CROP TALK

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EXTENSION & PLANT SCIENCE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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UConn Extension Vegetable and Small Fruit Growers Conference

January 8, 2026
Storrs, CT

Participant Registration

Trade Show Registration

Conference Agenda

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CT IPM

A Thank You Note

By: Jiff Martin, Senior Extension Educator, Food Systems
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Dear Farmers,

Thank you!

This October — as we celebrated *National Farm to School Month* and *CT Grown for CT Kids (CTGCTK) Week* — **you showed up, stepped up, and delivered**.

Across the state, more than **75 learning events** brought local food to life for Connecticut students, and farmers were at the heart of it all. We saw farm tours, taste tests, mini farmers markets, corn shucking races, recipe demos, and ribbon cuttings for new school gardens. Kids were learning, tasting, and connecting to where their food comes from — and none of it would be possible without you.

Thank you for answering those last-minute calls from hardworking school food directors. Thank you for delivering apples, corn, kale, carrots, radishes, butternut squash, mushrooms, lettuce, and kohlrabi — ensuring students could savor the flavors of locally grown food in their cafeterias. Thank you for showing up in person in school classrooms and cafeterias to meet the students and talk with them about farming and where their food comes from.

Students at Goodwin Elementary School in Old Saybrook celebrating the kick off of CT Grown for CT Kids Week.

At the risk of missing many, we want to highlight a few who went the extra mile to elevate farm to school with key stakeholders:

- **Rob Schacht (Hunts Brook Farm)** – for joining Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Agriculture Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt, and Commissioner of Education Charlene Russell-Tucker at the CTGCTK Week kickoff event at Goodwin Elementary School in Old Saybrook.

Will O'Meara and Jill Verzino of Hungry Reaper Farm host school food directors at their farm for an educational tour about buying from farmers.

Rob Schact of Hunts Brook Farm talking to Lieutenant Governor Susan Bieczwicz, Agriculture Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt, and Education Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker at a press event in Old Saybrook.

- **Melissa Greenbacker (Greenbacker Farm)** – for bringing her beautiful cow, Fettucini, to meet students at the CTGCTK kickoff.
- **Rebecca Jack (Handel Family Farm)** – for participating in a press event, garlic planting, and contributing to a squash tasting at Sunset Ridge Middle School in East Hartford.
- **Mia Colasuonno (Lathrop Farmstead)** – for sharing her insights on a farmer panel at the School Nutrition Association of CT Annual Meeting.
- **Will O'Meara and Jill Verzino (Hungry Reaper Farm), Willie Dellacamera (Ceccarelli Farm at Harrison Hill), Pete Higgins and John Harenda, (Stone Acres Farm), Susan Mitchell (Cloverleigh Farm), and Randy & Victoria Rogowski (Laurel Glen Farm)** – for hosting School-to-Farm Field Trips that helped school food directors see firsthand the dedication behind local food.

You are the steady hands and rich soil nurturing the growth of farm to school in Connecticut.

Your time and partnership are helping students discover the joy and value of local food.

With gratitude,
UConn Extension - Farm to School Team

If you have read this far and are wondering, how to get involved... here are some options:

1. If you are new to selling to schools, and not sure where to begin, apply for the **Farm to Cafeteria Sales Training Program**. Contact Shannon.Raider@uconn.edu
2. Get onto the **Farm Directory**. Contact Shannon.Raider@uconn.edu
3. Connect with one of our five **Regional Farm to School Coordinators** to learn more about selling to schools. Go to: putlocalonyourtray.uconn.edu/regionalcoordinators/

CROP INSURANCE AND NAP: CASE STUDIES, 2025

By: Mary Concklin, Extension Educator Emerita, UConn
Joseph Bonelli, Extension Educator Emeritus, UConn

USDA-RMA Crop Insurance and **USDA-FSA NAP** (non-insured crop disaster assistance program) are programs available to help growers off-set crop losses. Congress authorized the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation in 1938, and in 1980 Congress passed the Federal Crop Insurance Act. NAP coverage was instituted as a provision of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 and is administered by USDA-FSA.

One issue that has come up over the years is whether crop insurance and NAP are cost effective. Crop losses that trigger a payout do not happen every single year for any one grower but may happen periodically. For this study, we examined the cost of both crop insurance and NAP for recent years at different coverage levels.

USDA-Risk Management Agency (RMA): Multi-Peril Crop Insurance

The first crops examined are apples, peaches, and sweet corn with crop losses in 2 of the 5 years. For fresh market tomatoes, 2021 was the first year there was a crop insurance policy. Please note, the data shown is actual from Connecticut but not a specific farm operation. These figures may vary depending on the county your operation is in, and your annual yields. In addition, some crops may receive different federal subsidy rates. All growers should contact a crop insurance agent or access the RMA website to get a personalized quote using their personal location and production history.

Table 1: Fresh Market Apple; 10 acres. No crop loss in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Year	Coverage Level	Insured Premium	Loss Payments
2023	75%	$4,651.00	$32,595.00
2022	75%	$4,891.00	$0.00
2021	75%	$4,974.00	$0.00
2020	75%	$6,180.00	$47,071.00
2019	70%	$5,394.00	$0.00
	Total	**$26,090.00**	**$79,666.00**

Table 2: Fresh Peach; 5 acres. No crop loss in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Year	Coverage Level	Insured Premium	Loss Payments
2023	80%	$5,903.00	$30,876.00
2022	80%	$5,170.00	$0.00
2021	75%	$4,053.00	$0.00
2020	75%	$2,350.00	$28,503.00
2019	75%	$1,587.00	$0.00
	Total	**$19,063.00**	**$59,379.00**

Table 3: Fresh Market Sweet Corn; 5 acres. No crop loss in 2022 and 2023.

Year	Coverage Level	Insured Premium	Loss Payments
2024	65%	$734.00	$5,728.00
2023	65%	$584.00	$0.00
2022	65%	$502.00	$0.00
2021	55%	$247.00	$3,127.00
2020	50%	$198.00	$2,696.00
	Total	**$2,265.00**	**$11,551.00**

Table 4: Fresh Market Tomatoes; 5 acres. No crop loss in 2021 and 2023.

Year	Coverage Level	Insured Premium	Loss Payments
2024	60%	$1,993.00	$51,851.00
2023	60%	$1,914.00	$0.00
2022	60%	$2,063.00	$29,622.00
2021	60%	$2,492.00	$0.00
	Total	**$8,462.00**	**$81,473.00**

In all four crop insurance examples (Tables 1-4), the premiums paid for the multi-year period were recouped in full plus additional funds.

Tables 5-8 are examples of purchasing crop insurance for apples, peaches, sweet corn and fresh market tomatoes at different coverage levels for a single year – 2025, showing the total premium BEFORE the subsidy, the total grower premium, the subsidy, the percent the subsidy is of the total premium, and the total coverage.

It is important to note that as the coverage level increases, the Federal premium subsidy decreases (see Subsidy % column). On the surface it may look like the grower is not getting a commensurate increase in value with higher levels. However, every grower operation is different. For example, an operation with a high number of employees may need the insurance to kick in more quickly at loss time. That grower has immediate costs which cannot be put off. Another grower may be a family operation (for example, husband and wife). That operation may be able to withstand greater losses before needing an insurance payment. Each grower has to determine where that loss point is when they will need the insurance to kick in. The higher levels will come into use more often when the grower needs the help. It is important to understand this aspect of how crop insurance will work at higher levels.

Liability amount is calculated by taking approved yield X price election X acres.

Table 5: Apples; 10 acres. Price election: $24.00. Approved yield: 500 bu/acre. Non-irrigated crop. Fresh option. Liability amount=$120,000.

Coverage Level	Total Premium Before Subsidy	Total Grower Premium	Subsidy	Subsidy %	Total Coverage
50	$9,910.00	$3,270.00	$6,640.00	67%	$60,000.00
55	$12,532.00	$4,512.00	$8,020.00	64%	$66,000.00
60	$15,525.00	$5,589.00	$9,936.00	64%	$72,000.00
65	$18,911.00	$7,754.00	$11,157.00	59%	$78,000.00
70	$23,113.00	$9,476.00	$13,637.00	59%	$84,000.00
75	$27,820.00	$12,519.00	$15,301.00	55%	$90,000.00

Table 6: Peaches; 5 acres. Price election: $82.30/50 lb. bushel. Approved yield: 200 - 50 lb bu/acre. Non-irrigated crop. Fresh option. Liability amount=$82,300.

