

# **BF 103 Finding, Evaluating Farm sites, Leasing Farmland**

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December 2018**

# SOLID GROUND FARMER TRAININGS

*Strengthening Our Farms Across Connecticut*

Visit [newfarms.extension.uconn.edu/solidground](http://newfarms.extension.uconn.edu/solidground) for full training schedule offered in collaborations with our

## **Agricultural Learning Partners:**

- **Common Ground, New Haven**
- **Community Farm of Simsbury, Simsbury**
- **Green Village Initiative, Bridgeport**
- **Killingly Agricultural Education Center, Killingly**
- **Knox- Urban Farming Incubator Program, Hartford**
- **Grow Windham, Willimantic, Windham**
- **Listo Para Iniciar Program, Bethel**

# INTRODUCTIONS

Who's in the room?

# What Is Land Tenure?

- Land Tenure is the way people hold their land, usually owning or leasing it
  - It includes legal, political and business considerations
- For landowners, responsibilities and rights are defined by land use laws.
- For tenants, responsibilities and rights are spelled out in lease agreements.

# What Is the Issue of Land Access?

- Land access makes it possible for farmers and ranchers to secure suitable land to support their operations
- It involves land seekers and land owners
- It also involves service providers, community members, local governments, policy makers, real estate markets etc.

# Secure tenure is necessary for a farm or ranch to be sustainable

- Secure land tenure includes:
  - Affordability and availability
  - Findability and security
  - Equity and housing
  - Compatibility with land use laws and/or lease and deed terms

# Your Land...

- **Accessible:** use and suitability
- **Secure:** sufficient and appropriate
- **Equitable:** division of rights and responsibilities
- **Affordable:** what does this mean?
- **Meet needs:** business *and* social
- **Findable!**



# Why Does it Matter?

- Access to land is a serious challenge faced by most beginning farmers and ranchers
- It's often hard for beginners to:
  - Find suitable, available and affordable land to purchase and/or lease
  - Secure loans to buy it
  - Negotiate appropriate lease arrangements
    - ◆ Especially with non- family members

# Key Trends

- Competition for land from:
  - Non-farm development
  - Established farmers
  - Estate market and large parcel sizes
- So it's hard to find land to rent or buy
  - Especially for beginners if they don't come from a "landed" farm family



# Who Owns U.S. Ag Land?

- Principal operators own 68% of ag land acres
- Non-operator landlords own and rent out 31%:
  - 80% of land rented out for agriculture
- Seniors Own 40% of total ag land acres!
  - 33% of principal operators are over 65; own 38%
  - 57% of principal landlords are over 65; own 69% of land rented out by non-operator landlords.



# Landowners are Largely White Males

## Principal operators who own and operate ag land:

- 95.5% are white
- 14% are women
- 3.2% are Hispanic/Latino (regardless of race)
- 1.8% are American Indian/Alaskan native
- 1.5% are Black/African American

## Principal non-operator landlords:

- 97% are white
- 37% are women
- 2% Hispanic/Latino (regardless of race)

# Demographics Add Barriers to Access

- Many seniors are not retiring:
  - Landowners only plan to transfer ~10% of their land in the next 5 years – mostly through gifts or trusts
  - *Only 91.5 million acres – or ~2% – is projected to be sold on the open market*
- A history of discriminatory policies and fractured heir property rights have suppressed landownership especially for Black and Native American farmers

# Land Prices are also Barriers

- And land is expensive!
- These are some of the reasons it is so hard for beginners to gain secure access to affordable land
- And why it is important to understand landlords and sellers

# Understanding Lessors and Sellers

## ***Why lease or sell?***

- Financial
- Estate, Succession Planning
- Quality of Life
- Maintain agriculture/forestry tax rates
- Support for agriculture
- No heirs to farm
- Institution mission & objectives

## **To whom?**

- Considerations in Finding/selecting a Farmer
- Leasing, selling procedures, financing

## **For how long?**

- Tenure Options.....

# Land Values Vary Widely

- An acre in New Jersey was \$12,800 in 2017, \$8,700 in California and \$920 in Montana
- The highest regional farm real estate values are in the Corn Belt, \$6,260/acre average
- The Mountain region had the lowest farm values, on average \$1,130/acre

# Rental Rates are Equally Varied

- Rates might be as high as \$12,500/acre for irrigated cropland vs. \$3,600 for non-irrigated land in California
- Or \$500/acre for irrigated cropland vs. \$50 for good quality hay land in Connecticut

# Farmland for the Next Generation

This training seeks to help beginning farmers and ranchers gain secure land tenure whether by renting or buying land from:

- Relatives or their estates
- Retiring farmers and ranchers
- Non-farming and institutional landowners; and
- Nontraditional landowners including land trusts and the public sector

# Land Access Training: 8 Parts

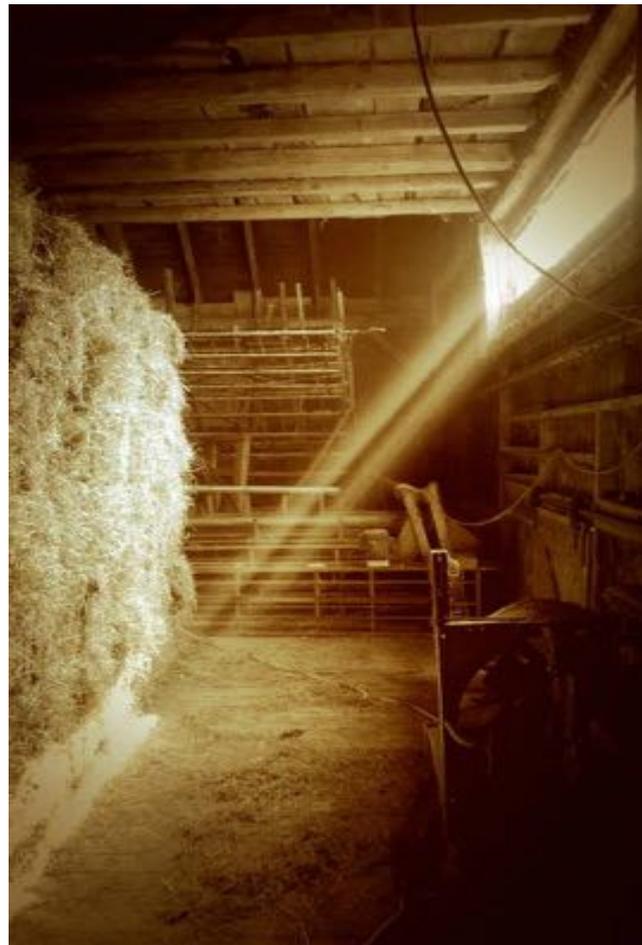
- Introduction to Land Tenure
- Financial Readiness
- Land Tenure Options
- Finding Land
- Land Assessment
- Leasing Land
- Purchasing Land
- Succession Planning

# Factors Affecting Land Tenure Decisions

- Personal and business goals
- Your current financial position
- Capital needs of your business
- Earning potential of your business

# Your Values and Goals

- Your beliefs about land ownership, debt, wealth-building
- Significant others: on the same page?
- Your business goals
- Comfort with risk?
- Farm with others?
- What is the driver?





# Farm Access Decision Tool

This decision tool organizes the basic farm access methods into three categories. Each category lays out the division of interests (rights) in the property, the legal vehicles, and the parties involved. Most land tenure arrangements will fall into one of these categories. This tool helps you compare methods and make informed decisions. It accompanies the Farm Access Methods Guide found at [www.landforgood.org/resources/toolbox/](http://www.landforgood.org/resources/toolbox/).

## WHAT IS MY FARM ACCESS GOAL?

**Ownership Now**

**Ownership  
in the Future**

**No Ownership**

## WHICH ARRANGEMENTS MIGHT WORK FOR ME?

Sole Ownership	Whole Shared Ownership Interests	Partial Ownership Interests	Path to Ownership	Leasehold Interest	Other Arrangements for Land
<p>Farmer acquires title to land, known as fee simple</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Deedright Purchase</li> <li>▷ Financed purchase with conventional or alternative financing</li> <li>▷ Gift or inheritance from family member or other</li> </ul>	<p>A group of farmers, or farmers with non-farmers, forms a legal entity to own the farmland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ LLC or Corporation</li> <li>▷ Cooperative</li> </ul>	<p>Farmer and other entities own different interests (rights) in the land</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Ground lease where entity owns land, farmer owns structures and tills land</li> <li>▷ Life estate where non-farmer retains rights to occupy</li> <li>▷ Easement</li> </ul>	<p>Farmer purchases a specific farm over time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Lease-to-own with right of first refusal or purchase option</li> <li>▷ Land contract where farmer pays landowner toward purchase</li> <li>▷ LLC or corporation within which equity in the farm is gradually transferred</li> <li>▷ Gift of land over time</li> </ul>	<p>Farmer (tenant) has a contractual agreement assigning use rights and responsibilities, may be written or oral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Short-term lease</li> <li>▷ Long-term lease</li> <li>▷ Ground lease where entity owns land, farmer owns structures and tills land</li> </ul>	<p>Farmer has agreement granting permission to use the land (technically not a tenant)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ License or Permit</li> <li>▷ Agreement</li> </ul>

## WHO MIGHT BE INVOLVED?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Private bank</li> <li>▷ State/Federal lender</li> <li>▷ Seller-financier</li> <li>▷ Community/Alternative lender</li> <li>▷ Family/trust</li> <li>▷ Employer</li> <li>▷ Other private landowner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Other farmers</li> <li>▷ Community members</li> <li>▷ Investors</li> <li>▷ Family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Community land trust</li> <li>▷ Conservation land trust</li> <li>▷ Other Non-profit</li> <li>▷ Public/Govt's entity</li> <li>▷ Private landowner</li> <li>▷ Investors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Private landowner</li> <li>▷ Family</li> <li>▷ Non-profit (e.g., land trust, school)</li> <li>▷ Public/Govt's entity</li> <li>▷ Investors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Private landowner</li> <li>▷ Family</li> <li>▷ Public/Govt's entity</li> <li>▷ Non-profit (e.g., land trust, school)</li> <li>▷ Investors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Private landowner</li> <li>▷ Public/Govt's entity</li> <li>▷ Non-profit (e.g., land trust, school)</li> <li>▷ Other landholding entity</li> </ul>
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# Financial Readiness

- Personal finance family living needs form the basis for determining the type and structure of farm acquisition that is affordable to the farmer.
- Farm business finance shows how the farm business plan helps determine capacity to lease or buy a farm property, supports family living and helps secure farm financing.
- Farm acquisition finance addresses farm valuation, securing financing, costs of purchasing and special circumstances that may influence farm affordability and financing.



