# Connecticut Weekly AGRICULTURAL REPORT

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



Connecticut Department of Agriculture June 14, 2017

## CONNECTICUT GROWN STRAWBERRIES IN SEASON NOW



### HEAT LAUNCHES STRAWBERRY SEASON INTO FULL SPEED

Cheshire Farm Revives Pick-Your-Own Business By Steve Jensen, Office of Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky

**CHESHIRE** - When Zentek Farms started offering pick-your-own strawberries in the late 1960s, customers had to literally watch their step if family matriarch Nellie was in the fields.

"She and my grandfather planted all the fields by hand and she didn't like the idea of people stepping on her strawberries," current farm owner Paul Zentek recalled Tuesday. "She'd go out in the rows and yell at people picking a hundred feet away. She was a tough one."

These days, the atmosphere in the pick-your-own rows is a lot more casual, as customers wander through the fields filling baskets and munching an occasional sample.

After weeks of persistent rainy and cool conditions that delayed ripening by about a week, the recent hot



spell has accelerated the picking season into full speed at farms across the state. Workers at Zentek have been picking about 500 quarts a day, said Ben Zentek, Paul's son.

"They're ripening so fast that we can pick in every row every day, as opposed to picking every other row like we normally do," Ben said as he walked through the fields. "We got started about a week late, but hopefully the season will extend a week later on the other side."

Ben said he was actually hoping for a little rain this week to help some of the berries "size up." Not too much rain though, he said, because a heavy storm can damage the fruit and produce mold in the rows.

Nellie and her husband Pawel had bought the farm in 1914 after emigrating from Poland.

(Continued on Page 3)

## LANCASTER, PA., LIVESTOCK

SUMMARY					
Avg. Dress	sing. Per cwt.				
SLAUGHTER		LOW	HIGH		
breakers 75-		68.00	73.50		
boners 80-8		68.00	74.00		
lean 88-90%		64.00	70.00		
SLAUGHTER	STEERS	01.00	10.00		
Hi Ch/Prime		135.00	139.50		
Choice 2-3		130.00	135.00		
Select 1-2		125.00	130.00		
SLAUGHTER					
Hi Ch/Prime	3-4	117.00	120.00		
Choice 2-3		98.00	107.00		
Sel 1-2 SLAUGHTER		92.00	98.00		
Hi Ch/Prime		130.00	134.00		
Choice 2-3	5-4	128.00			
Sel 1-2		119.00	123.00		
CALVES - Gra	ded bull	110.00	120.00		
No 1 120-13	0 lbs	160.00	160.00		
No 1 98-118		190.00	205.00		
SLAUGHTER			ı		
	ts: Choice 1-2				
40-50 lbs		255.00	255.00		
50-60 lbs 60-70 lbs		230.00 230.00			
70-80 lbs		230.00	245.00		
80-90 lbs		245.00	255.00		
SLAUGHTER	LAMBS: Wo	oled & Shorr	200.00 1		
Marke	ts: Choice 2-3				
90-110 lbs		221.00			
110-130 lb		225.00			
130-150 lb			227.00		
SLAUGHTER			405.00		
120-160 ll 160-200 ll		110.00 87.00			
SLAUGHTER		07.00	115.00		
20-40 lbs		120.00	155.00		
40-60 lbs		150.00	190.00		
60-80 lbs		195.00			
80-100 lbs	3	220.00	240.00		
SLAUGHTER		OES: Sel	1		
80-130 lbs		200.00			
130-180 lb		235.00			
SLAUGHTER					
80-100 lbs		240.00	260.00		
100-150 lb 150-250 lb		260.00 335.00	290.00 380.00		
130-230 10	15	555.00	300.00		
NEW HOLLA	AND, PA. H		TION		
A	vg dressing. P	er cwt.			
52-56	200-300 lbs		61.00		
19 50	300-350 lbs		56.00		
48-52	200-300 lbs 300-350 lbs		52.00 47.00		
Sows, US 1-3			47.00		
20110, 00 1-0	500-600 lbs		46.00		
Deere	400 700 lbr		E 00		

# NEW HOLLAND, PA. FEEDER PIGS June 7, 2017. Per cwt.

400-700 lbs

4.00

5.00

Boars

	June 7, 2017. P	er cwi.	
US 1-2	20-30 lbs	160.00	190.00
	30-40 lbs	120.00	140.00
	40-50 lbs	100.00	135.00
	50-60 lbs	140.00	200.00
	60-80 lbs	60.00	80.00
US 2	20-30 lbs	170.00	170.00
	30-40 lbs	140.00	150.00
	40-50 lbs	120.00	170.00
	50-60 lbs	60.00	95.00
	60-80 lbs	65.00	115.00