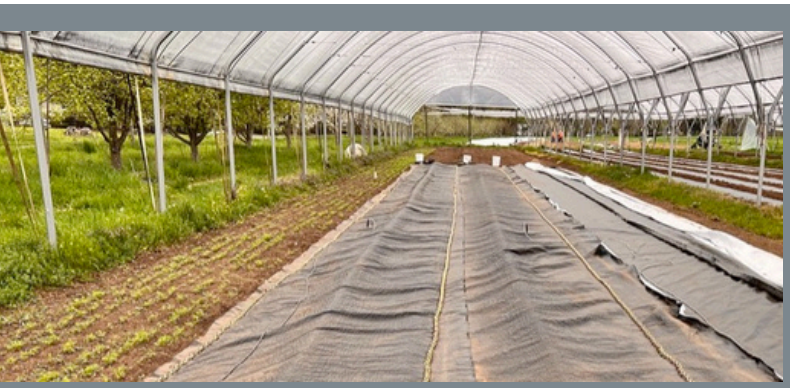
Coverage Level	Total Premium Before Subsidy	Total Grower Premium	Subsidy	Subsidy %	Total Coverage
50	$3,535.00	$1,167.00	$2,368.00	67%	$41,150.00
55	$4,189.00	$1,508.00	$2,681.00	64%	$45,265.00
60	$4,918.00	$1,770.00	$3,148.00	64%	$49,380.00
65	$5,729.00	$2,349.00	$3,380.00	59%	$53,495.00
70	$7,157.00	$2,934.00	$4,223.00	59%	$57,610.00
75	$8,476.00	$3,814.00	$4,662.00	55%	$61,725.00
80	$9,986.00	$5,193.00	$4,793.00	48%	$65,840.00
85	$11,672.00	$7,237.00	$4,435.00	38%	$69,955.00

Table 7: Fresh Market Sweet Corn; 5 acres. Dollar plan. Price election: $3,146/acre. Non-irrigated crop. Liability amount=$15,730.

Coverage Level	Total Premium Before Subsidy	Total Grower Premium	Subsidy	Subsidy %	Total Coverage
50	$904.00	$298.00	$606.00	67%	$7,865.00
55	$1,090.00	$392.00	$698.00	64%	$8,650.00
60	$1,323.00	$476.00	$847.00	64%	$9,440.00
65	$1,610.00	$660.00	$950.00	59%	$10,225.00
70	$1,994.00	$818.00	$1,176.00	59%	$11,010.00
75	$2,471.00	$1,112.00	$1,359.00	55%	$11,795.00

Table 8: Fresh Market Tomatoes; 5 acres. Price election: $32.00/25 lb. carton. Approved yield: 560 – 25 lb. cartons/acre. Non-irrigated crop. Liability amount=$89,600.

Coverage Level	Total Premium Before Subsidy	Total Grower Premium	Subsidy	Subsidy %	Total Coverage
50	$3,476.00	$1,147.00	$2,329.00	67%	$44,800.00
55	$4,360.00	$1,570.00	$2,790.00	64%	$49,280.00
60	$5,368.00	$1,931.00	$3,437.00	64%	$53,760.00
65	$6,506.00	$2,667.00	$3,839.00	59%	$58,240.00
70	$8,217.00	$3,369.00	$4,848.00	59%	$62,720.00
75	$10,236.00	$4,606.00	$5,630.00	55%	$67,200.00
80	$12,602.00	$6,553.00	$6,049.00	48%	$71,680.00
85	$15,339.00	$9,510.00	$5,829.00	38%	$76,160.00



Farm risk management involves understanding and mitigating factors that can impact agricultural operations, such as climate change, pest management, and financial uncertainties. Learn about UConn Extension's free **Farm Risk Management Online Certificate** to enhance the resilience and sustainability of your farm.

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA): NAP Program

Looking at USDA-FSA NAP for tomatoes for the years 2021-2025, the total cost of premiums at 50/55 coverage was $1,625 with a payout for the 2015 crop loss of $12,716. The net gain was $11,091. With four buy-up levels available, the total premiums (basic plus buy-up) minus the payout, provided a net payout range from $8,300 - $11,278. There is a sequestration reduction percent applied prior to final payment.

NAP (Non-Insured Crop Assistance Program): Tomatoes

Coverage Level	**Cost Estimate per Year**							
Basic at 55% market price	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	Total cost of admin fees	2025 est. payment	Est. payment minus 5 yr. cost
50/55	$325	$325	$325	$325	$325	$1,625	$12,716	$11,091
Buy-up at 100% market price								
Premium per year	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**Total costs (premiums + admin fees)**	**2025 est. payment**	**Est. payment minus 5 yr. cost**
0.5 X	$3,041	$2,847	$2,540	$2,339	$2,428	$14,820	$23,120	$8,300
0.55 X	$3,345	$3,131	$2,794	$2,573	$2,670	$16,138	$25,432	$9,294
0.6 X	$3,649	$3,416	$3,048	$2,807	$2,913	$17,458	$27,744	$10,286
0.65 X	$3,953	$3,701	$3,302	$3,041	$3,156	$18,778	$30,056	$11,278

Producer share	1				
Acres	10				
Unharvested factor	0.5				
County expected yield (Carton/A)	429	388	328	297	289
Avg. market price	$27.00	$27.95	$29.50	$30.00	$32.00

Beginning in the 2022 crop year, historically underserved producers have NAP basic coverage (50/55) by certifying to being socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning, or veteran farmers or ranchers on the FSA form CCC-860. In addition, NAP buy-up coverage premiums for historically underserved producers are reduced by 50%, and NAP administrative fees are waived for such producers. Payments, administrative fees, and waivers on the above chart were calculated to reflect a producer who has not certified to being a member of a historically underserved group.

The NAP information was provided by the USDA-Farm Service Agency, and the Crop Insurance information was taken from the USDA-Risk Management Agency website.

The information provided are examples and not specific to any particular Connecticut farm. You should contact your crop insurance agent and/or local USDA-FSA office for information specific to your farming operation.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Risk Management Agency

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EXTENSION

CONNECT WITH UCONN EXTENSION'S FARM VIABILITY SERVICE

As the growing season slows down, now is a great time to bring your attention to **UConn Extension's Farm Viability Service** (FVS). Whether your question is big or small, broad or specific, the FVS is a great starting point for your inquiries.

Maybe you are contemplating expanding into new markets or funding sources for an infrastructure rehaul, or maybe you need to add new species to your cover crop mix or figure out how to deal with a new invasive species on the farm. We're here for the whole scope of farm questions!

FILL OUT THIS FORM TO GET STARTED

BUYING VEGETABLE SEEDS: DO'S AND DON'TS

By: Shuresh Ghimire, Associate Extension Educator, Vegetable Specialist (shuresh.ghimire@uconn.edu) and Diane Dorfer, Farm Viability Service Coordinator (diane.dorfer@uconn.edu)

This article aims to share practical strategies, helpful tips, and key do's and don'ts to guide Connecticut vegetable growers in selecting seeds that best match their farms, mostly regarding disease management.

DO'S

- Do order from companies that focus on your region and collaborate with trusted researchers & plant breeders.
- Consult with fellow growers on varieties that work for them.
- Do start with disease pressure. List your top 3–5 recurring diseases by field and choose varieties with HR/IR resistance that match them.
- Do confirm seed quality. Check germination rate, test date, and lot number; ask suppliers about seed health testing for key pathogens.
- Do use the NE Vegetable Guide for crop-by-crop notes on variety traits, spacing, and IPM.
- Do hot-water treat seed (or buy treated/clean seed) when seed-borne diseases have been an issue, especially in brassicas and solanaceous crops.
- Do watch for in-season alerts about cucurbit downy mildew (cdm.ipmpipe) and weekly pest alerts from UConn Extension.
- Do keep records by field and market grade.
- Trial a few new varieties each season.
- Do follow organic rules on seed sourcing and document your search if organic seed isn't available in the form/quality/quantity you need.

DON'TS

- Don't rely on one tool. Resistant varieties still need rotation and sanitation and, when warranted, fungicides, especially for powdery mildew and downy mildew.
- Don't assume resistance is permanent. Pathogens change.
- Don't store primed/pelleted seed for years. Use it quickly or re-test germination before planting next year.
- Don't save seed from F1 hybrids if you want uniform results next year; hybrids don't breed true.

