



Words of Windham

March 2008

A Newsletter For People Who Care About Agriculture

Introducing our Windham County FSA Committee

On January 17, 2008 at 1:00 p.m., our new officers were voted on. The committee is scheduled to meet on March 11, 2008 at 1:00 p.m., here at the Windham County Agricultural Center.

Harold Bishop, Chairman: Harold is part owner of Woodstock Orchards, LLC, Woodstock, operating since 1958, celebrating 50 years in business in May. Harold is active in various farm organizations as well as the Volunteer Fire Department. He enjoys traveling with his wife Colleen, who is a third grade school teacher.

Betsy Molodich, Vice-Chairman: Betsy is owner and operator of Betsy's Stand, Sterling, where she sells fruits, vegetables and operates a greenhouse. Her husband is a dairy farmer and their two children help out on both farms. Betsy is involved in farmers markets and she is the President of the Northeast CT Farmers Market Association, and Leader of the Ekonk Jr. Grange, with her husband Mike.

Charles "Tim" Tyler, Regular Member: Tim is a partner with his brother Bill of Tyler Brothers Farm, Canterbury, milking 230 cows. Tim is also a Connecticut Farm Bureau member. He started custom harvesting this past year. Welcome and best wishes to Tim our newest committee member.

Ed Schafer was sworn in as the 29th Secretary of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on January 28, 2008. He served as Governor of North Dakota from 1992 to 2000 and one of his top priorities while in office was advancing Agriculture.



March 19, 2008 is Agriculture Day at the Connecticut State Capital

The Program is scheduled to run from 10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m., on Wednesday March 19th in the North Lobby of the Capital Building in Hartford. On this day Agriculture meets the Legislators. There will be an opening ceremony with awards, displays from many agricultural organizations, and sharing of information.

Last Green Valley Plans Maple Sugar Days

Celebrating the annual maple harvest with special maple-related activities on March 8-9th and March 15-16th throughout the 35 towns of The Last Green Valley. Everyone is invited to join in, Sugar-houses, shops, restaurants, accommodations, businesses and non-profits. Information at www.ctmaple.org or www.thelastgreenvalley.org.

Be sure to visit our local Maple Syrup Producers!

USDA's National Organic Program (NOP)

The Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) was passed by Congress in 1990. The OFPA required the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to develop national standards for organically produced agricultural products to assure consumers that agricultural products marketed as organic meet consistent, uniform standards. Regulations require that agricultural products labeled as organic originate from farms or handling operations that are certified by a State or private entity that has been accredited by the USDA. The NOP is a marketing program within the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. Neither the OFPA nor the NOP regulations address food safety or nutrition.

NOP regulations prohibit the use of genetic engineering, ionizing radiation, and synthetic substances in organic production and handling. As a general rule, all natural (non-synthetic) substances are allowed. There is a national list of Allowed Synthetic and Prohibited Non-Synthetic Substances, a section in the regulations, contains the specific exceptions to the rule.

More consumers are looking to purchase organically grown or produced dairy products, vegetables, fruits, etc. If you are currently providing organic products or are interested in getting started in organic farming you can obtain the information you need from the USDA at www.usda.gov, or contact Rick Macsuga at the CT Department of Agriculture at (860) 713-2500.

USDA Farm Service Nationwide 2008 Summer Intern Program Recruitment Announcement

Announcing Clerk/Assistant or Program Technician summer intern positions available at the USDA Farm Service Agency. Location: USDA, Farm Service Agency—Nationwide. Exact location to be determined at a later date. Applicants must indicate the State(s) of interest and submit separate application(s) for each State desired. Major duties: Provide assistance to senior specialists in day-to-day activities of State and County operations, which include clerical support, office management, providing service to farmers/ranchers for loan processing & servicing, or administering farm programs. Desired Major/Course Work: Economics, Finance, Agriculture, Agribusiness, Business Management or Marketing; computer skills required. Knowledge & skill in the application of ESRI ArcGIS 8.3 products desirable.

Closing date: March 14, 2008. For more information refer to <http://www.usda.gov/da/employ/intern.htm> or you may contact our office for a copy of the posting at (860) 774-8397, ext. 1.

Connecticut Department of Agriculture provides the Connecticut Weekly Agricultural Report free on-line!