# Land Tenure Situations Come with Financial Obligations

- It's important to understand both the costs of buying, leasing and even inheriting land
- AND the costs of maintaining it over time
- Factor in things like property taxes, upkeep, insurance, etc.

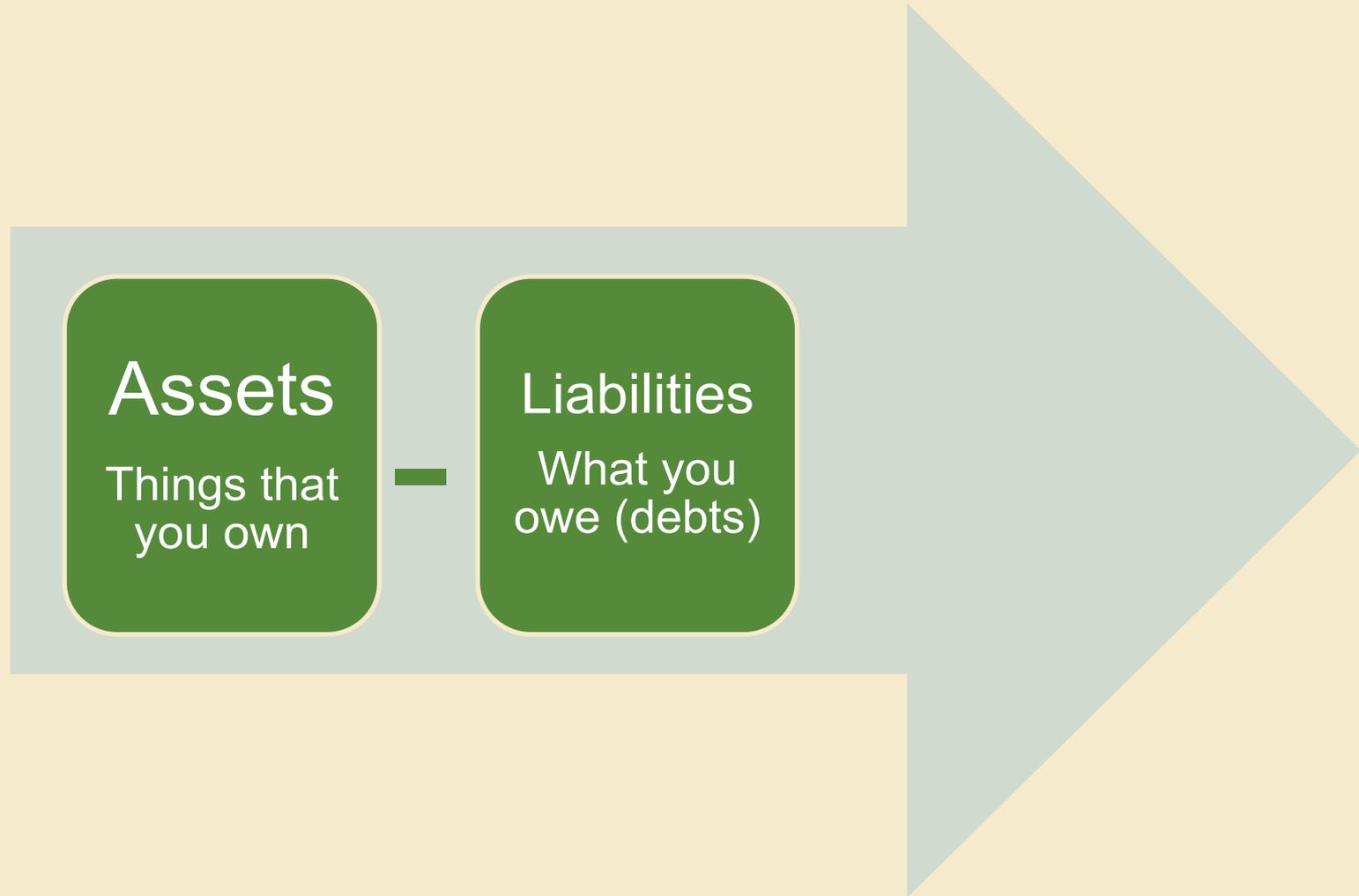
# The Balance Sheet



## Assets

Things that  
you own

# The Balance Sheet



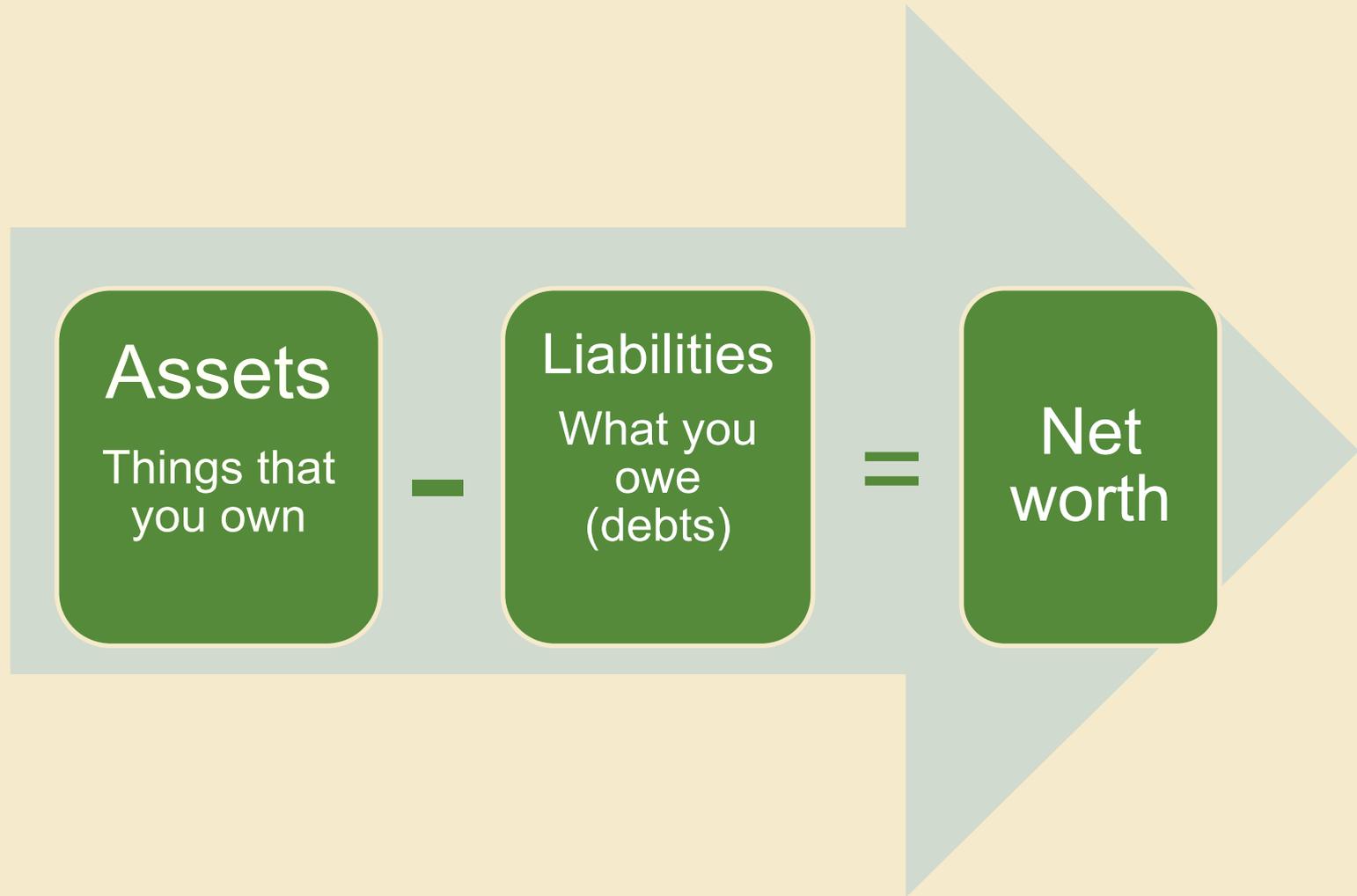
**Assets**

Things that  
you own

**Liabilities**

What you  
owe (debts)

# The Balance Sheet



# The Balance Sheet

The **balance sheet** is a listing of all your assets and liabilities.