Seed Purchasing: Practical Strategies & Helpful Tips

- Start with the right references, such as the New England Vegetable Management Guide (NEVMG). It is targeted for our regional climate and pests. Keep it (hard copy or online version) open while you order. Before committing to larger orders, consult NEVMG crop chapters and talk with seed company representatives about size, color, and shelf-life of produce. Keep a small on-farm block for trialing 2-5 new varieties per crop.

- *HortScience* published a free-access article on Vegetable Cultivar Descriptions for North America List 29, it is the newest national publication of vegetable varieties. It pulls together up-to-date cultivar names, brief trait notes (like maturity and disease resistance), and seed sources across many crops, which will be useful for double-checking what's on a seed order and building a short list.

- Lean on the university's disease-resistant variety lists and tips. Cornell University's Vegetable Resources summarize resistances by crop, how to use resistant varieties, and links to variety trial results.

- Match varieties to CT conditions, particularly days to maturity and frost window. Choose days to maturity that fit your farm's frost-free period; higher hills and inland sites run shorter than the shoreline. Connecticut Vegetable Crop Calendar and freeze/frost tables such as National Weather Service (Figure 1) are handy starting points. Fine tune with your own farm data and record-keeping.

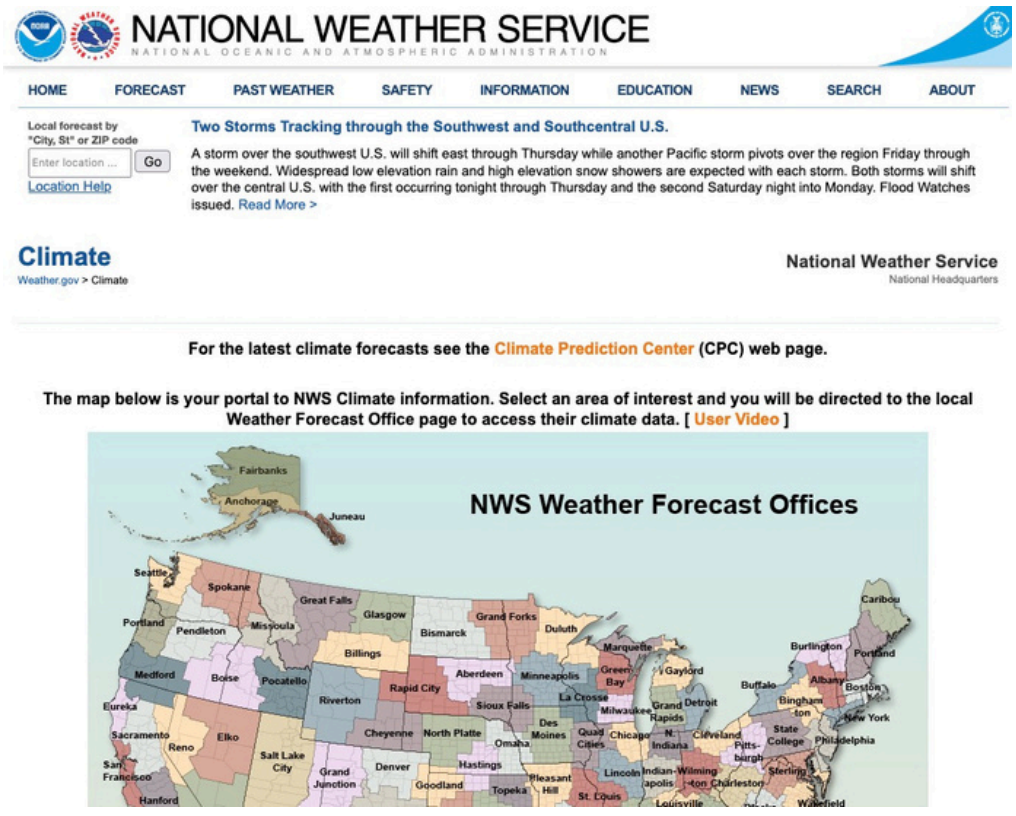

Figure 1. On the National Weather Service website:

- Navigate to the "Climate" page. pen NOWData - NOAA Online Weather Data
- Pick your location
- Set Product to First/last dates
- Choose a Year range
- Set Criteria to Min temp ≤ 32°F (or 28/36°F)
- Click Go.

This returns the last spring and first fall freeze dates for the selected station.

NWS NOWData - NOAA Online Weather Data

- Trial on your farm. Keep planting notes and trial a few new varieties in small blocks each year; your field data will be your most useful information when you reorder.

- Put disease resistance at the top of the list. Resistant varieties are a proven, low-cost cornerstone of IPM. They cut risk and can reduce sprays, but they're not a silver bullet. Integrate them with rotation, sanitation, and your other management tools. Choose:
  - Pepper cultivars with Phytophthora resistance
  - Pumpkins and squash cultivars with downy mildew resistance
  - Basil cultivars with downy mildew resistance

  The key takeaway is to pick varieities with resistance to specific diseases a.) you've had, and b) those that reliably threaten CT. A good way to learn more about common diseases is through UConn Extension Pest Alerts (sign up here). Growers can also submit samples to the UConn Plant Diagnostic Laboratory.

- Buy clean, high-quality seeds and read the label. Check the seed tag. Look for germination rate, test date, lot number, and other purity information. Adjust the seed rate if the germination rate is lower, for example, seeding 10% higher if the germination is 90%. If you grow organically, USDA rules require organic seed when commercially available. If not, document your search and keep records. Seed treatment must be allowed by the organic standards listed in your Organic System Plan.

- Hot-water seed treatment can knock back seed-borne pathogens like bacterial leaf spot in brassicas/pepper or black rot in brassicas and many others. You can treat on-farm or submit seed for treatment to the UConn Plant Diagnostic Laboratory.

- Order early. Popular resistant cultivars sell out. Use substitutions that keep resistance traits and maturity similar. Plan for your microclimate. Coastal CT has a longer frost-free period than interior hills; use frost tables to dial in earliness.

- Talk with fellow growers to swap notes on this season's varieties, what thrived, what did not, and why. Share lessons learned, troubleshoot challenges, and get inspired for next season.

LOOKING TO GET INSIGHT INTO WHAT SEED VARIETIES OTHER CT GROWERS HAVE TRIALED AND LIKE TO GROW?

Two opportunities tailored for small-scale growers and market gardeners are coming up:

- **Elise and Rachel of Four Root Farm (East Haddam)**
  The 2nd annual Flower Seed Variety Zoom, hosted by NCTFA
  Thursday, December 4, 2025 | 4-5:30 p.m. (Register for Flower Seed Variety Zoom)
- **Yoko of Assawaga Farm (Putnam)**
  The 6th(!) annual Vegetable & Annual Fruit Variety Zoom, hosted by NCTFA
  Thursday, December 11, 2025 | 4-5:30 p.m. (Register for Veggie/Fruit Variety Zoom)

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NEW CONNECTICUT FARMER ALLIANCE

- Crop-specific quick checks
  - Peppers on heavier soils: Pick Phytophthora-resistant peppers; if bacterial leaf spot is a problem, look for X10R (resistant to races 0-10). Improve drainage and plan a preventive oomycete fungicide program.
  - Pumpkins and winter squash: Choose PMR types ideally with homozygous resistance. Then follow a targeted FRAC rotation in July–August.
  - Cucumbers/cantaloupe: Add DM-resistant cucumbers; watch the regional CDM map early-summer and adjust fungicide timing.
  - Basil: Use Rutgers DMR basil cultivars to reduce losses to basil downy mildew.

- Storage and viability. Keep leftover seed cool, dry, and dark in airtight containers. Primed/pelleted seed loses vigor faster. Run a quick paper-towel germ test before planting and adjust seeding rates.

Still have questions about seed selection? We are happy to work with you

Shuresh Ghimire, Associate Extension Educator and Vegetable Specialist, can work with you to understand key challenges related to pests, diseases, and weed pressure that might have given you trouble in past growing seasons. Through collaboration, he can support the development and implementation of IPM strategies that are specific to your needs and catered to the unique characteristics of your growing operation. Email Shuresh at shuresh.ghimire@uconn.edu.

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USING BENEFICIAL NEMATODES FOR INSECT PEST MANAGEMENT

By: Dr. Ana Legrand, Assistant Extension Professor,
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White grub infected with *Heterorhabditis* nematodes.

Beneficial or entomopathogenic nematodes are an important biological control tool. They are very specific in attacking insects and they will not harm plants unlike plant-parasitic nematodes. There are several species of beneficial nematodes available for management of soil-dwelling pests. One example is *Heterorhabditis bacteriophora* which is the recommended nematode species for white grub management.