This report provides valuable information at your fingertips. The web version of the Agricultural report is available at www.ct.gov/doag and click on publications then click on Connecticut Weekly Agricultural Report. Once you're at the Ag Report web page, click on current edition.

**2008 Crop Year Wool, Mohair, and Unshorn Pelt Marketing
Assistance Loan (MAL) and LDP Policy**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008—was signed by the President on December 26, 2007. This act authorizes MAL and LDP programs for 2008 crops of graded and ungraded wool, mohair, and unshorn pelts through March 15, 2008.

Note: The 2008 crop year wool and mohair loan rates will remain unchanged from the 2007 crop loan rates. Graded Wool: \$1.00/lb., Ungraded Wool: \$.40/lb., Mohair \$4.20/lb. Please contact us at (860) 774-8397, ext. 1, for more information.

2008 Crop Insurance Policy Sign-up Deadlines

Adjusted Gross Revenue	January 31, 2008
Adjusted Gross Revenue—Lite	March 15, 2008
Corn	March 15, 2008
Corn-Crop Revenue Coverage	March 15, 2008
Fresh Market Sweet Corn	March 15, 2008
Potatoes	March 15, 2008
Tobacco	March 15, 2008
Nursery	30 day waiting period before protection attaches
Organic Crops	Contact your crop insurance agent

**Connecticut Department of Agriculture now has: Commodity Brochure
Applications available on-line!**

If you are interested in being listed in any of the Department's commodity brochures, you can now download the applications from their website—www.ctgrown.gov under "Publications" or "Forms". Applications currently available for download include:

"Agritourism" Brochure (Autumn)	"Experience Dairy Products" Brochure
"Farm Stands and Stores throughout CT" Brochure	"CT Grown Honey Producers" Brochure
"Ct Grown Meat Producers" Brochure	"Pick your Own" Brochure
"Wholesale Growers " Listing	

If you have any questions or would like more information or details about the Department's organic, apple or horse brochures, **please contact Jaime Smith at 860-713-2559.**

Connecticut Renewable Energy Incentive Program

CT Clean Energy Fund (CCEF) offers rebates for CT residents who install solar electric (photovoltaic) systems on their homes. The incentives are available through Solar Works Inc., designated as an approved installer by CCEF. They also have an on-site Renewable DG Program providing financial support to stimulate demand for behind-the-meter installations of CT commercial, industrial and institutional buildings.

- *The program offers grants to buy down the cost of solar electric generating systems;*
- *Grant amount for a given project will be limited up to \$4 million;*
- *Grant request must be made through an application process with CCEF Board;*
- *The Energy Policy Act of 2005 established a 30% investment tax credit;*
- *To be eligible for the tax credit the system must be placed into service before December 31, 2008*

**For more information on these programs refer to <http://www.solar-works.com>
or <http://Connecticut.uscity.net/solarenergy>.**

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March Events

March 3rd: Volunteers Needed: Monday March 3rd is Natl. Read Across America Day. CT Ag. Ed. Foundation has chosen to read The Tree Farmer. If you can provide an hour of your time to read at the elementary school of your choice contact Eleanore Provençal at 860-871-2987, ext. 100 or eleanore@ctaef.org.

March 8th: Dairy, Connecticut Hoof Trimming Clinic, UConn, Ratcliffe Hicks Arena, Storrs, contact Sheila Andrew, UConn, (860) 486-0803.

March 8th & 9th: Hebron Maple Festival: 18th Annual Hebron Maple Festival, visit their website for more information at www.hebronmaplefest.com

March 11th: Moving your Farm Transfer Forward: The 2nd workshop in a series of Transferring the Farm, Sturbridge, MA. Contact: Norm Bender, 860-885-2827 or norman.bender@uconn.edu.

March 17th: New England Dairy Conference, Update-Contagious Mastitis Control & Mycoplasma bovis, Uconn, Bishop Center for Continuing Education, Storrs, contact Sheila Andrew, UConn, (860) 486-0803.

March 18th: Ask the Experts about Farm Labor, Prop. & Sales Tax and Farmland Preservation: 8:30 a.m., Cromwell Courtyard Marriott, Contact: Norm Bender 860-885-2827 or norman.bender@uconn.edu.



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Ron Clark, Farm Loan Manager
860-887-3604 x 105

COUNTY COMMITTEE:

Harold Bishop, Chairman
Betsy Molodich,
Vice-Chairman
Charles Tyler, Regular
Member