

# Connecticut Weekly AGRICULTURAL REPORT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor  
Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner  
Steve Jensen, Editor



Connecticut Department of Agriculture  
December 16, 2014



Beginning farmer Melody Wright gets some guidance on how to start selling her botanical herbs at farmers' markets from Department of Agriculture Marketing Representative Rick Macsuga at the "Build Your Network, Grow Our Future" conference last week, attended by more than 80 newer farmers.

## AG COMMUNITY GATHERS TO HELP NEWER FARMERS GET STARTED, SCALE UP

By Steve Jensen, Office of Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky

**EAST WINDSOR** - Melody Wright has gotten a pretty good start selling medicinal and therapeutic herbs like the Lavender and St. John's Wort she grows at her Pleasant Valley Botanicals in Barkhamsted.

With an eye toward expanding her sales to farmers' markets next season, Wright went looking for advice last week at the second annual "Build Your Network, Grow Our Future" conference.

The event matched up more than 80 new or beginning farmers with a wide variety of established farmers and service agencies offering guidance on how to launch or scale up their operation.

Under a white Connecticut Grown vendors' tent set up over the Department of Agriculture's booth, Marketing Representative Richard Macsuga told Wright what she needed to do to start selling at markets that participate in the state's Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. To be able to accept purchase vouchers issued to seniors, lower-income residents and military veterans participating in the

popular program, she needs to register as a "certified grower" with the agriculture department. That requires her to submit a crop plan and have her growing area inspected by the department.

"If you're going to take that step forward we can help you," Macsuga said. "There are four or five farmers' markets in your area you might be interested in."

By the end of the conversation, Wright was committed to becoming a certified grower, and to buying a Connecticut Grown tent to set up at farmer's markets.

"I'm sort of in the incubator stage now, so I definitely want to do that," she said.

Macsuga also suggested she contact the Northwest Family Farm Cooperative, which promotes farmers' markets in that region of the state. That kind of dialogue was happening all over the Scout Hall Youth Center during the daylong conference, sponsored by the

*(Continued on Page 3)*

**PA LIVESTOCK SUMMARY**

Avg. Dressing

LOW HIGH

**SLAUGHTER COWS:**

breakers 75-80% lean	103.75	108.25
boners 80-85% lean	100.50	105.75
lean 85-90% lean	94.50	100.25

**CALVES graded bull**

No 1 95-120lbs	394.00	445.00
No 2 95-120lbs	374.00	425.00
No 3 80-120lbs	294.00	377.00

**SLAUGHTER HEIFERS**

HiCh/Prm3-4	163.00	166.25
Ch2-3	157.00	160.50
Sel1-2	152.50	155.50

**SLAUGHTER STEERS.**

HiCh/prm3-4	165.25	169.25
Ch2-3	162.00	165.50
Sel1-3	153.75	157.50

**SLAUGHTER HOLSTEINS**

HiCh/prm3-4	148.75	152.50
Ch2-3	140.25	144.50
Sel1-2	136.50	142.50

**VEALERS**

	60.50	139.25
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**SLAUGHTER LAMBS: ch/pr 2-3**

40-60lb	235.00	287.00
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60-80 lbs	208.00	237.00
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80-130lbs	180.00	227.00
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**SLAUGHTER EWES: good 2-3**

120-160lbs	95.00	205.00
160-200lbs	86.00	97.00

**BUCKS**

150-160.lbs	98.00	115.00
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180-200lbs	72.00	102.00
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**SLAUGHTER GOATS: Sel. 1, by head, est.**

40-60lb	150.00	187.00
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60-80lb	155.00	222.00
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80-110	200.00	275.00
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Nannies/Does: 100-130lbs	180.00	182.00
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130-170lbs	180.00	222.00
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Bucks/Billies: 120-130lbs	305.00	350.00
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150-200lbs	395.00	460.00
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**NEW HOLLAND, PA, HOG AUCTION**

Sold by actual weights; prices quoted by hundred wt.

48-52	200-400 lbs	62.00	70.00
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	300-350 lbs	N/A	
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52-56	200-350 lbs	71.00	76.00
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Sows, US1-3	300-500 lbs	pkg	66.00
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	500-700 lbs	65.50	68.00
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Boars	400-800 lbs	N/A	
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**WHOLESALE FRUITS & VEGETABLES****NEW ENGLAND GROWN**