Beneficial nematodes have six life stages: an egg, four juvenile stages and the adult stage. Nematodes sold for pest management are in the infective juvenile stage and it is the only stage that survives outside the insect host. Infective juveniles or IJs do not feed, mate, or develop outside an insect host. They have energy reserves that they use until they find a new host.

IJs enter the host through the mouth, anus, spiracles or penetrate the insect cuticle. Then, they release specific bacteria into the host which kills it in about 48 hours. The nematodes feed on the bacteria and reproduce for one to three generations within a dead host. Up to 500,000 IJs can later emerge from a host in search of a new one! Although the IJs have features that help them survive outdoors until they find a host, we must remember that they are sensitive to the ways we handle them.

Here are important tips to keep in mind for successful beneficial nematode use:

1. Beneficial nematodes have distinct abilities and efficacies against target hosts. Thus, it is important to carefully select nematode products according to the target pest. See Table 1 for examples of nematode species and their target pest groups. Correct pest identification is essential for successful nematode use. For instance, within the white grub complex we see significant differences in efficacy. Efficacy is higher against Japanese beetle grubs followed by Oriental beetles with the least susceptibility observed in Asiatic garden beetle grubs.

Table 1. Commercially available beneficial nematodes and their target insect hosts.

Nematode Species	Target Insect Pest	Soil Temperature Efficacy
Heterorhabditis bacteriophora	Japanese, Oriental, and Asiatic garden beetle grubs; wireworms	Optimal range 66-91°F
Steinernema carpocapsae	cutworms, armyworms, wireworms	Optimal range 72-82°F
Steinernema feltiae	armyworms, fungus gnat larvae, thrips, onion maggot	Optimal range 57-79°F

2. Nematodes are sold in different formulations so check ahead of time the manufacturer's application instructions and rates to make sure they are a good fit to your situation.

3. Nematodes are very sensitive to the storage and ambient temperature they experience. One must keep nematode products in refrigeration until they are used.

4. Apply them directly to the soil for best results. It is very important to water in the nematodes after application: at least 0.5 inch of water. Applications during a gentle rain are great! If possible, irrigate the area before the application and keep good soil moisture after application.

5. Apply nematodes late in the day, during a cloudy day or very early in the morning. Do not expose nematodes to direct sun light or to dry conditions.

6. Nematode application can be done with any equipment - from a simple watering can to boom sprayers. With specialized equipment, just remove any filter or any mesh smaller than size 50 and avoid using pressures higher than 300 psi.

7. When mixing the nematode formulation do not use water warmer than 80^{o}F. If possible, monitor soil temperatures for optimum nematode activity - see Table 1.

8. It is important to keep the nematode suspension under agitation to mix in oxygen and to prevent nematodes from settling at the bottom of the container. The best approach is to apply them as soon after you have mixed the nematode formulation in water.

9. Verify the compatibility of any other pesticide used during or near the time of nematode application. Generally, carbamate insecticides, organophosphate insecticides, and nematicides are not compatible.

10. Before any application check the product's end date and nematode viability. Live nematodes are easily spotted by their wriggly movements. Once they are mixed in water, they should be active in about 30-45 min depending on formulation and water temperature. Take a small sample of the nematodes in water and place it in a clear shallow dish. Use a 15x or better hand lens to see them well. Dead nematodes will look like tiny toothpicks floating in water and exhibit no movement even after being poked at. Note that *Steinernema carpocapsae* are not as active as other species in water suspension and can take a more straight, J shape while at rest.

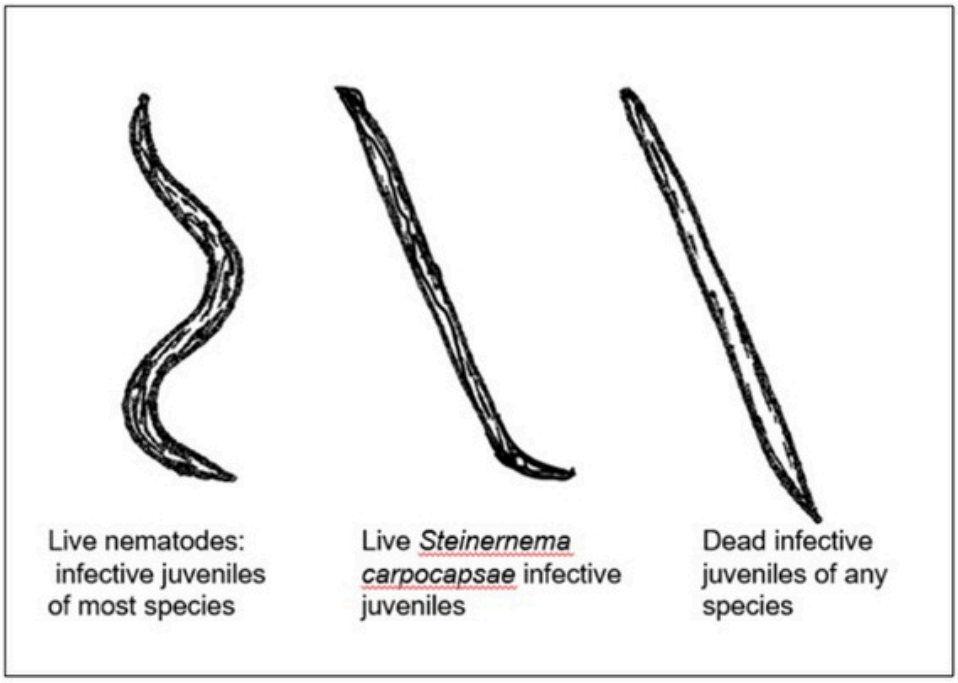

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Photo credit: M. Villani. Cornell University

Illustration: A. Legrand, Univ. of Connecticut.

STRAWBERRY RENOVATION

By: Evan Lentz, Assistant Extension Educator, Commercial Fruit Production
Email: evan.lentz@uconn.edu
Website: UConn Fruit Program

Introduction

Strawberries are a high-value fruit crop with a great degree of versatility. Depending on if the variety grown is June-bearing or Day-neutral, harvest times and production systems can vary – offering producers with flexibility in cultural management and marketing. Below, renovation of June-bearing strawberries will be covered in detail. This practice is essential to maintaining healthy, productive plantings.

June Bearing versus Day Neutral

There are two types of strawberries: June-bearers and Day-neutrals. Each has its own unique physiological and growth characteristics which influence the types of management practices undertaken. The key differences to note between these two groups are their harvest windows, the development of their flower buds, and their growth pattern.

1. Harvest Windows – June-bearing strawberries, as the names suggests, produce their crop in June with one late-season variety producing into early July. June-bearing strawberries will produce a single, substantial crop per year. Although, there is some flexibility to extend the picking season with the range of early-, mid-, and late-season varieties available. Day-neutral, or Everbearing, varieties will produce 2-3 crops per year – one in June, one in mid to late summer, and one in the fall. These crops will be much smaller than those produced by the June-bearing group. However, Day-neutrals provide a much longer harvest season and may work well for some markets.
2. Flower Bud Initiation – June-bearing strawberries are short-day plants. Short-day plants receive photo-signals from the environment to initiate flower bud formation when days begin to get shorter. For June-bearing strawberries, this is generally when nights (dark-periods) are longer than 14 hours and temperatures are below 59°F. This means flower buds are initiated the year before the crop is to be harvested. Day-neutrals are not photo-sensitive in the same way. Their flower buds are initiated at various times throughout the year when temperatures are between 40-85°F. For their first crop, flower buds are initiated the year before in the late summer to fall. For their subsequent summer/fall crops, flower buds are initiated earlier in that same summer.
3. Growth Habit – The final distinction between June-bearing and Day-neutral strawberries is their growth habit, specifically, their tendency to produce runners and daughter plants. June-bearing strawberries runner easily. They spread in the production area via runners or stolons (horizontal, above-ground stems). From these stolons, new crowns develop which root into the soil (Figure 1). This tendency to runner allows plants to fully colonize the planting area, creating an interconnected mat of new plants that can be leveraged for years to come (Figure 2). This spread of plants is one reason that renovation is required. Day-neutral strawberries historically have only produced runners sporadically, depending on the variety. However, many modern varieties runner profusely.

