

Agricultural Report

Connecticut Department of Agriculture
 Dannel P. Malloy, Governor
 Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner



Wednesday, June 13, 2018

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRODUCE SAFETY RULE – FIRST STEPS

Katie Yuhas, Bureau of Regulatory Services

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg) and the University of Connecticut (UConn) Extension will be working together to conduct On Farm Readiness Review (OFRR)s for Connecticut farms.

An OFRR is a voluntary, non-regulatory review of a farm's produce growing and handling activities. It is intended to help prepare farmers for implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule (PSR). Reviewers are meant to act as a resource, providing tools and insight to each farm to assist farmers in complying with the rule requirements.

The review is confidential, so what happens on the farm stays on the farm. If notes are taken, they will be given to the farmer. The reviewers will take no paperwork with them.

The OFRR is free and voluntary for Connecticut farms. It will help farmers implement or enhance on-farm produce safety practices, and provide an opportunity for a one-on-one personalized discussion about farm operations.

The intent of the OFRR is to help farmers align what they are doing with what is required in the PSR.

The OFRR was developed by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and state University Extension programs, in cooperation with FDA, to help farmers un-

derstand the details and implications of the FSMA PSR.

The OFRR will help farmers who do need to comply with the PSR determine if they need to make changes on their farm in order to meet the requirements.

During an OFRR, a DoAg regulator and a UConn educator will answer any questions that the farmer may have about the PSR and provide suggestions. The farmer will be left with information on the PSR regulations, a list of technical assistance contacts, a list of required records, and a DVD to help with staff training.

A farmer interested in scheduling an OFRR must first go through the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training course. In Connecticut, 153 people representing 115 farms are currently trained and eligible for an OFRR review.

Additional opportunities to take the Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training course will be offered in the fall of 2018 through UConn Extension.

To be placed on an email list for course notification contact Diane Hirsch at 203-407-3163 or diane.hirsch@uconn.edu.

Farms that need to comply with the PSR will be given first priority for scheduling of OFRRs. OFRRs will be available over the next three years.

To schedule an OFRR contact Katie Yuhas at 860-713-2537 or Katie.Yuhas@ct.gov.

FDA FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT



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Reviews will typically be on Tuesdays and Wednesdays throughout the summer and fall. Other days of the week are available upon request.



DoAg regulator Katie Yuhas presents information at a meeting on how the federal Food Safety Modernization Act affects Connecticut growers.

In order to determine which farms fall within the FSMA PSR UConn Extension has distributed a Connecticut Produce Industry Assessment Questionnaire to Connecticut farmers.

Information from the survey will be used by DoAG to identify farms that might not be covered, might be exempted, or might need to follow the full rule.

The survey will ensure the proper information and trainings are available to best prepare Connecticut farmers for the inspections to come.

Every farmer that fills out the survey will be entered into a drawing to win one of two Connecticut Grown tents.

Many farmers have already completed the survey, which was distributed by email to an extensive list of farmers.

Any farmer who has not received the survey by June 15, 2018 can contact Diane Hirsch at diane.hirsch@uconn.edu or 203-407-3163 to request a survey.

FSMA FOR WHOLESALE PRODUCE BUYERS MEETING

The UConn Extension is hosting a free educational meeting at the UConn Storrs campus on July 17, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. for wholesale buyers of fresh produce from Connecticut farms.

This meeting, which is intended for, but not limited to, wholesalers, restaurants, and schools, will be regional in scope, and include buyers from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.

Connecticut farmers often sell their product to buyers in neighboring states, and farmers from Massachusetts and Rhode Island are likely to sell to Connecticut buyers as well.

The purpose of this meeting is to educate wholesale produce buyers on what the new PSR means to them and

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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.

29-R. Round hay bales. Large. Unwrapped. 1st cutting. Fertilized grass hay. \$40.00 a bale and up. 203-264-2217.

47-R. Garlic, organically, locally grown for fall planting. Available in August. 860-391-3466.

