownership loans. Direct loans are made by FSA. Guaranteed loans are issued by lending institutions, with up to 90 % guaranteed by FSA.

Operating loans may be used to purchase livestock, equipment, feed, seed, and other business related expenses. Repayment terms run from one to seven years. Ownership loans provide capital to purchase or enlarge a farm, construct or improve buildings; promote soil and water conservation and pay closing costs. Direct ownership loan terms are up to 40 years.

Qualified candidates are provided information and assistance to develop sound management practices, analyze problems and utilize available resources essential for successful farming operations to cope with the changing agricultural environment.

SDA loan applicants do not receive automatic approval. Individuals must be U.S citizens with a satisfactory history of meeting credit obligations; have sufficient education, training or experience managing or operating a farm; possess legal capacity to incur debt; and be unable to obtain credit elsewhere.

Contact: Ron Clark, 860-887-3604x 105 or Ellen Losee; 860-626-8852.

CONSERVATION LOANS AVAILABLE TO FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Ellen Losee, Farm Loan Manager with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), reminds farmers and ranchers that the Agency will make and guarantee Conservation Loans (CL) to producers who want to promote conservation on their land as well as conserve the country's natural resources.

Many farmers who need and want to implement conservation measures on their land do not have the "up front" funds available to implement these practices.

"I encourage producers who want to conserve natural resources and need a source of financing to implement conservation measures to apply for credit through this program," said Losee. "It is a great opportunity for producers to remain good stewards of the land," she said.

Producers can apply for conservation loans to improve or implement conservation practices on their land, as long as the practice is approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

According to Losee, producers who do not currently have an existing conservation plan should visit NRCS to develop one prior to requesting Conservation Loan Program assistance.

Examples of conservation practices include the installation of conservation structures, establishment of forest cover, installation of water conservation measures, establishment or improvement of permanent pastures, implementation of manure management and the adaptation of other emerging or existing conservation practices, techniques or technologies.

Direct CLs are available at your local FSA office with loan limits up to \$300,000. Guaranteed CLs with limits up to \$1,119,000 are available from lenders who participate in FSA's guaranteed loan program.

For more information on the CL program, contact Ellen Losee Litchfield/ Fairfield County FSA office at (860)626-8250 Ext. 104 or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

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