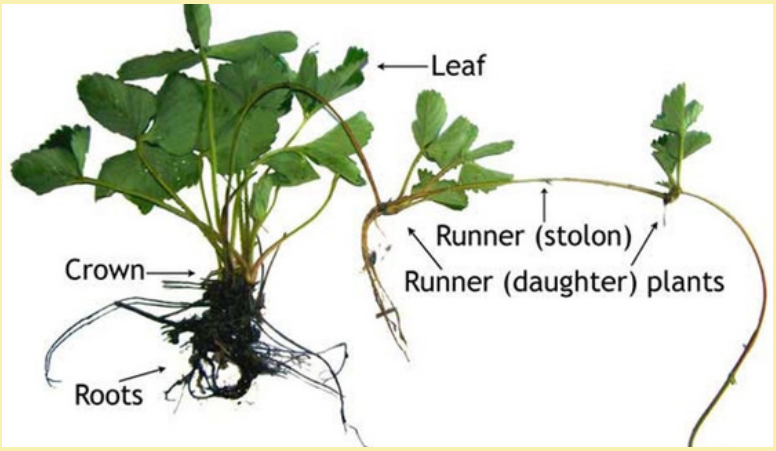

Figure 1. A June-bearing strawberry plant with runners and daughter plants attached (Strawberry Plants).

Figure 2. An interconnected mat of June-bearing strawberries planted in a double row (Concklin).

Renovation and Benefits

Renovation refers to a process of rejuvenating a strawberry planting area and preparing it for the subsequent season. Since strawberries are grown in a semi-perennial nature (3-5 years), it is important to keep them clean and productive to maximize yield, quality, and revenue (Figure 3). The process of renovation involves mowing over the tops of strawberry plants, removing daughter plants that have rooted outside of the planting area and narrowing the row, thinning plants, adding soil to the crowns of plants, fertilizing, and applying herbicides. The process for this will be discussed below in the **How-to Renovate** section. First, the benefits of these activities will be discussed.

Mowing

Mowing off the tops of the plants serves multiple purposes. First, old diseased leaves are removed to reduce any overwintering inoculum that could serve to infect your plants next year. This process also introduces light and airflow down into the planting. Increased light penetration to the crown of the plant will help to stimulate the initiation of flower buds, increasing potential yields. Increased airflow can help reduce pest-related issues.

Narrowing Rows

Due to the growth habit of June-bearing strawberries, many runners and daughter plants will likely have grown outside of the planting row and into the drive rows. These plants should be removed to maintain neat, orderly, and distinct production areas, leaving those within the planting row. This will ensure all other production activities, such as fertilization and pest management, are targeted and effective. This will also increase the ease of access for farm labor or pick-your-own customers.

Adding Soil to Plant Crowns

Tillage equipment is an effective means of weed control between planting rows. If tines are set at an angle, this will provide the dual purpose of adding soil to the crowns of strawberry plants. This new soil will encourage plants to send out new roots, increasing the overall vigor of plants, and may provide increased protection from winter temperatures.

Fertilization
For June-bearing strawberries, renovation is one of the most important times fertilize. With so much disturbance and the removal of a large amount of plant mass, it is essential to provide plants with nutrients so they can begin to redevelop their canopies and send out new roots and runners.

Weed Control
Renovation is also a great time to manage weeds. In addition to tillage, pre-emergent herbicides should be applied during this window. It is important to irrigate or water-in these materials, so they make their way down into the soil.

Figure 3. A neat, orderly, weed-free strawberry field that has benefited from regular renovation (Concklin).

How to Renovate
Timing – Renovation should take place as soon as harvest is completed, which is late June to early July. Do not wait for the very late variety, Malwina, to complete harvest before renovating your other June-bearing varieties. Renovate Malwina separately.

1. Mow off the tops of your strawberry plants about 2" above the crown (Figure 4). It is extremely important NOT to hit the plant crowns to avoid killing the plant.

Figure 4. A farmer mowing off the tops of their strawberry plants (Handley).

2. Narrow the width of the planting rows. Single rows can be reduced to as little 6” as daughter plants will fill in to the desired 12-14”. During this process adding soil to the crown of plants is recommended to encourage root growth and for winter protection (Figure 5). Thin plants if needed.

3. Begin weed management. Survey for weed pressure and decide if a broad spectrum or broadleaf herbicide application is warranted. Cultivate and apply any appropriate burndown materials. Utilize hand cultivation in small or organic operations. Materials such as 2,4-D only affect actively growing plants and should not affect strawberries which are not actively growing at the end of their season.

Figure 5. A farmer utilizes tillage equipment to remove weeds, narrow rows, and add new soil onto strawberry plants (Toledo).

4. Apply pre-emergent herbicides and water in.

5. Fertilize. Broadcast applications of nitrogen can vary depending on soil type but will range between 25-60 lbs/acre (see table below). An NPK fertilizer can be used if phosphorus or potassium is needed. This decision should be informed by foliar tests.

Nitrogen (N) recommendations for June-bearing strawberries

Soil Organic Matter (OM) level[1]	Low	Medium	High	Organic soil[2]	Method/Timing[3]
Establishment year	80 lbs N/acre	70 lbs N/acre	60 lbs N/acre	25 lbs N/acre	Split application: Apply 1/2 before planting and 1/2 in August during runner production
Bearing year[4]	80 lbs N/acre	70 lbs N/acre	60 lbs N/acre	25 lbs N/acre	Immediately after renovation

1. Low = less than 3.1% OM; Medium = 3.1-4.5% OM; High = 4.6-19% OM; 2. Organic soil = greater than 19% OM; 3. Suggested methods of application are a general guide and can be modified when appropriate; if nitrogen is applied in the spring, do not apply more than 15-20 lbs/A; 4. Leaf analysis should also be used to help determine nitrogen needs. (Adapted from UMN Extension, 2021)

6. Irrigate the planting.

7. Collect tissue samples. Tissue sampling should be done after renovation, and the plant has begun to grow again. The sample should consist of the first fully expanded leaves. There are no leaves to sample after the plants are mowed off. Fertilization is based on many factors such as crop load, drought, heavy rains and the tissue results from last year. However, if tissue and soil samples indicate non-nitrogen elements are low, those materials should be applied the same year – unrelated to renovation. *The process of renovation is demanding of nitrogen. Last year's tissue results should be taken into account when deciding the amount to apply. The table above is for general maintenance applications and should not be used alone.*

Other Considerations

Irrigation – Irrigation is essential to the productivity of all strawberries. At least 1" of water per week is required from either rainfall or irrigation. This ensures adequate vegetative growth and promotes the development of large, high-quality berries. Irrigation during renovation provides the added benefit of assisting applied fertilizers and herbicides to move down into the soil.

Tissue Samples – All fertilizer applications should be informed by tissue testing. Annual tissue testing should be performed.

Weed Control – Weed control during the renovation process will vary by operation. Some operations with lower weed pressure or with concerns over potential harm to strawberry plants may not wish to apply burndown materials.

Additional Resources/Sources

- Northeast and Midwest Strawberry Production Guide
- University of Minnesota Extension – End-of-Season Renovation
- New England Small Fruit Management Guide

SAVE THE DATE

FARM MANAGERS SUMMIT
2.0.2.6.

Wednesday Jan. 14th, 2026 Hartford, CT

We know that managing a farm, a crew and a work/life balance is hard. The Farm Managers Summit is here to help foster the conversations and community to make it easier. If you want to help us make this work even more effective, please provide your anonymous feedback.

feedback request!

Please reach out to megan.l.hebert@uconn.edu with any questions or concerns.

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY: WHAT CT GROWERS NEED TO KNOW

By: Nicole Davidow, Outreach Assistant, Commercial Vegetable Production and Evan Lentz, Assistant Extension Educator, Commercial Fruit Production

The first domestic sighting of the Spotted Lantern Fly (SLF) in the United States was reported in Pennsylvania in 2014. By 2020, SLF made their way into CT, and as of July 2025 there have been reported sightings of the invasive insect in every county across the state. So far, SLF have had minimal impact on agriculture in Connecticut. However, as sightings become more frequent and widespread, it is important to be equipped with the knowledge about SLF and its life cycle, what plants are at risk, and what to do to stop they spread.