48-R. Cub Cadet Gas, 100 gallon polyethylene Tank Sprayer, 5 HP Kawasaki engine, 2-wheel trailer. Spray gun 18", electric reel/hose, \$4,100.00. VM 203-592-0554.

49-R. Dahlia tubers – exhibiting/cut varieties. \$6 each. For more information about purchasing and varieties email info@strongfarm.org.

50-R. 800 gallon stainless steel jacketed tank with gear-head agitator. Last used to hold dairy products. In excellent condition. 860-276-7815.

51-R. For sale: Parts for Grimm Hay Tedders. Also, rough lumber. 860-684-3458.

52-R. 20,000 tomato stakes for sale, good condition, \$.25 each. Negotiable for large quantities. Baggot Farms in East Windsor. 860-573-6442.

WANTED

7-R. Livestock wanted: Dairy cattle, heifers of any age, beef cows, bulls, steers, feeder cattle, veal, groups of sheep and goats. RyanM01@comcast.net or 860-655-0958. If no answer, leave message. All calls returned.

42-R. Interested in purchasing a farm or land in Middlesex or New London County. Call 516-801-0888.

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.

AG JOB CONNECTION

45-R. Strong Family Farm, Vernon's 501 (c)3 community farm is looking for a PT Executive Director and PT Store Manager. For more information go to www.strongfamilyfarm.org.

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also to the region's farmers. Attendees will learn about the FSMA PSR, Preventive Controls for Human Food, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) audits, and other programs.

Speakers at the meeting will include DoAg Bureau of Regulatory Services Director Dr. Bruce A. Sherman, DoAg inspection staff working to implement the PSR, UConn and University of Rhode Island Extension educators, and a panel of local buyers.

To register for the event call 203-407-3163 or email Diane Hirsch at diane.hirsch@uconn.edu.

LAST CHANCE TO COMPLETE THE 2017 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is wrapping up data collection for the 2017 Census of Agriculture. To stay on track for data release in February 2019, the deadline for submitting the paper questionnaire is June 15, 2018. Farmers and ranchers who have not responded by June 15, 2018 still have until the end of July to complete the Census online through the secure website found on the cover of their Census form. Phone follow-up and personal interviews will also continue through July.

"The Census of Agriculture provides the only source of comprehensive agricultural data for every state and county in the nation," said USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue. "These data

are used to make important local, state, and national decisions that will have a very real impact on farmers, ranchers, ag operations, and rural communities. I encourage producers to respond online or to send in their paper form today."

The questionnaire needs to be completed by everyone who received a form - including landowners who lease land to producers, those involved in conservation programs, even those who may have received the Census and do not farm. Every response matters.

"Our mission at NASS is to provide data in service to U.S. agriculture," said NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer. "We extended the original Census deadline because many producers weren't counted - and if they aren't represented in these critical data, they risk being underserved in farm programs, disaster assistance, agricultural research, education, local policies, and business; it is imperative that we hear from everyone."

Federal law, Title 7 USC 2204(g) Public Law 105-113, requires NASS to keep all information confidential, to use the data only for statistical purposes, and to only publish in aggregate form to prevent disclosing the identity of any individual producer or farm operation.

For more information about the 2017 Census of Agriculture or to respond online, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov. Improved in 2017, the online form is faster and more convenient than ever. For questions about or assistance with filling out the Census, call toll-free (888) 424-7828.

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CTGrown.gov

Advertising Rates: Fifteen or fewer words: \$3.75 per insertion. More than 15 words: 25 cents per word per insertion. Ads must be related to agriculture in Connecticut and are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Payment must be received by noon on Friday before publication the following Wednesday. Make check or money order payable to the Connecticut Dept. of Agriculture, and mail copy and remittance to the department at 450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 701, Hartford, CT 06103. For more information contact Jane.Murdock@ct.gov or call 860-713-2588.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, 450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 701, Hartford, CT 06103.

Print subscriptions expire Dec. 31, 2019.

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