## WHOLESALE FRUITS & VEGETABLES **Boston Terminal and Wholesale Grower Prices NEW ENGLAND GROWN**

ALFALFA SPROUTS, 5 LB CTN ALFALFA SPROUTS, 12-4 OZ BEAN SPROUTS, 12-12 OZ BEAN SPROUTS, 10 LBS CHIVES, 1 LB FILM BAG CIDER, APPLE, 4-1 GALLON CIDER, APPLE, 9-1/2 GALLON FIDDLEHEADS, 10 LBS PARSNIPS, 20 LBS RADISHES, BNCHES, 24 RHUBARB,OPN FIELD, 20 LB TOMS, GHS, CHRRY, 8-10 OZ TOMS, GHS, VINERIPE, 11 LBS TOMS, GHS, VINERIPE, 15 LBS TOMS, GHS, VINERIPE, 25 LBS	LOW 14.00 16.00 12.00 8.00 21.00 22.50 45.00 24.00 16.00 35.00 10.00 20.00 11.00 17.00	HIGH 14.00 16.50 15.00 22.00 25.00 25.00 18.00 38.00 14.00 24.00 17.00 20.00
SHIPPED IN	10.00	20.00
ASPARAGUS, NJ, L, 28 BN BASIL, GA, 2 – 1-1/2 LB FILM BEAN, GREEN, GA, MACHPK, BU BEANS, FAVA, NJ, BU BEETS, RED, NJ, 12 BN BEETS, GLD, NJ, 25 LBS BLUEBERRIES, NJ, 12-1 PT BOK CHOY, SHANGHAI, NJ, 10 LB CABBAGE, GREEN, NJ, 50 LBS CABBAGE, GREEN, NJ, 50 LBS CABBAGE, GREEN, NJ, 50 LBS CABBAGE, GREEN, NJ, 50 LBS CABBAGE, GREEN, NJ, 12 L COLLARDS, GA, 12 BN CUKE, PICKL, NJ, 150-200 DANDELION GRNS, NJ, 12 BN EDIBLE FLOWRS, MIX, CA, 96 EGGPLANT, NJ, 1-1/9 ENDIVE, NJ, 13 BU, 24 ESCAROLE, NJ, 13 BU, 24 KALE, MIXED COLORS, NJ, 12 KALE GRNS, LACINITO, NJ, 12 BN KOHLRABI, NJ, 12 BN, 1-3/5 LETTUCE, BOSTON, NJ, 24 LETT, MESC LIN MIX, CA, 3LB LETT, MESC MIX, ORG, CA, 3LB LETTUCE, ROMAINE, NJ, 24 LETTUCE, ROMAINE, RJ, 25 LETTUCE, ROMAINE, RJ, 25 LETTUCE	11.00 18.00 18.00 28.00 13.00 40.00 12.00 20.00 15.00 15.00 18.00 16.00 16.00 16.00 16.00 12.00 16.00 12.00 14.00 15.00 14.00 12.00 14.00 15.00 12.00 14.00 15.00 12.00 14.00 15.00 12.00 10.000	46.00 20.00 32.00 52.00 18.00 24.00 27.00 26.00 18.00 14.00 20.00 35.00 13.00 42.00 18.00 19.00

#### MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION Middlefield, CT - June 12, 2017

Middleffeld, C I	- June 12, 2	2017
Bob Calves:	LOW	HIGH
45-60 lbs.	45.00	50.00
61-75 lbs.	55.00	65.00
76-90 lbs.	135.00	140.00
91-105 lbs.	145.00	150.00
106 lbs. & up	155.00	160.00
Farm Calves	165.00	170.00
Starter Calves	n/a	n/a
Veal Calves	100.00	120.00
Feeder Heifers	75.00	145.00
Beef Heifers	n/a	n/a
Feeder Steers	100.00	120.00
Beef Steers	88.00	120.00
Feeder Bulls	125.00	140.00
Beef Bulls	85.00	92.00
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 each	n/a	n/a
Sheep each	65.00	150.00
Lambs each	75.00	200.00
Goats each	80.00	270.00
o calo cacin		
Kid Goats each	45.00	125.00
Canners	up to	69.00
Cutters	70.00	72.00
Utility Grade Cows	73.50	75.00
Rabbits each	5.00	47.50
Chickens each	5.00	50.00
Ducks each	16.00	20.00
	rs (volume buy	
XTRA LARGE LARGE	.63 .57	.79 .71
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLANI</b>	.63 .57 .49 D SHELL EC	.79 .71 .62
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLANI</b> Per doz. Grade	.63 .57 .49 <b>O SHELL EC</b> A brown in	.79 .71 .62
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLANI</b> Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto	.63 .57 .49 <b>O SHELL EC</b> A brown in bre door. (Rang	.79 .71 .62 GGS
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLANI</b> Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE	.63 .57 .49 <b>D SHELL EC</b> A brown in bre door. (Rang 1.16	.79 .71 .62 GGS <sup>(e)</sup> 1.29
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLANI</b> Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE LARGE	.63 .57 .49 <b>D SHELL EC</b> A brown in bre door. (Rang 1.16 1.06	.79 .71 .62 GGS <sup>(e)</sup> 1.29 1.19
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM	.63 .57 .49 <b>D SHELL EC</b> A brown in bre door. (Rang 1.16 1.06 .78	.79 .71 .62 GGS (e) 1.29 1.19 .89
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLANI</b> Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE LARGE	.63 .57 .49 <b>D SHELL EC</b> A brown in bre door. (Rang 1.16 1.06	.79 .71 .62 GGS <sup>(e)</sup> 1.29 1.19
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLANE</b> Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM SMALL	.63 .57 .49 <b>D SHELL EC</b> • A brown in ore door. (Rang 1.16 1.06 .78 .48	.79 .71 .62 GGS 1.29 1.19 .89 .58
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM NEW ENGLAND Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM SMALL VIRGINIA FARM	.63 .57 .49 O SHELL EC A brown in ore door. (Rang 1.16 1.06 .78 .48 MERS' MAR	.79 .71 .62 GGS <sup>1.29</sup> 1.19 .89 .58 <b>RKET</b>
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLANE</b> Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM SMALL <b>VIRGINIA FARM</b> Vegetable prices from M	.63 .57 .49 O SHELL EC A brown in ore door. (Rang 1.16 1.06 .78 .48 MERS' MAR May 31, 2017. \$	.79 .71 .62 GGS (e) 1.29 1.19 .58 KET (5 per unit.
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLANE</b> Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM SMALL <b>VIRGINIA FARM</b> Vegetable prices from M Asparagus, per lb.	.63 .57 .49 <b>D SHELL EC</b> A brown in ore door. (Rang 1.16 1.06 .78 .48 <b>MERS' MAR</b> May 31, 2017. \$ 5.0	.79 .71 .62 GGS 1.29 1.19 .58 KET \$ per unit. 0 5.00
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM <b>NEW ENGLAND</b> Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM SMALL <b>VIRGINIA FARM</b> Vegetable prices from M Asparagus, per lb. Beets, bunch	.63 .57 .49 <b>D SHELL EC</b> A brown in ore door. (Rang 1.16 1.06 .78 .48 <b>MERS' MAR</b> May 31, 2017. \$ 5.0 3.0	.79 .71 .62 GGS (e) 1.29 1.19 .89 .58 <b>CKET</b> § per unit. 0 5.00 0 3.00
XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM Per doz. Grade carton delivered sto XTRA LARGE LARGE MEDIUM SMALL VIRGINIA FARM Vegetable prices from M Asparagus, per Ib. Beets, bunch Broccoli, bunch	.63 .57 .49 <b>D SHELL EC</b> A brown in bre door. (Rang 1.16 1.06 .78 .48 <b>MERS' MAR</b> May 31, 2017. § 5.0 3.0 3.0	.79 .71 .62 GGS (e) 1.29 1.19 .89 .58 <b>CKET</b> (5 per unit. 0 5.00 0 3.00 0 3.00
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#### (Continued from Page 1)

After establishing a customer base for their tomatoes, peppers and eggplant, the couple decided to try their hand with a few acres of strawberries.

"It was an early crop so that meant early money," Paul said.

As subsequent generations of Zenteks took over, the farm began to focus on growing and selling annual flowers and vegetable plants, and strawberries were abandoned for many years.

The family decided to start planting berries again in 2014, and the farm now supplies a number of farmstands in the area. The pick-your-own business is growing slowly, Ben said, as word gets out that they are again offering it.

Customers tend to return to the same farm every season, he said, so he expects it will take a few years to build a loyal following, especially when they are competing with larger farms that advertise heavily.