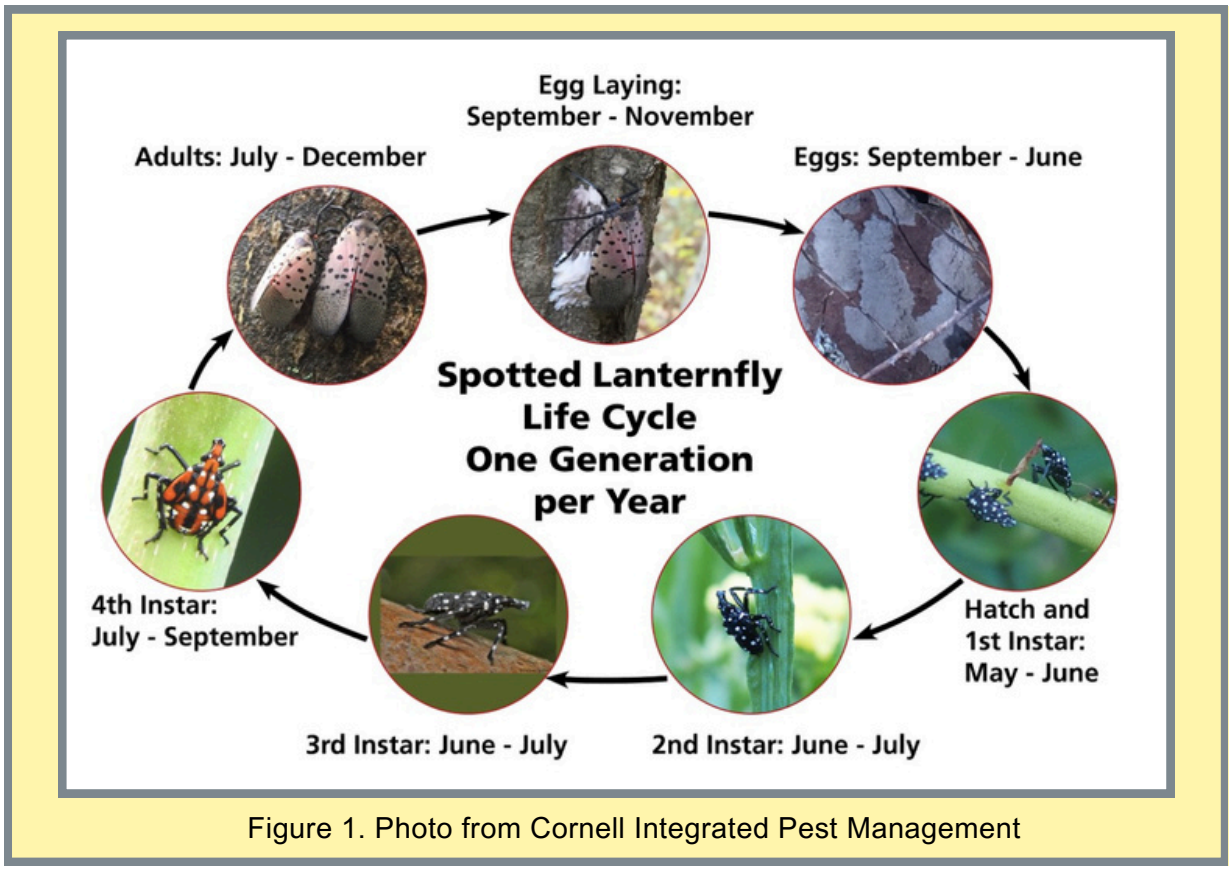

Figure 1. Photo from Cornell Integrated Pest Management

Figure 2. SLF egg mass blends in with tree bark. Photo: E. Lentz.

Life Cycle & Host Plants

SLF overwinter in the northeast as egg masses. The egg masses of between 30-60 eggs are covered with a putty-like substance that changes color from a creamy-white to pinkish-gray as it dries. Eventually the dried covering will turn dark tan and crack, looking very similar to a splotch of mud. Egg masses are often laid on various outdoor surfaces including trees, camp chairs, and rusty metal. Egg masses can be incredibly difficult to spot as the color and texture blends easily with the bark of trees and other structures. When spotted, you can dispose of the egg mass by smashing them, burning them, or by scrapping them into a re-sealable bag with a rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer and discarding them in the trash.

Once the weather warms in the spring (April-May), the eggs hatch and a new life cycle begins. Nymphs have an extremely broad range of host plants and are known to feed on vegetable, fruit, and herb plants. Right after they hatch they are not yet strong enough to penetrate denser tissue so they feed on younger plants or new plant growth. Damage is usually minimal except in cases of very high SLF populations. Adults are mostly attracted to the woody stems of trees and vines as they seek out sugary saps. SLF adults begin to appear in July and can be found until the first killing freeze in the fall.

Human Activity Gets SLF Farther Than They Can on Their Own
SLF are great jumpers from all nymphal stages until adulthood. As adults, they also acquire the ability to fly. Between walking, jumping, and flying, a single SLF can travel 3 to 4 miles on their own. However, their primary mode of transportation is by means of human activity.

SLF can hitchhike at any life stage making it extremely challenging to contain existing populations. This is important to take into consideration especially if you are receiving or shipping plants across borders. States that have reported sightings as of July 2025 include MA, CT, NY, RI, NJ, NY, PA, MD, VA, WV, OH, IN, IL, KY, GA, TN, and NC. Inspect vehicles, trailers, shipping containers, and plants for signs of SLF at all life stages, especially if items originate or travel through states with known SLF populations.

Impacts on Agriculture
The current impact of SLF on local agriculture is still not fully understood. Although SLF are confirmed to feed on grapevines, current observations place most large populations on Tree-of-Heaven. 2025 marks the first year where a large number of SLF have been observed in grape vineyards as far north as Glastonbury, CT, along the river valley. Some regional specialists suggest the impact to be minimal. However, the continual feeding of SLF on grapevines can impact plant vigor, fruit set and quality, and the survivability of vines through the winter. In addition to the physical control methods outlined earlier, producers may consider chemical control in agricultural fields. Systemic materials, such as dinotefuran and imidacloprid, and contact insecticides, such as bifenthrin, carbaryl, and zeta-cypermethrin, can be an effective means of control in situations where impacts are anticipated or observed. Please be aware that many of these materials have activity against non-target organisms. Please consult with your Extension professionals if you have questions and make sure to follow label instructions.

IPM Approach is the Key to Success
If you are concerned about the impact of SLF on your crops contact our UConn Extension Educators to develop management plans:
Evan Lentz (Fruit): evan.lentz@uconn.edu
Shuresh Ghimire (Vegetables): shuresh.ghimire@uconn.edu

About Spotted Lantern Fly:

- They don't bite or sting. However, residual honeydew from feeding can attract stinging insects.
- They are swarm feeders. Feeding in large numbers can be a nuisance and threat to key crops.
- Preferred hosts: Grapes, Tree of Heaven, Hops, Maple, and Black Walnut. Learn more about SLF host plants

References & Resources

CT DEEP
Spotted Lanternfly in CT

CAES Info Page:
Spotted Lanternfly

CAES Pest Alert (2019):
Spotted Lanternfly

NEWA SLF
Prediction Model

SLF Biology & Lifecycle
Cornell IPM

PennState Extension SLF
Management Guide

2025 PRODUCE RETAIL MARKET PRICES

By: Mary Concklin, Extension Educator Emerita, UConn
Joseph Bonelli, Extension Educator Emeritus, UConn

Produce retail market pricing information was collected at 5 winter farmers markets and 29 farmers markets across Connecticut in late May through late August by UConn staff, using an app developed by UConn through a cooperative agreement with USDA RMA. Prices did not fluctuate for any product throughout the summer season.

Winter Farmers Markets: February & March 2025
The winter markets were Ashford, Ellington, Litchfield, New Haven City Seed, and Wallingford. Examples of product prices are: beets ranged from $2.61 to $4/lb. with the Ellington market the lowest and Litchfield the highest. Carrots ranged from $3 to $6/lb for both organic and conventionally grown across the markets; garlic was $12 to $18/lb with organic garlic at $25/lb in New Haven; radishes were $2 to $4/lb for organic at the New Haven market while conventional radishes were $2.69 to $4/lb with the Ellington market the lowest and Litchfield the highest. The Ellington market had out-of-season blueberries and raspberries for $6.50/pint.