	LOW	HIGH
SQUASH,BUTTERCUP,1 1/9	12.00	15.00
LETTUCE,BOSTON,GH,12/4OZ	15.00	17.00
CIDER,9,4/1 GAL	17.00	18.00
APPLE PINK LADY 88CT,XFCY	28.00	28.00
CRANBERRIES,24/12OZ	32.00	35.00
POTATOES,10LB	2.00	2.20
BEAN SPROUTS,10LB	4.50	6.00
POTATOES,RUSSET,100CT	14.00	14.00
POTATOES,YELLOW,CHEF,50LB	15.00	15.00
SQUASH,ACORN,1 1/9	10.00	15.00
POTATOES.RED,SZ A,50LB	11.00	11.00
SQUASH,BUTTERNUT,1 1/9	12.00	15.00
TURNIP,PURPLE ,1 1/9	10.00	10.00
PARSNIPS,25LB	17.00	20.00
POTATOES,CHEF,50LB	10.00	10.00
TOMATOES,11LB, VR	18.00	18.00
APPLE,HONEY CRISP,12/3	24.00	24.00
APPLE,MCINTOSH,100CT XFCY	24.00	26.00
APPLE,MCINTOSH,80 CT FCY	20.00	20.00
APPLE,MCINTOSH,120,US#1	17.00	18.00
APPLE,GALA,80CT,XFCY	24.00	28.00
APPLE,MCINTOSH,12/3	17.00	18.00
APPLE,FUJI,80CT,XFCY	26.00	30.00
APPLE,CORT,BU,FCY	18.00	18.00
APPLE,MACOUN,100CTX,FCY	26.00	28.00

**NORTHEAST/USDA RETAIL BEEF  
PRICES PER LB,CHOICE**

BONE-IN RIBEYE	5.99	8.99
T-BONE STEAK	7.99	8.99
BONE-IN STRIP STEAK	5.99	8.99
SIRLOIN STEAK	7.99	7.99
CHUCK ROAST	3.99	5.99
BEEF SHORT RIBS	5.99	5.99
CUBE STEAK	4.99	4.99
RUMP ROAST	4.59	5.19

**HAY****LANCASTER,PA/PRICE PER TON**

	PREMIUM	GOOD
ALFALFA	290.00-365.00	N/A
MIXED HAY	225.00-400.00	180.00-210.00
TIMOTHY	240.00-305.00	170.00-185.00
STRAW	125.00-225.00	N/A

**MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION**

Middlefield, CT, Dec. 15, 2014

LOW HIGH

**Bob Calves:**

45-60 lbs.	55.00	65.00
61-75 lbs.	120.00	150.00
76-90 lbs.	310.00	330.00
91-105 lbs.	375.00	380.00
106 lbs. & up	385.00	390.00
Farm Calves	395.00	400.00
Starter Calves	60.00	70.00
Veal Calves	95.00	225.00
Open Heifers	125.00	135.00
Beef Heifers	123.00	137.00
Feeder Steers	150.00	180.00
Beef Steers	125.00	146.00
Stock Bulls	135.00	144.00
Beef Bulls	137.00	142.00
Replacement Cows	n/a	n/a
Replacement Heifers	n/a	n/a
Boars	n/a	n/a
Sows	n/a	n/a
Butcher Hogs	n/a	n/a
Feeder Pigs	55.00	118.00
Sheep	220.00	250.00
Lambs	135.00	290.00
Goats each	100.00	250.00
Kid Goats	n/a	n/a
Canners	up to	155.00
Cutters	116.00	119.00
Utility Grade Cows	120.00	123.00
Rabbits each	5.00	20.00
Chickens each	3.00	15.00
Ducks each	4.00	18.00

**NORTHEAST EGG PRICES USDA**

Per doz. Grade A and Grade A white in cartons to retailers (volume buyers)

XTRA LARGE	2.02	2.06
LARGE	2.00	2.04
MEDIUM	1.47	1.51

**NEW ENGLAND SHELL EGGS**

Per doz. Grade A brown in carton delivered store door. (Range)

XTRA LARGE	2.25	2.41
LARGE	2.30	2.40
MEDIUM	1.42	1.57

**PA FEEDER PIG SUMMARY**

US# 1-2		
20-30lb	185.00	235.00
40-50lb	175.00	185.00
US# 2		
20-30lb	175.00	200.00
30-40lb	220.00	225.00
40-50lb	160.00	180.00

**FOR SALE**

1-R. Blumenthal & Donahue is now Connecticut's first independent NATIONWIDE Agri-Business Insurance Agency. Christmas tree growers, beekeepers, sheep breeders, organic farmers and all others, call us for all your insurance needs. 800-554-8049 or [www.bludon.com](http://www.bludon.com).

2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or [www.bludon.com](http://www.bludon.com).

3-R. Gallagher electric fencing for farms, horses, deer control, gardens, & beehives. Sonpal's Power Fence 860-491-2290.

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

5-R. Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Program, endorsed by the CT Farm Bureau, save up to 23% on your farm insurance and get better protection. References available from satisfied farmers. Call Marci today at 203-444-6553.

150-R. Ford Skidsteer, Wisconsin V4, bucket, extension for snow, Hay Spike attachment, excellent condition, inside stored. \$4,900. 860-877-3335.

151-R. CT non-GMO grain and corn. Hay and straw. Pleasant View Farms. Louis. 860-803-0675.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

10-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.

**LOW-COST AG COURSES AT NONNEWAUG HIGH SCHOOL IN WOODBURY**

- **Integrated Pest Management**

Jan. 7 - Feb. 11, 2015/Wed., 6:45-9:05 p.m.