Balance Sheet		
Assets:		
Savings	\$3,000	
Car	\$10,000	
Real Estate	\$100,000	
<u>Total Assets:</u>		<u>\$113,000</u>
Liabilities:		
Credit Card	\$1,000	
Mortgage	\$50,000	
<u>Total Liabilities:</u>		<u>\$51,000</u>
Net Worth:		\$62,000

# Three Main Financial Statements

- **Balance Sheet:** Tells you your current financial position.
- **Income Statement:** Tells whether you are making or losing money in your enterprise.
- **Cash Flow Statement:** Keeps track of where cash comes from and where it goes.

## Part 3: What are Lenders Looking For?



# Both Leasing and Purchasing Land Require a Financial Commitment

- A landlord will want to make sure you can make lease payments on time.
- A lender will want to make sure you can repay your loan.
- Both may require documentation to prove your credit-worthiness.

# Lenders Want to See Financial Documents

- When approaching a lender: Be ready!
- Whether borrowing for land or borrowing for your farm or ranch business:
  - Know your financial position
  - Know how much loan you can repay
  - Have your documents in order

# Eventually, You'll Need a Business Plan

- It's a roadmap to success
- Critical for long-range planning as well as getting financing
- Should be general enough to be flexible, but provide clear direction

# Elements of a Business Plan

## A business plan describes:

- Who you are
- Who are your customers
- What you plan to produce
- How you plan to produce it
- How you will market your product
- **How you will make money!**

# Approaching a Lessor

Be prepared to demonstrate that you will be a reliable tenant.

A lessor may want:

- References
- Credit report
- Cash budget
- Legal contract

# Approaching a Lender

Be prepared with your financial documents.

Most lenders will want:

- Tax returns
- References
- Credit report
- Cash budget
- Business plan

# Part 1: Paths to Land Access



# Two Forms of Land Tenure

- To own or
- To lease

# Three Basic Paths to Land Access

- Leasing land
- Buying land
- Accepting gifts/inheriting land

# Leasing Land

- Leases can be oral or written
- Short or long term
- With different payment arrangements:
  - Cash leases
  - Share agreements
- Ground leases
- Leases with option to purchase

# Land Leasing: Pros

- Affordability
- Flexibility – less risk when starting an operation
- Lower risk
- Frees capital to invest in building your equipment and/or livestock

# Land Leasing: Things to Consider

- Less security
- Often short-term access to land
- Harder to build equity
- Must maintain relationship with your landlord
- Landowner may limit what you can do
- Important that both landowner and lessee have sufficient liability insurance

# Different Types of Landlords

## ■ Private

- Other farmers/ranchers (operators)
- Non-operators, often retired farmers and heirs
- Institutions like schools or churches
- Conservation organizations/Land trusts

## ■ Government

- Federal
- State
- Local
- Native American tribes

# Paths to Land Ownership

- Gift
- Inheritance
- Fee title purchase
- Fee title purchase & sale or donation of conservation easement
- Buying land over time:
  - Land contract or installment sale
  - Shared equity arrangements

# What Are Conservation Easements?

- A deed restriction landowners voluntarily place on part or all of their land
  - Conservation easements are held by eligible conservation organizations – like land trusts – or units of government
- An agricultural conservation easement specifically protects agricultural land – it can be donated or sold
  - 28 states and nearly 100 local governments have public programs to purchase them

# Land Purchase: Pros

- Provides the rights of land ownership
- Permanent access to land
- Fewer limitations on what you can do with the land
- You can build equity in the land
- You can take advantage of federal income tax benefits and local property tax relief programs
- And participate in various state and federal financing opportunities

# Land Purchase: Things to Consider

- Requires a landowner interested in selling land
- Requires substantial financial investment and usually requires financing
- Does not allow for easy liquidation – land would have to be sold
- Ties up equity in the land
- More liability and risk - landowner is responsible for all bills, mortgage, taxes, maintenance costs and liability

# Accepting Gifts / Inheriting Land

- Sometimes people receive a direct gift or inherit land outright
- Often inheriting land or receiving it as a gift includes:
  - Gradual transfer of land and/or assets
  - Leasing some or all of the land
  - Purchasing some or all of the land and other assets

# Accepting Gifts / Inheriting Land: Pros

- All the benefits of ownership
- Potentially no or lower upfront financial investment to gain ownership

# Accepting Gifts / Inheriting Land: Things to Consider

- Includes all the considerations of purchasing plus:
- Requires the current landowner to transfer through a gift or bequest
- Requires careful planning to avoid gift and estate taxes
- May involve conflict with other family members

# Innovative Approaches to Land Access

- Lease from public entities, institutions and/or private land trusts
- Incubator farms
- Purchasing protected land

# Purchasing Protected Land

- Fee title purchase of protected land
- Fee title purchase & sale or donation of conservation easement
  - Through public Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement programs
  - Through eligible organizations, like land trusts

# How to Decide Which Land Tenure Options Are Right for You?

- What can you afford?
- Do you want to build equity?
- How much security do you need?

Networking/Activity Break  
**Land Requirements Worksheet**  
**15-20 min**

# *STEPS TO ACQUIRING A FARM OR FARMLAND\**



\* adapted from the 4 steps from the Land for Good website

# ***1. Gather information*** -Learn about land acquisition options that might be right for you

- Evaluate if a farm lease is for you
- Assess if purchasing a farm is for you
- Explore conventional & non-traditional approaches
- Learn about different kinds of landowners & landlords

## ***2. Prepare yourself*** - Use your newly gained knowledge to do your own planning

- **Evaluate your situation**
- **Set clear farm acquisition goals**
- **Take a personal financial inventory**

### ***3. Find farm prospects***

#### **Search for & evaluate properties**

- **Search strategies & techniques**
- **Evaluate properties, especially how they fit with your business plan**
- **Work with friends, communities, organizations & other farmers**

## ***4. Negotiate with landowners & landlords -*** **Develop successful agreements**

- **Communicate for success**
- **Learn negotiation hints & strategies**
- **Understand lease, purchase and sales,  
& other transfer agreements**
- **Use a team of advisors**

# The Town Office: A wealth of Information

- **Ownership, current title**
- **Zoning**
- **Building Code**
- **Aerial Maps**
- **Tax map and acreage**
- **Easements**
- **Taxes, liens, PA 490 status**
- **Comparable sales data**

# What should I consider when evaluating a farm or farmland ?

- Suitability with my business, financial, and personal goals and needs
- Location, location, location
- Natural Resources
- Infrastructure
- The landowner and their land
- Neighbors and the community
- Local Government and regulations
- Programs and assistance available to you

# What is a Land Assessment?

A land assessment is a way to evaluate a property in the context of its neighbors and community

- It inventories natural resources, physical characteristics and existing infrastructure.
- It documents historic and current land use.
- It evaluates a specific site and setting including owner, property and community considerations.
- It analyzes carrying costs.

# Why Conduct a Land Assessment?

- To identify the attributes and features of a specific site for ag production
- To make sure it is compatible with the kind of farming or ranching you want to do
- To see if you can afford it and overcome any limitations
- To compare properties to find the one that's best for you: does it meet your personal, financial and business goals?

# How to Assess a Specific Site

- Collect information like maps and photos
- Visit the site and community setting - talk to people!
- Identify experts to consult with on specific issues/concerns
- Document what you find: use a checklist
- Perform due diligence

# Analyzing Results from Reading the Land

- Does the property meet your needs and goals?
- Do you need another site visit or professional help to decide?
- Does the price reflect the value of the property for your operation?
- If this site doesn't completely meet your needs, visit other properties and compare the advantages.

# Natural Resources

- **Soil suitability – Web Soil Survey tool**
- **Water sources - quality and quantity**
- **Past history of the parcel**
- **Current land use and land cover**
- **Topographic position on the landscape**
- **Forest, wetlands, and other areas**
- **Viewsheds and field orientation**
- **Current health and conditions of resources**
- **Status of stewardship/conservation plan**

# Evaluating the property

- **Access to water**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Restrictions in the deed**
- **On-site visit, testing of soil and water**
- **Owner restrictions/uses**
- **Zoning restrictions**

# Location and Configuration

- Location, location, location
  - Where is the property located?
  - What are local weather patterns and growing seasons?
  - How is road and highway access?
  - Are services readily available?
  - Is housing affordable?
  - Are neighbors friendly toward agriculture?
- Configuration
  - Size, shape and orientation of fields and parcel
  - Neighboring land use and cover