Summer Farmers Markets
For this analysis, the summer markets will be identified by regions:

- Northeast: Brooklyn, Coventry, Danielson, Plainfield, Putnam, Willimantic
- Southeast: Bozrah, Ledyard, Lisbon, Old Mystic, Stonington
- Central: Bristol, Cromwell, Manchester, Middletown, Wethersfield, West Hartford, West Hartford Blue Back, Windsor
- North Central: Canton, Ellington
- South Central: Chester, Guilford, New Haven City Seed Q House, New Haven City Seed Edgewood Park
- Southwest: Darien, Milford, Westport

VIEW THE PDF OF THE REPORT FOR 2025

Product	Unit	Conventional	High/Low	Organic	High/Low
Apples	Quart	$4 - $7	High SE & central, Low N central	$4 - $5	Low NE, High SE & N central
Asparagus	Pound	$6 - $8	High central	$5.28 - $14	Low N central, High central
Basil	Bunch	$5	S East only	$2 - $5	Low N east, High central
Basil	Pound			$15 - $28	Central only

Product	Unit	Conventional	High/Low	Organic	High/Low
Beans	Pound	$4 - $9	High central, low others	$3 - $8	Low S central, High central
Beans	Quart	$3 - $7	High and low central	$4 - $6	all
Beans	Pint	$2	S east only		
Beets	Pound	$4 - $5; outlier $2.61	Outlier N central	$3 - $4	
Beets	Quart	$5	N east only	$3.50 - $6	S east only
Blackberry	Pint	$10 - $16, outlier $6	Outlier central, High NE, low central		
Blueberry	Pint	$5 - $10, outlier $13	Outlier SE, High SE, Low multiple	$6 - $10	High & Low central
Blueberry	Quart	$8 - $14	High NE, Low central	$8.50	NE only
Broccoli	Pound	$3 - $5, outliers $8 & $2.79	Outlier low N central, outlier high central	$4 - $6	Across all markets
Broccoli	Quart	$5	Central only		
Carrots	Pound	$3 - $6.50	High N central, Low S central	$3 - $5, Outlier $12	Outlier Central
Cauliflower	Pound	$3 - $8	High S Central, Low NE	$5 - $5.50	SW, S Central
Cherry-sour	Pint	$7	Central & NE		
Cherry-sweet	Pint	$7, outlier $5	Outlier: Central		
Cucumber	Pound	$2 - $4	Low NE & Central, $3-$4 rest of state	$3 - $4	all
Cucumber	Quart	$4.50 - $6	All	$3 - $5	all
Eggplant	Pound	$3 - $5, outlier $2.50	Outlier NE	$4 - $5, outlier $3	Outlier NE

Product	Unit	Conventional	High/Low	Organic	High/Low
Garlic	Pound	$12 - $18, outlier $8	Outlier SW	$15-$16, outlier Low $6, high $20, $25	Low outlier NE High outlier NE & S central
Garlic	Quart	$10			
Kale	Pound	$7.50 - $8, outlier $3	Outlier NE	$4 - $6.67 Outliers $10, $12.50, $16	Outliers all SE
Lettuce: Head	Each	$3 -$5, outlier $2	Outlier Central	$3 - $6, outlier $2	Outlier SE
Lettuce: Leaf	Pound	$4 - $10	All	$12 -$18. Outlier $10, $20	Low outlier NE, High outlier Central
Melon	Pound	$1 - $1.50	All	$1 - $1.60	All
Nectarine	Pound	$4.99	NE		
Nectarine	Pint	$4.99	NE		
Nectarine	Quart	$5 & $8	Low Central, High NE		
Nectarine	Quart	$5 & $8	Low Central, High NE		
Onions	Pound	$2 - $4		$2 - $4, outlier $1.45	Outlier, NE
Onions	Quart	$4 - $5		$5	
Peach	Quart	$7 - $8, outlier $10	Outlier Central	$3, $4, $7	Low SE, Mid & High Central
Pear	Quart	$5, $7, $8	Low & High Central, Mid NE		
Pear	Pound	$2.99	N Central		

Product	Unit	Conventional	High/Low	Organic	High/Low
Peas	Pint	$4 - $7.50	High NE	$5 - $7.75	High SW
Peppers: Hot	Pint	$3 - $5		$4 - $6	
Peppers: Hot	Quart	$3 & $5	Low NE, High N Central	$4 - $5	
Peppers: Hot	Pound	$3.50 - $6		$3.99	Central
Peppers: Sweet	Pint	$3 & $4		$5	Central
Peppers: Sweet	Quart	$4 - $5, outlier $2	Outlier: Central	$2 & $4	Both Central
Peppers: Sweet	Pound	$3 - $5, outlier $2.50	Outlier NE	$4 - $5.50	
Plums	Pint	$5 - $7		$7	Central
Plums	Quart	$5 - $8.50			
Plums	Pound	$4.99	NE all		
Radish	Pound	$3 - $5, outliers $2.69 & $12	Outlier Low N Central, high NE	$2, $4 & $8	Lows S central, High Central
Radish	Bunch	$3 - $5		$3.75 - $6	
Raspberry	Pint	$8 - $16	Low Central, High NE	$10	SE
Rhubarb	Pound	$5.50 - $8, outlier $3.33	Outlier S central	$5, outlier $8	Outlier SE
Snow peas	Pint	$5 - $6		$5 & $6	

Product	Unit	Conventional	High/Low	Organic	High/Low
Snow peas	Pound	$7.50 & $12	Low NE, High Central		
Spinach	Pound	$3.50	SE	$10 & $12	SE
Squash, summer	Pound	$2 - $4		$2 - $4	
Squash, winter	Pound	$1.99 & $3.79	Central	$1.60	Central
Strawberry	Pint	$5 - $9, outlier $10	Outlier Central	$6 - $7, outlier $10	Outlier Central
Strawberry	Quart	$7 - $10		$7 - $10	All Central
Sweet corn	Dozen	$10			
Sweet corn	each	$1 - $1.10, outlier $0.75	Outlier Central	$1	
Tomato: cherry	Pint	$5 - $6, outliers $4, $12	Outlier low NE, high NE	$5 - $8, outlier $2	Outlier SE
Tomato: heirloom	Pound	$4 - $6		$4 - $6	
Tomato: large	Pound	$3.99 - $6		$4.50 - $5, outlier $2.50	Outlier SE

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Risk Management Agency

UCONN COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES
EXTENSION

This material is funded in partnership by USDA, Risk Management Agency, under award numbers RMA23CPT0013448 and RMA24CPT0013928.

SOLID GROUND

A Program of UConn Extension

25-26 WINTER LEARNING

Climate Smart Adaptations for Beginning Farmers
Dec 1 & Feb 4: Self-paced, Virtual

Accessing Grant Funding for Your Farm
Dec 5 at 8:30-12: Tolland Extension Office
Dec 18 at 8:30-12: Farmington Extension Office

Disaster Preparedness for Beginning Farmers
Dec 10 at 12-1:15: Virtual

UConn Ext. Vegetable & Small Fruit Conference
Jan 8 at 8:45-3:15: UConn Storrs Campus

Farm Manager Summit
Jan 14 at time TBD: Chrysalis Center, Hartford

Business of Farming
Jan 22- multiple times and locations

Ag Mechanics: Tool Sharpening
Jan 31 at 9:30-12:30: Rockville High, Vernon

On-Farm Food Safety for Small Scale Wholesale Markets
Feb 2- multiple times and locations

Ag Mechanics: Tool Sharpening II
Feb 21 at 9:30-12:30: Rockville High, Vernon

Ag Mechanics: Small Engine Repair
Feb 25, Mar 11 & Mar 25 at 4:30-7:30: location TBD

Ag Mechanics: Women's Chainsaw
Mar 21: time & location TBD

Ag Mechanics: Intermediate Chainsaw
Mar 28: time & location TBD

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This project is supported by USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Award 2023-49400-40870

UCONN EXTENSION

CLIMATE SMART ADAPTATION STRATEGIES FOR BEGINNING FARMERS!

Climate Smart Adaptation Strategies

UCONN EXTENSION

UConn Extension is working closely with experts throughout the state, including educators from the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources and beyond, to relaunch our 14 module, online course on **Climate Smart Adaptation Strategies for Beginning Farmers**. This course addresses the constant challenges that farmers are dealing with in every year's growing season: intense rainfall events, drought, extreme temperatures, and pest, disease, and land management problems. Through climate smart practices, this course focuses on new growers trying to expand their knowledge and will make them more resilient so that they can create a thriving farm business in our state.

Our first cohort this year will begin December 1st, with a second cohort start date of February 4th. The course includes expert instructors in various fields implementing climate smart agriculture practices, tools to help you implement these practices for under $2000, virtual field trips and more. The course is completely online with guidance provided by CT Farmer, and Project Coordinator, Baylee Drown as students interact with content. The course has the flexibility of being run asynchronous so that learners can follow at their own pace in whatever way fits into their busy farm life.