Course Fee: \$125/ \$75 with Scholarship

Contact: 203-575-8038, [nv.edu/agriculture](http://nv.edu/agriculture)

- **Soils and Fertilization**

Jan. 7 - Feb. 11, 2015/Wed. 6:45-9:05 pm

Course Fee: \$125/\$75 with Scholarship

Contact: 203-575-8038/[nv.edu/agriculture](http://nv.edu/agriculture)

- **Tractors for Beginners**

Jan. 7-24, 2015/Wed. 7-9 p.m.; Sat., 1/24 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Contact: [woodburyffa.org](http://woodburyffa.org)

All courses held at Nonnewaug High School, 5 Minortown Rd., Woodbury. Space is limited. Presented by CT Department of Agriculture, CT Board of Regents for Higher Education, CT Department of Education's Agricultural Science and Technology Education Program, the Ellis Clark Regional Agriscience and Technology Center and Naugatuck Valley Community College.

**DEADLINE FRIDAY FOR USDA MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM**

Dairy producers have until Friday, December 19 to take advantage of a new risk-management program offered under the 2014 Farm Bill

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Margin Protection Program for Dairy Producers (MPP), allows farmers to sign up the portion of their milk production they want covered, and then decide a level of margin above feed cost they want to purchase. The lowest coverage option is free.

Previously, when milk prices dropped below a set level, Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) support kicked in.

Registration for the MPP began Sept. 2 and has been extended until Dec. 19 to give farmers the opportunity to establish production history for 2011, 2012, and 2013 needed for the program. FSA staff will be available to take the information.

An online resource available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool) allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. For local FSA Service Center contact information, visit <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

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UConn Cooperative Extension's Scaling Up Program for New and Beginning Farmers, and the USDA Risk Management Agency.

Participants included the state Department of Agriculture; the federal USDA Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service; the New CT Farmer Alliance; CT NOFA and the CT Farm Bureau Association.

"It's a very exciting time to be in agriculture and it's great to have all of these people in one room because this is where relationships are made," said Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky, who recalled expanding his farming activities to raising sheep on a 2-acre family plot in Ashford when he was in grade school. "You have to start somewhere, and if you work hard at it there is no doubt you can be successful."

The conference included breakout sessions, videos and panel discussions with established farmers, each of whom had a unique story of how they entered agriculture and the obstacles they must continually overcome to keep thriving.

Several farmers said they were greatly helped in expanding their operation by the state agriculture department's Farmland Restoration Program, through which grants of up to \$20,000 are available to bring fallow land back into use for growing under an approved plan.

The \$5 million program was initiated by Governor Dannel P. Malloy in 2011 and funding is still available. Program director Cameron Weimar said more than 1,300 acres have been brought into production through clearing of rocks, stumps and invasive plants, installing wildlife fencing and planting of cover crops.

Steve Munno, manager of the non-profit Massaro Community Farm in Woodbridge, said the farm recently finished restoring and fencing about eight acres being considered for use as a fruit orchard.

"We essentially doubled our workable land," he said. "Without this program we would be on a much slower trajectory of growth."

Munno said some farmers are reluctant to pursue either state or federal grants and loans because they view the application process as too time-consuming or intimidating.

"There is a lot to think through and I can understand why some people may not want to do it, but the rewards are really tangible," he said. "We're in the middle of the woods and I don't think we could farm without deer fencing."

Another tool for finding resources is a "New Farmer Bucket List" that is posted on the websites of all the conference sponsors and participants listed above.

The 4-page list includes guidance on topics such as finding and financing farmland, selling products, connecting with other farmers and navigating municipal, state and federal regulations and programs.

"Starting in your first season, be sure to record your production history, including acres farmed, pounds harvested and dollars generated," reads one suggestion on the list. "This will be very helpful in future years as you begin to explore federal and state programs for agriculture such as loans, grants and insurance."

The bucket list also includes links to the websites of service providers and other agricultural organizations.

Michael O'Neill, Director of the UConn Cooperative Extension, stressed the need for farmers to adapt to changes in growing techniques and shifts in the marketplace.

"One year something is a good idea and the next year it's not," he said. "So you really need to keep your networks fresh."

Bryan Hurlburt, Connecticut State Executive Director of the USDA Farm Service Agency, told conference attendees that the event shows the strength and depth of the agricultural community in Connecticut.

"There is a lot going on here - out in the fields and out on the farms," he said. "And the reality is there is also a lot going on to support that."



Above left: Among the established farmers offering advice at the “Build Your Network, Grow Our Future” conference were (L to R) Dina Brewster of The Hickories farm in Ridgefield; Kerry Taylor of Provider Farm in Salem; Steve Munno of Massaro Community Farm in Woodbridge and Paul Trubey of Beltane Farm in Lebanon. Above right: Conference attendees were offered a wide range of materials and guidance to help them launch or scale up their operations, including remarks from Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky, (below), who recalled getting his start on a 2-acre family plot in Ashford.



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