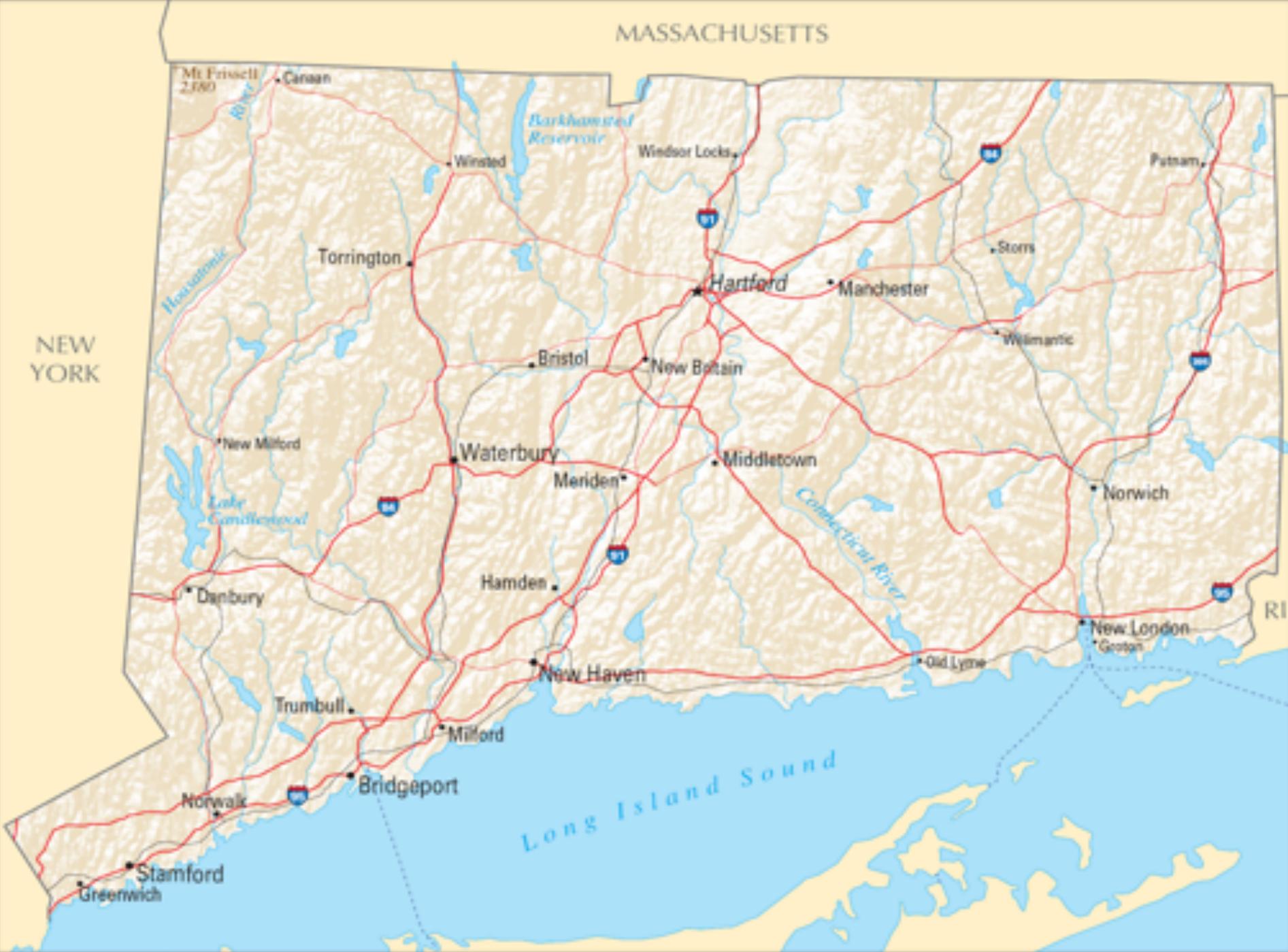
# Carrying Costs

- Property taxes
- Water and other utilities
- Conservation practices
- Needed improvements/restoration
- Special assessments

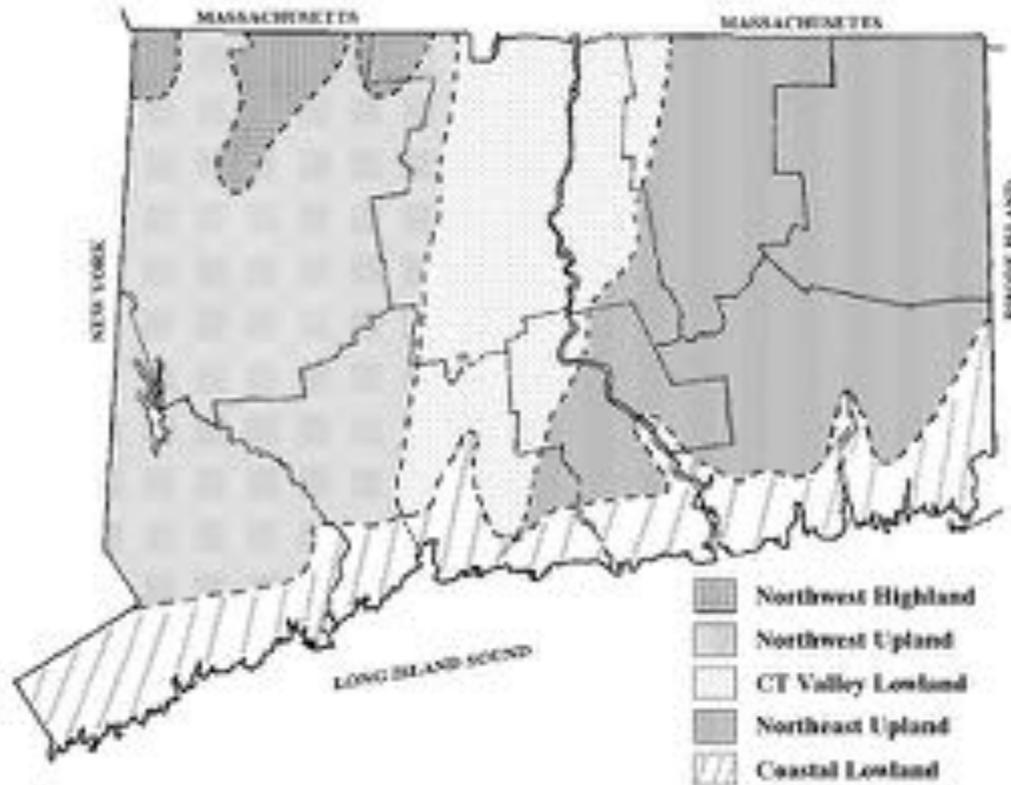
MASSACHUSETTS

NEW YORK

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# Physiographic Regions of Connecticut



USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map

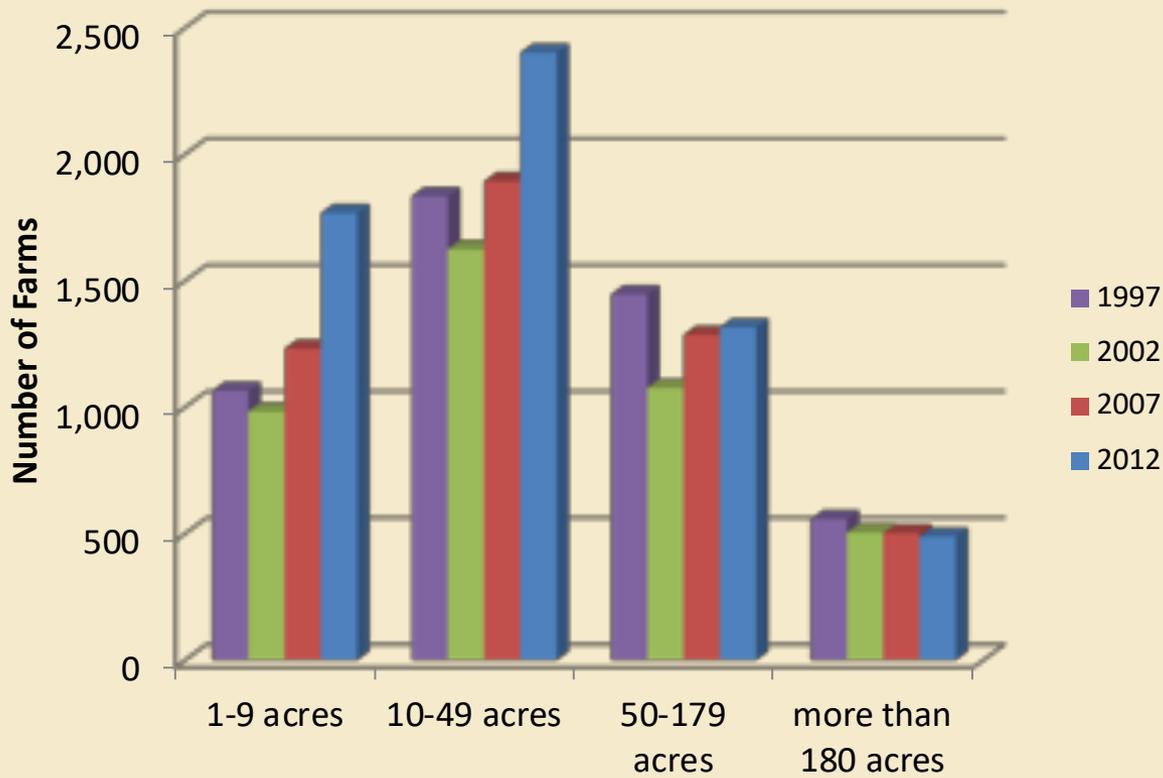
Connecticut and Rhode Island



# Agriculture is changing and growing in CT!

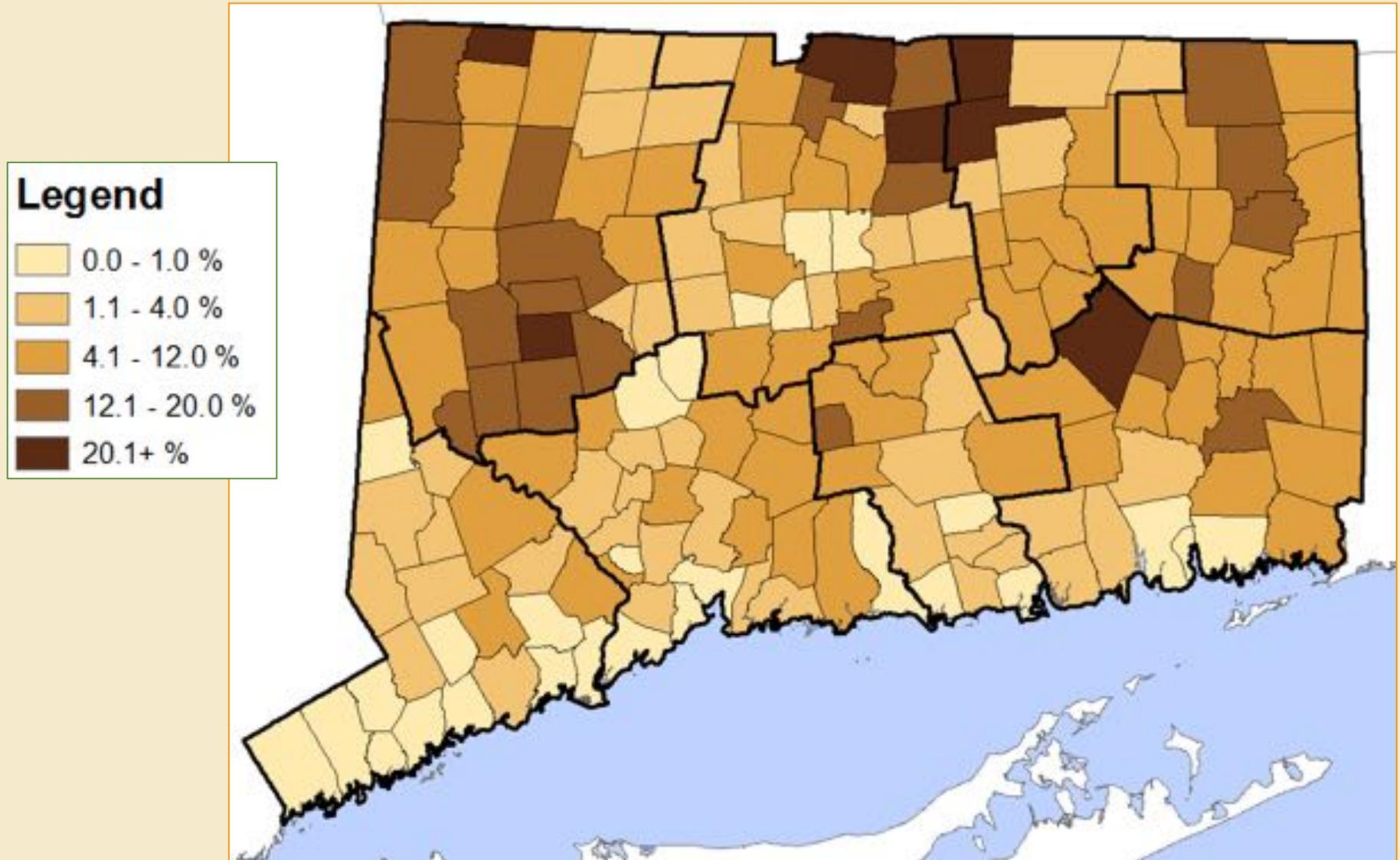
**5,977 farms in 2012,** up from 4,916 farms in 2007:  
1,061 more farms!

**CT Farms by Size**



- Less than 50 acres is increasing.
- 50 acres or more is flat to declining.

# Where is our agricultural land?



# How much do we have?

Agricultural use	# of acres	Percentage of CT land cover
Forested	144,391	
Cropland	151,144	
Permanent Pasture	39,806	
Farmsteads/buildings	101,198	
<b>Total Land in Farms:</b>	<b>436,539*</b>	<b>12.3%</b>

\* 3.59 Million People living in CT

Acres of CT farm/person = .12 acres/person

Data from 2012 Census of Agriculture

# Top Crops

## USDA Census of Agriculture 2012

**TOP CROPS**

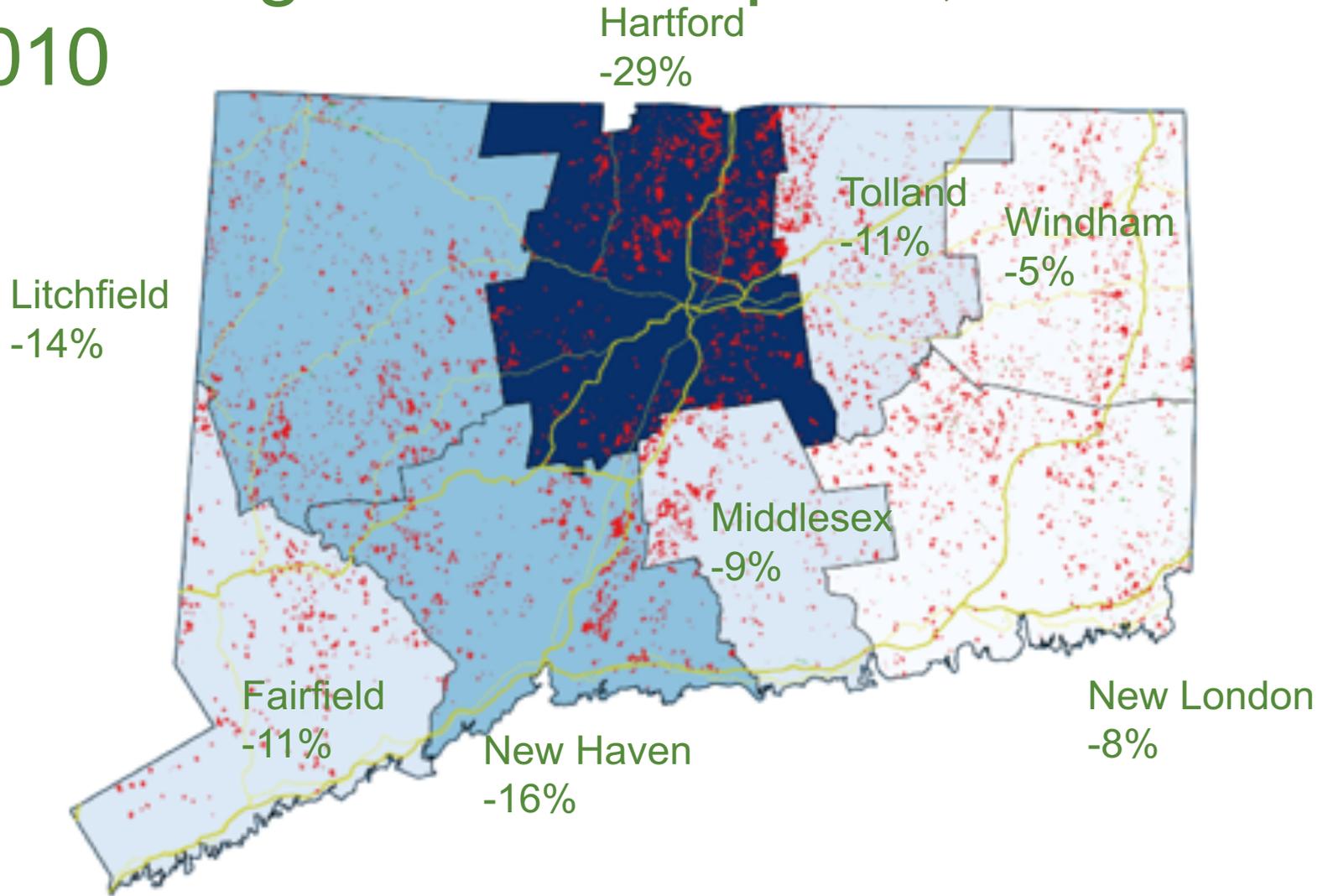
**ACRES**

- **Forage- hay, haylage, grass silage, greenchop** **69,013**
- **Corn for silage** **21,436**
- **Greenhouse, nursery, floriculture, sod** **15,096**
- **Vegetables harvested for sale** **9,293**
- **Fruit farms (tree, berries, nuts)** **5,831**