Course modules include:

1. Intro to Climate Smart Farming*
2. Climate Smart Soil Health part 1*
3. Climate Smart Soil Health part 2*
4. On-Farm Composting
5. Agricultural Fabrics and Plastic Mulch
6. Biological Pest Control and Native Pollinators
7. Pasture Based Livestock Management
8. Silvopasture
9. Managing Water on the Farm
10. Matching Your Landscape, Climate, and Production
11. Managing Native Species, Invasive Plants, and Noxious Weeds
12. Climate Smart Conversion of Raw Land
13. Climate Smart Energy
14. Financial Resources to Implement Climate Smart Farming*

Project Coordinator:
Baylee Rose Drown

Course completion requires you to finish only 10 out of 14 modules, though you are welcome to do all 14! Some of the modules will be required, which are asterisked above.
Class cost is $35. Farmers that complete the class will be eligible to apply for our Climate Smart Microgrants which will open in spring 2026.These micro-grants are meant for the purchase of equipment/inputs that cost up to $2400 for implementing climate smart farming practices.

To find out more information, visit **Climate Smart Adaptation Strategies on the Solid Ground** website. If you're ready to sign up for the class, **Register Here**.

The Connecticut Pomological Society

Finer Fruits Through Co-operative Efforts Since 1891

Greg Parzych President	Vice-President	Erica Teveris Secretary-Treasurer

Annual Meeting
Tuesday, December 2, 2025
Middletown Elks Lodge

44 Maynard St, Middletown, CT

8:00	Registration, Socialize, Coffee/Pastries – **Visit with vendors**
8:30-9:00	**Soil Health in Northeast Orchards.** Michael Basedow, Cornell
9:00-9:30	**Apple Tree Decline.** Daniel Donahue, Cornell
9:30-10:15	**The Honeycrisp Apple Playbook.** Daniel Donahue, Cornell
10:15-10:30	**Break – Visit with Vendors**
10:30-11:15	**Apple Bitter Rot Management on the East Coast.** Srdjan Acimovic, Virginia Tech
11:15-11:45	**Managing Apple Diseases without Captan & Mancozeb.** Kerik Cox, Cornell
11:45-12:00	**Crop Insurance Update.** Arthur Carroll Insurance
12:00-1:00	**Lunch**
1:00-1:30	**Business meeting, Award presentations** Apple Marketing Board Update: Erin Windham, CT Department of Agriculture Financial Report: Erica Teveris Award of Merit: Greg Parzych (presenter) Award of Distinction: Eric Henry (presenter)
1:30-2:00	**Agritainment Legislation Updates, Insurance.** Jim Lyman, Lyman Agency/Farm Family
2:00-2:30	**Farm Succession & Estate Planning.** Jon Jaffe, Farm Credit East
2:30-3:00	**Herbicide Resistance Management.** Maria Gannett, UMass
3:00-3:30	**Harnessing Chemical Ecology to Control Pests in Connecticut** Hany Dweck, CAES
3:30	**Pesticide Credits and Socialize**

Directions to the Middletown Elks Lodge are below

4 pesticide re-certification credits are available at this meeting.

This Program is a cooperative effort of The CT Pomological Society, UConn Extension and UConn Dept of Plant Science & Landscape Architecture

UCONN
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES
EXTENSION & PLANT SCIENCE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

CT POMOLOGICAL SOCIETY WEBSITE

Northeast Agricultural Networks Summit

Join farm support providers from across New England for this professional development event.

Monday
December 8
9:30 AM - 4 PM

The Maine Center
300 Fore Street
Portland, Maine

Learn more about this one-day mini conference:

are.uconn.edu/farmnetwork/

High Tunnel Production Conference

Enhance Your Tunnel Vision

December 10 & 11, 2025 | 9am - 4pm

In-Person
Fireside Inn and Suites
West Lebanon, NH 03784

REGISTER ONLINE

Calling all high tunnel growers!
Whether you are a new or experienced high tunnel grower, plan to join UMaine, UNH, and UVM for this two-day event. Come learn from experts and other farmers, talk with vendors, and see their products at the trade show. This conference will offer useful information for high tunnel growers and agricultural service providers of all experience levels and all crops.

Cost: $120 for both days.
Registration fee includes the farm tour, all educational sessions, admission to the trade show, and lunch on Day 2. Additional people from the same farm are just $90 each. Registration Deadline is December 3.

Credits: Pesticide applicator re-certification credits in New England states and New York will be awarded. (The specific number of credits are pending approval).

Co-Sponsors: University of Vermont, University of Maine, & University of New Hampshire

UConn Extension 2026 Vegetable & Small Fruit Growers Conference

Learning | Networking | Research Posters | Trade Show

CONFERENCE WEBSITE

REGISTRATION

Event Details:

- **Date**: Thursday, January 8, 2026
- **Time**: 9:00 AM – 3:15 PM, Check-in and Trade Show open at 8:00 AM
- **Location**: UConn Student Union Ballroom, Storrs, CT
- **Pesticide Recertification Credits**: amount pending confirmation

Registration:

- Regular Registration: $55 (ends December 14, 2025)
- Late Registration: $75 (starting December 15, 2025)
- Student Registration: $35

New this year, the conference will feature the opportunity to participate in farmer-to-farmer focus groups during the lunch break. This will be an opportunity for growers to have casual conversations within defined topics pertaining to farm operations.

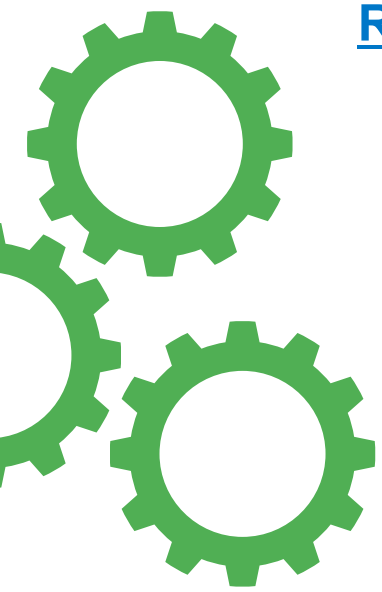
In the spirit of keeping the conversations centered on farmers' experiences, these focus groups will be led by fellow farmers from around the state. This year's topics and facilitators are:

- **Cut Flowers**, led by Teri Natoli of Harris Brook Farm
- **Farming Strong: Caring for Our Bodies While We Care for the Land**, led by Becky Jack of Handel Family Farm
- **High Tunnels and Season Extension**, led by Kaitlyn Kimball of Sunset Farm
- **Managing New Pests and Diseases for Vegetable Crops**, led by Kayla Cook of Massaro Community Farm
- **Non-traditional Wholesale Markets**: Food Hubs and Farm-to-School, led by Mia Colasuonno of Lathrop Farm
- **On-Farm Composting**, led by Baylee Drown of Long Table Farm

The focus groups will meet at individual tables in the main conference room during the second half of the lunch break. We'd love to have you join in the conversations to share your experiences and insights!

UConn Extension's 2026 Online

Vegetable Production Certificate Course



Register for the Vegetable Course

About: This fully online course is for new and beginning farmers who have 0-3 years of vegetable growing experience or no formal training in agriculture. Participants will learn answers to the basic questions about farm business planning, planning and preparing for a vegetable farm, warm- and cool-season vegetable production techniques, season extension, identification of biotic and abiotic issues, and marketing.

Enrollment fee: The price of the course is $149.
Register before January 20, 2026, course begins January 22, 2026.

Questions: Please contact the course coordinator, Shuresh Ghimire, 860-870-6933 or shuresh.ghimire@uconn.edu.

NORTHEAST SARE FARMER GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Due: 5PM EST December 9, 2025

The Northeast SARE Farmer Grant Program is open for proposals. These grants support farmer-led projects to test new ideas and share results with the farming community. As you will see in the posting, a key requirement is that each project must include a technical advisor to provide expertise and guidance.

Technical advisors may be Extension educators, researchers, NRCS or other government staff, nonprofit professionals, private consultants, veterinarians, agricultural service providers, or even another experienced farmer. Their role is to help design, implement, and share outcomes from your project. If you're thinking about applying for a grant, consider partnering with a UConn Extension Educator.

SARE
Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

View the Farmer Grant Program Call for 2026 Proposals

2026 Farmer Grant Question & Answer Sessions

November 2025 Crop Talk Editors/Contributors

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