For the past two years, Zentek has supplied berries for Cheshire's annual strawberry festival, which has drawn them some new customers.

"People like to pick local, so I think that once word gets around that we're here we'll be a lot busier with the pick-your-own," Ben said.

#### 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

2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or 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.

27-R. Quality hay for sale; large bales from fertilized fields no kicker bales. 25 bale minimum \$5.75 per bale. Call 203-453-9865.

50-R. Retiring from farming. Greenhouse and vegetable equipment for sale. <u>www.wagonroadgreenhouse.com</u> for pictures and details.

54-R. Tolland. 21 acre mini farm includes a 2300 sq.ft. Contemporary with 2-1/2 baths, 2 car attached garage and post and beam barn with 3 garage bays. Geothermal and solar heating/cooling, 30x96 greenhouse and spring fed pond. Suitable for horses, vegetables, small livestock or Christmas trees. \$399,900. Call Clint Charter, Wallace & Tetreault Realty, 860-558-3908. The farm also grows about 60 acres of vegetables, including tomatoes that were finally able to be planted this week after fields dried out enough to be worked.

Strawberries are a perennial, but the Zenteks chop the fields and plant new ones at least every other year.

"After the first year, the berries just don't get as big," Paul explained.

So far, the farm has sold out their berry harvest every season, prompting them to plan an annual expansion.

"I'd like to add at least one new field every year," Ben said. "There's definitely a big market out there for strawberries."

Connecticut Grown strawberries are June's featured crop in Dept. of Agriculture promotions on broadcast and internet radio, as well as social media. The "Just say yes to #CTGrown strawberries!" campaign – funded by a USDA Specialty Crop Grant, includes the message: "Shortcake, jam, or FRESH from the field...how do YOU eat your Strawberries? Strawberry picking is FUN for the whole family! Head to a Connecticut strawberry patch today to create lasting memories and delicious dishes. Plan your visit at <u>www.ctgrown.gov/strawberry</u>"

64-R. Tew Produce wash line, 5' table, 24" line – wash, grade and pack. Make a reasonable offer.203-521-3141 or 860-619-8030 leave message or mortensen23@aol.com

65-R. JD #5 mower w/attach, 2 way plow. Farmall Cub 2 way plows, snow plow, saw table. International 3 bottom plow quick hitch. 203-521-31-41 or 860-619-8030 leave message or mortensen23@aol.com

67-R. 7'x12' heavy duty twin piston dump trailer. \$4,500.00. 6x10 dump trailer. \$3,800.00. Large log splitter with 11 H.P Honda engine. \$1,800.00. 6-wheel amphibious ATV project. Seats 4. \$3,500.00. Solid maple butcher block 18x24. \$350.00. Large Bolens GT 1800 lawn and garden tractor, 48" deck. 18 H.P. Hydro. \$2,750.00. 8' Harley rake. 3 P.H. power angle. Excellent condition. \$7,500.00. Old 12" meat slicer. \$250.00. NH L-554 skid-steer loader. Needs gas engine. \$2,500.00. Foley Belsaw chainsaw, tool, and blade sharpening machine. \$600.00. 860-663-1769 until 9 p.m.

#### WANTED

30-R. Standing timber wanted. Hardwood/softwood, especially sugar maple/white oak. Top prices paid. Licensed and insured. 10 acre minimum. 860-798-4039.

68-R. H.D. Commercial meat grinder. 860-663-1769 until 9 p.m.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

6-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-Tetreault Realty (860) 644-5667.

69-R. 10-12 acres of hay available to be cut and baled in Cheshire. Call Jim Fazzone 203-250-6677.



Above: Ben Zentek shows some of the ripe strawberries in the farm's pick-your-own fields Above right: A1924 photo taken at the farm showing Paul Zentek's grandparents, Pawel and Nellie, and other family members.

**Right:** The Farm, in Woodbury, is offering an unusual addition to its spring annual hanging basket line this year: the Hula Berry, a white strawberry that tastes like a pineapple. The berry needs three white berry plants to one red berry plant planted in close proximity for pollination.

"They are growing really well and customers are very interested in this berry," said Michael Berecz, whose family owns The Farm. "We plan on selling some as is in the baskets, and keeping some for field production."

**Page 1 left:** A graphic that is part of the Dept. of Agriculture's social media promotion of Connecticut Grown strawberries.

Page 1 right: Ross Merriam, 2, of Cheshire, pops a berry in his mouth while picking at Zentek Farms Tuesday with his mother, Lauren.







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