**436,539 acres in farms**

2012 Census of Agriculture, USDA - Compiled by NASS

# Loss of Agricultural Cropland, 1985 - 2010

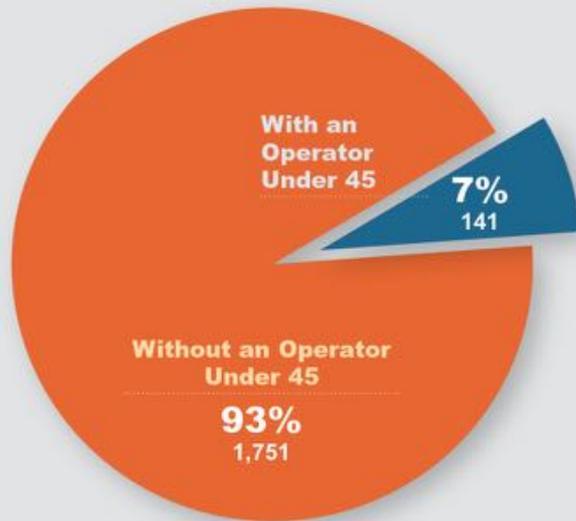


Source: UCONN CLEAR Land Cover

# KEEPING FARMERS ON THE LAND

New Research Underscores Need To Address  
Farm Transition in Connecticut

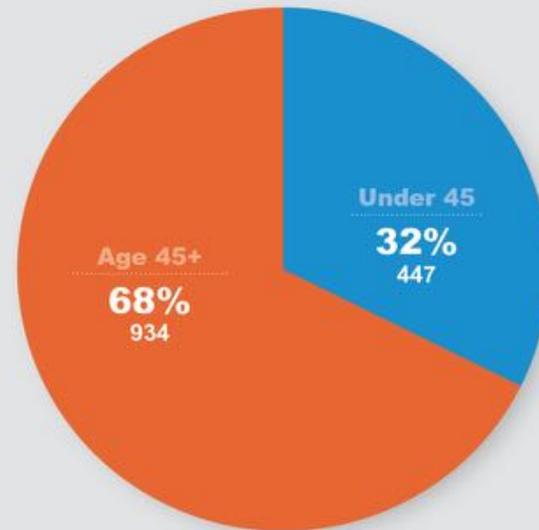
## Senior Farm Operators MORE THAN 90% HAVE NO YOUNG FARM OPERATOR FARMING ALONGSIDE CONNECTICUT



Source: 2012 Census of Agriculture

  
American Farmland Trust

## Beginning Farm Operators: A Majority of Them Are Age 45+ CONNECTICUT

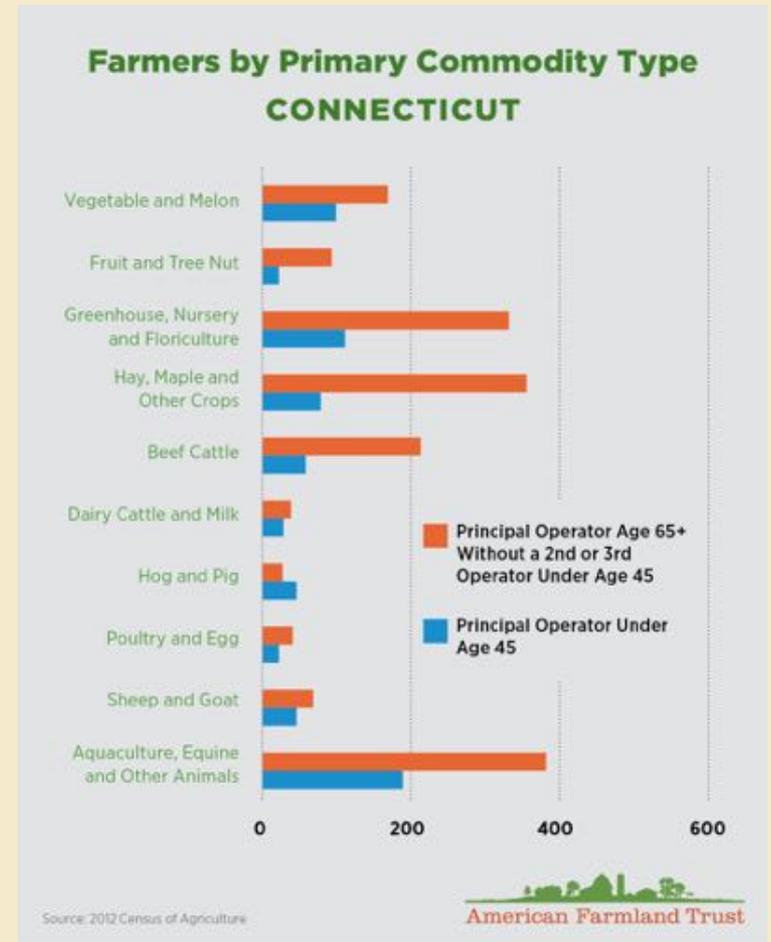
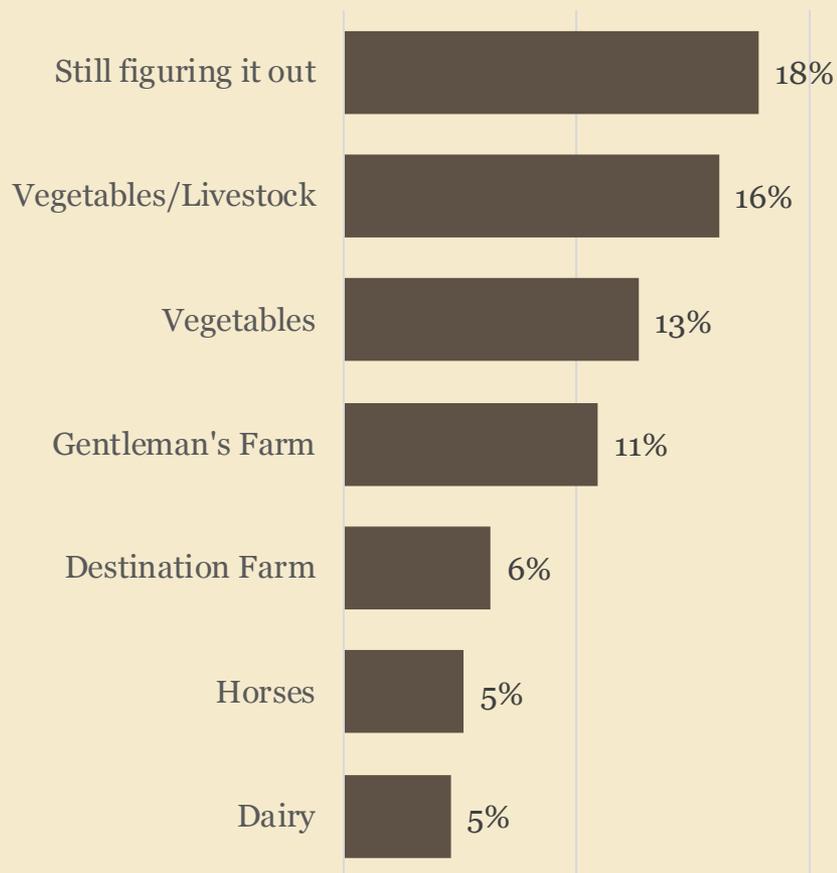


Source: 2012 Census of Agriculture

  
American Farmland Trust

# Farm Seekers and their interests

## % of Farm Seekers by Intent





## FARM RENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Just as in a farm purchase, your approach to leasing a farm or farmland should involve careful examination of the site conditions and variables that may affect the viability of your farm operation.

This checklist is meant to be used as a guide as you examine prospective farm properties for lease. **BEFORE** visiting farm properties for lease, carefully review each consideration. Identify any particular aspects vital to your operation. **NEXT**, as you visit a particular property, check the boxes on the left to confirm that you have considered each item. Note comments on the right to help remember unique observations, next steps and/or questions. You may want to bring an extra sheet of paper to help keep your notes organized. By carefully scrutinizing all of the items listed, you may be able to better evaluate the suitability of each property for your farm operation and identify any "deal breakers."

Information on developing working landlord-tenant relationships and drafting lease agreements can be found in the Resources section on page 4.

CONSIDERATION	COMMENTS OR SITE VISIT NOTES
<input type="checkbox"/> Access	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ag Support Services	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone Reception	
<input type="checkbox"/> Current Tenant Relations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Easements	
<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment Storage	
<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment Usage	
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing / Residence	
<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Usage, Improvements & Maintenance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Barns	
<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment sheds	
<input type="checkbox"/> Farm office	
<input type="checkbox"/> Farm stands	
<input type="checkbox"/> Feed storage facilities	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fencing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Food processing facilities	
<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouses	
<input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation, wet, watering systems	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile livestock units	
<input type="checkbox"/> Product storage facilities, coolers, freezers	
<input type="checkbox"/> Land Orientation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Livestock	
<input type="checkbox"/> Microclimates	
<input type="checkbox"/> Neighbor Relations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Power Supply	
<input type="checkbox"/> Property Boundaries	
<input type="checkbox"/> Roads	
<input type="checkbox"/> Records	
<input type="checkbox"/> Restrictions/Restricted Areas	
<input type="checkbox"/> Soils	
<input type="checkbox"/> Topography	
<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Water Resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Considerations	

# SITE INDICATOR SCORECARD

for Connecticut Community Gardeners



U.S.D.A. National Experiment Station Connecticut Station

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Site Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Form Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_

(If applicable list)

Site Indicator	Poor	Tolerable	Best
<b>Accessibility</b>			
1. Walking distance to site	0.75 minutes <input type="checkbox"/>	1-20 minutes <input type="checkbox"/>	0-7 minutes <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Availability of parking	None <input type="checkbox"/>	Difficult <input type="checkbox"/>	No problem <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Path(s) from street	Can't see site, or it is not visible <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat visible <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Hilliness of site	Very hilly <input type="checkbox"/>	Some slope <input type="checkbox"/>	Level or nearly level <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Topography</b>			
5. Direction the slope faces	North <input type="checkbox"/>	East, West <input type="checkbox"/>	South <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Retention, ledge, or large boulders on site	Yes, makes it work around <input type="checkbox"/>	Some, but can work around them <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Location/Distance to Water</b>			
7. Water access - city water, pond, or stream for irrigation	No water available on the site, and no access to bring it to site <input type="checkbox"/>	Have to connect to city water or bring water to site <input type="checkbox"/>	Water available easily <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Water quality tested	Bad quality, can't use <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair quality <input type="checkbox"/>	Good quality <input type="checkbox"/>
9. Erosion	After rainfall, a lot of soil washes from site <input type="checkbox"/>	After rainfall, a little soil washes from site <input type="checkbox"/>	After rainfall, no soil is seen to wash from site <input type="checkbox"/>
10. Water on surface during the growing season (spring, summer, fall)	After a moderate rainfall, water stays on surface for a few days <input type="checkbox"/>	After heavy rainfall, water stays on surface for a short time <input type="checkbox"/>	After rainfall, no water is observed on the soil surface <input type="checkbox"/>
11. Tree exposure through the day	Shady, very little exposure <input type="checkbox"/>	Not a thicked cover all the time <input type="checkbox"/>	Mostly sunny <input type="checkbox"/>
12. Amount of existing pavement on site	Too much pavement, will interfere with plans for the site <input type="checkbox"/>	Some, but can work around <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>
13. Other construction materials, bricks, concrete, etc. (?)	A lot on the surface <input type="checkbox"/>	Dispersed <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>
14. Structures through site	None <input type="checkbox"/>	Some <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>
15. Neighborhood type	Not good location for access <input type="checkbox"/>	Some use <input type="checkbox"/>	No problems observed <input type="checkbox"/>
16. Human activity on site	Lots of evidence of people on site <input type="checkbox"/>	Some people use site <input type="checkbox"/>	Very little or no evidence of people on site <input type="checkbox"/>
17. What's growing on the site now?	Lots of unwanted weeds or trash <input type="checkbox"/>	Some unwanted weeds and trash <input type="checkbox"/>	Plants will mix well with site plans <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>History of Site</b>			
18. History of site	Not known <input type="checkbox"/>	Some stories about the site <input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely known <input type="checkbox"/>

# SOIL INDICATOR SCORECARD

for Connecticut Community Gardeners



USDA, National Resources Conservation Service

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Site Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Form Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_

If applicable use:

Soil Indicator	Poor	Tolerable	Best
19. Can you see the soil that is on the soil? (Is there soil on the soil?)	No, there is being soil in site <input type="checkbox"/>	Some <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes, all soil is available <input type="checkbox"/>

## Surface of Soil

20. Cracks on soil surface in July and August	Many cracks <input type="checkbox"/>	Occasional fine cracks <input type="checkbox"/>	No cracks <input type="checkbox"/>
21. How do existing plants grow? Compare open level of plant	Plants are dead or struggling <input type="checkbox"/>	Plants taller and more abundant <input type="checkbox"/>	Plants look healthy <input type="checkbox"/>

## Soil Examination

22. Level of soil	Very unevenly, gullies, water signs, or hard or strange <input type="checkbox"/>	No cracks <input type="checkbox"/>	Even, easy <input type="checkbox"/>
-------------------	--	------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

If it was possible to smell some components, the level, in the soil, level the site of the soil level is poor unless you can determine the site history is right and environmental testing for contaminants indicates the area is right. Do not smell the soil if the smell is offensive.

23. How hard is it to dig a hole two feet deep?	Very possible <input type="checkbox"/>	Moderately difficult <input type="checkbox"/>	Easy <input type="checkbox"/>
24. Try to make a hole one foot deep and soil surface two days after rainfall during the growing season.	1 foot longer hole or cannot be located <input type="checkbox"/>	1 foot longer can be pushed in with pressure <input type="checkbox"/>	1 foot longer goes in easily with finger <input type="checkbox"/>
25. Depth of soil	Less than 1 foot <input type="checkbox"/>	Between 1 and 2 feet <input type="checkbox"/>	More than 2 feet <input type="checkbox"/>
26. Depth of topsoil layer	0-2 inches <input type="checkbox"/>	3-7 inches <input type="checkbox"/>	7+ inches <input type="checkbox"/>
27. Color of topsoil layer	Yellow, grey, white, red <input type="checkbox"/>	Light brown <input type="checkbox"/>	Black, dark brown, dark red, color is uniform <input type="checkbox"/>
28. Moisture of soil two days after heavy rain	Soil is very dry or very wet <input type="checkbox"/>	Soil is somewhat dry or wet <input type="checkbox"/>	Soil is moist, but not wet <input type="checkbox"/>
29. How quickly water drains to one foot deep hole during the growing season	Water stays in hole and doesn't drain after 17 minutes <input type="checkbox"/>	Water drains, but less than one inch in 17 minutes <input type="checkbox"/>	Water soaks and quickly and evenly down more than one inch in 17 min <input type="checkbox"/>
30. How does loose soil feel (texture) -- The Guide to Soil Texture by Paul Parton	Sand, heavy sand, sandy clay, silty clay, or clay <input type="checkbox"/>	Clay loam, silty clay loam, or sandy clay loam <input type="checkbox"/>	Sandy loam, loam, or silt loam <input type="checkbox"/>
31. How loose soil particles hold together	Soil is hard and very difficult to break with finger <input type="checkbox"/>	Soil breaks apart with some difficulty with finger <input type="checkbox"/>	Soil crumbles easily with finger <input type="checkbox"/>
32. Roots in the top 12 inches of soil	None <input type="checkbox"/>	Some roots grow mostly across the soil, not down <input type="checkbox"/>	Many roots grow mostly down into the soil, not across <input type="checkbox"/>
33. Worms and other bugs in the soil	None <input type="checkbox"/>	A few <input type="checkbox"/>	Many <input type="checkbox"/>
34. Stones or rocks in the soil	Too many <input type="checkbox"/>	Some <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>
35. Debris in the soil (sticks, construction materials, glass, concrete, etc.)	Too much to dig around <input type="checkbox"/>	A little bit, doesn't interfere with digging <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>
36. Other things, old tires in the soil	Too much to dig around <input type="checkbox"/>	A few small pieces <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>









It's  
All  
About  
the  
Soil!!



Your soil is here, sir.

# Soil and soil landscape properties important for agriculture

- Suitability for different crops and kinds of agriculture
- Impacts on equipment, farmability (planting, harvesting, tilling)
- Moisture holding capacity- need for irrigation, drainage
- Available rooting depth for plants
- Fertility, impacts on effectiveness of fertilizers, pesticides
- Soil temperature
- Potential for erosion, leaching of nutrients, pesticides
- Potential for compaction, seasonal wetness, flooding, ponding
- Suitability and management of farm infrastructure; fences, utilities, foundations, etc
- Resiliency to intense use, climate change

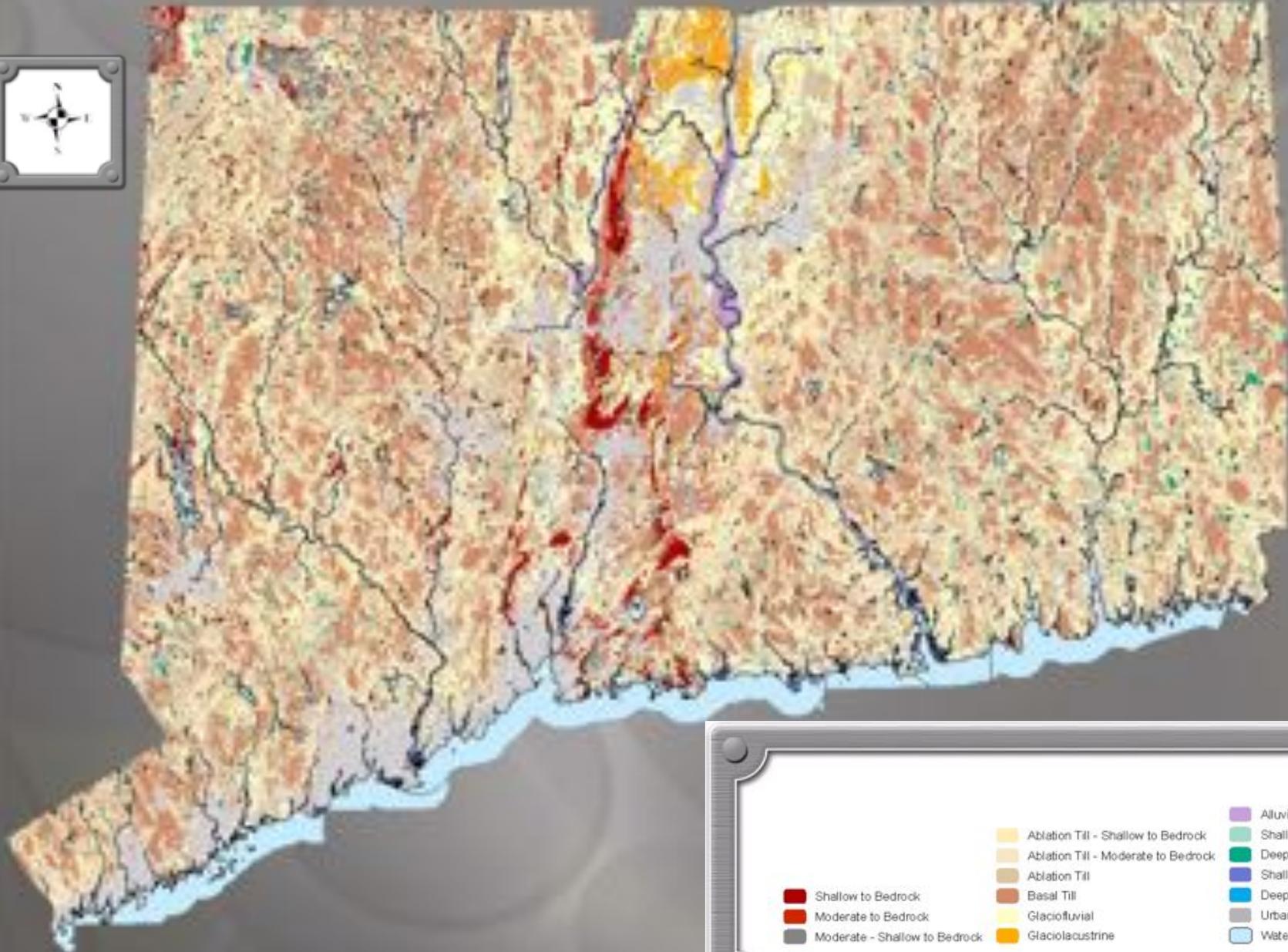








# Soil Parent Material



# Where are our best soils?

## *Connecticut Prime and Important Farmland Soils*



Prime Farmland Soils are those soils that are of the highest quality and are best suited to the production of food and fiber. They are the most productive soils in the State and are the most vulnerable to loss. They are the most important soils in the State and are the most vulnerable to loss. They are the most important soils in the State and are the most vulnerable to loss.

Statewide Important Farmland Soils are those soils that are of high quality and are best suited to the production of food and fiber. They are the most productive soils in the State and are the most vulnerable to loss. They are the most important soils in the State and are the most vulnerable to loss.

Local Government Farmland Maps are those maps that show the location of farmland in a local government's jurisdiction. They are used to identify farmland that is subject to local government action and to provide information to the public.

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
National Resources Inventory  
National Inventory of Wetlands  
National Inventory of Plant Hardiness Zones

© 2000 National Resources Inventory

# Glaciofluvial Parent Material



***Manchester Series***

# WSS homepage - click on Start button



The image shows the homepage of the Web Soil Survey (WSS). At the top, there is a banner with the USDA logo and the text "National Resources Conservation Service" and "Web Soil Survey". Below the banner is a navigation menu with links for "Home", "About Soils", "Help", and "Contact Us". The main content area features a large green button labeled "START WSS" with a red arrow pointing to it. To the left of the button is a search box and a "Browse by Subject" menu. To the right is a "I Want To..." section with a list of links. Below the "START WSS" button is a "Welcome to Web Soil Survey (WSS)" section with a photo of people in a field and a paragraph of text. Below that is a "Three Basic Steps" section with a numbered list starting with "1 Define..." and a "Area of Interest (AOI)" section with a red button and text.

USDA National Resources Conservation Service

## Web Soil Survey

Home About Soils Help Contact Us

You are here: Web Soil Survey Home

The simple yet powerful way to access and use soil data.

**START WSS**

**I Want To...**

- Start Web Soil Survey (WSS)
- Know the requirements for running Web Soil Survey
- Know whether Web Soil Survey works in my web browser
- Know the Web Soil Survey source of operation
- Find what areas of the U.S. have soil data

**Announcements/Events**

- Web Soil Survey Release History

**I Want Help With...**

- How to use Web Soil Survey

**Welcome to Web Soil Survey (WSS)**

Web Soil Survey (WSS) provides soil data and information produced by the National Cooperative Soil Survey. It is operated by the USDA National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and provides access to the largest natural resource information system in the world. NRCS has soil maps and data available online for more than 95 percent of the nation's counties and anticipates having 100 percent in the near future. The site is updated and maintained online as the single authoritative source of soil survey information.

**Three Basic Steps**

- 1 Define...

**Area of Interest (AOI)** Use the Area of Interest tab to define your area of interest.

# View the Soil Map

Web Soil Survey

Contact Us Download Soils Data Archived Soil Surveys Soil Survey Status Glossary Preferences Logout Help

Area of Interest (AOI) **Soil Map** Soil Data Explorer Shopping Cart (Free)

Printable Version Add to Shopping Cart

Search

Map Unit Legend

State of Connecticut (CT600)

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
2	Ridgebury fine sandy loam	14.2	3.3%
3	Ridgebury, Leicester, and Whitman soils, extremely stony	13.0	3.0%
13	Walpole sandy loam	6.6	1.5%
15	Scarboro muck	8.9	2.0%
17	Timakwa and Natchaug soils	19.1	4.4%
18	Catden and Freetown soils	0.1	0.0%
21A	Ninigret and Tisbury soils, 0 to 5 percent slopes	15.3	3.5%

Soil Map

Click on map unit name for description

The screenshot shows a web application interface with a sidebar on the left and a main content area on the right. The sidebar contains a search bar, a map unit legend, and a table of map units for the State of Connecticut (CT600). The table has columns for Map Unit Symbol, Map Unit Name, and Acres in AOI. The 'Ridgebury fine sandy loam' entry (symbol 2) is circled in red, and a red arrow points from the text 'Click on map unit name for description' to it. The main content area displays a detailed report for the selected map unit, including its setting, composition, description, and properties.

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI
2	Ridgebury fine sandy loam	14.2
3	Ridgebury, Leicester, and Whitman soils, extremely stony	13.0
13	Walpole sandy loam	6.6
15	Scarboro muck	8.9
17	Tinakwa and Natchaug soils	19.1
18	Catden and Freetown soils	0.1
21A	Ninigret and Tisbury soils, 0 to 5 percent slopes	15.3
23A	Sudbury sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes	3.5
29A	Agawam fine sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes	5.1

**Report — Map Unit Description**

**State of Connecticut**

**2—Ridgebury fine sandy loam**

**Map Unit Setting**

Elevation: 0 to 1,200 feet  
Mean annual precipitation: 37 to 56 inches  
Mean annual air temperature: 45 to 55 degrees F  
Frost-free period: 140 to 185 days

**Map Unit Composition**

Ridgebury and similar soils: 80 percent  
Minor components: 20 percent

**Description of Ridgebury**

**Setting**

Landform: Depressions, drainageways  
Down-slope shape: Concave  
Across-slope shape: Concave  
Parent material: Coarse-loamy lodgment till derived from granite and/or schist and/or gneiss

**Properties and qualities**

Slope: 0 to 5 percent  
Depth to restrictive feature: 20 to 30 inches to dense material  
Drainage class: Poorly drained  
Capacity of the most limiting layer to transmit water (Ksat): Very low to moderately high (0.00 to 0.20 in/hr)  
Depth to water table: About 0 to 6 inches  
Frequency of flooding: None  
Frequency of ponding: None  
Available water capacity: Very low (about 2.6 inches)

# Example Soil Interpretation Land Capability Classification Rating

Area of Interest (AOI) | Soil Map | **Soil Data Explorer** | Shopping Cart (Free)

View Soil Information By Use: All Uses | Printable Version | Add to Shopping Cart

Intro to Soils | **Suitabilities and Limitations for Use** | Soil Properties and Qualities | Ecological Site Assessment | Soil Reports

Search

Suitabilities and Limitations for Use

Building Site Development

Construction Materials

Disaster Recovery

**Land Classification**

Conservation Tillage

Ecological Site Assessment

Ecological Site Assessment

Farmland Classification

Forage Suitability

Hydric Rating

Irrigated Capability

Irrigated Capability

**Nonirrigated Capability**

View Options

Map Legend

Map Legend

- Area of Interest (AOI)
  - Area of Interest (AOI)
- Soils
  - Soil Survey Areas
  - Soil Map Units
  - Soil Ratings
    - Capability Class - I
    - Capability Class - II
    - Capability Class - III
    - Capability Class - IV
    - Capability Class - V
    - Capability Class - VI
    - Capability Class - VII
    - Capability Class - VIII
    - Not rated or not available
  - Special Point Features
  - Special Line Features
- Political Features
  - States
  - Counties
  - Urban Areas

Map - Nonirrigated Capability Class

Tables - Nonirrigated Capability Class - Summary By Map Unit

Summary by Map Unit - State of Connecticut

Map unit symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
2	Ridgebury fine sandy loam	4	14.2	3.3%
3	Ridgebury, Leicester, and Whitman soils,	7	13.0	3.0%

Description of Rating

Rating Options  Detailed Description



□ **Nothing Beats an onsite investigation!**

# Infrastructure

- **Suitability of buildings/infrastructure**
- **Condition of buildings/infrastructure**
- **Water quantity/quality, conveyance system**
- **Location and quality of farm roads/driveways**
- **Fencing and stone walls**
- **Conservation practices**
- **Septic systems, utility conditions and location**
- **Right of ways**















# The Landowner and their land

- Knowledge and attitude
- Involvement of family and friends
- Restrictions in the deed
- Ability to contact and communicate
- Owner wishes, restrictions/uses
- Zoning restrictions
- Other “allowable” uses of the property
- Current tax status
- Opportunities for improvements





# Neighbors and the Community

- **Kind and location of neighbors**
- **Distances to neighbor infrastructure and use**
- **History with landowner**
- **Farm friendliness of Town**
- **Presence of an agricultural community and their attitudes**
- **Opportunities for markets and partners**

# Suburban/Rural Interface





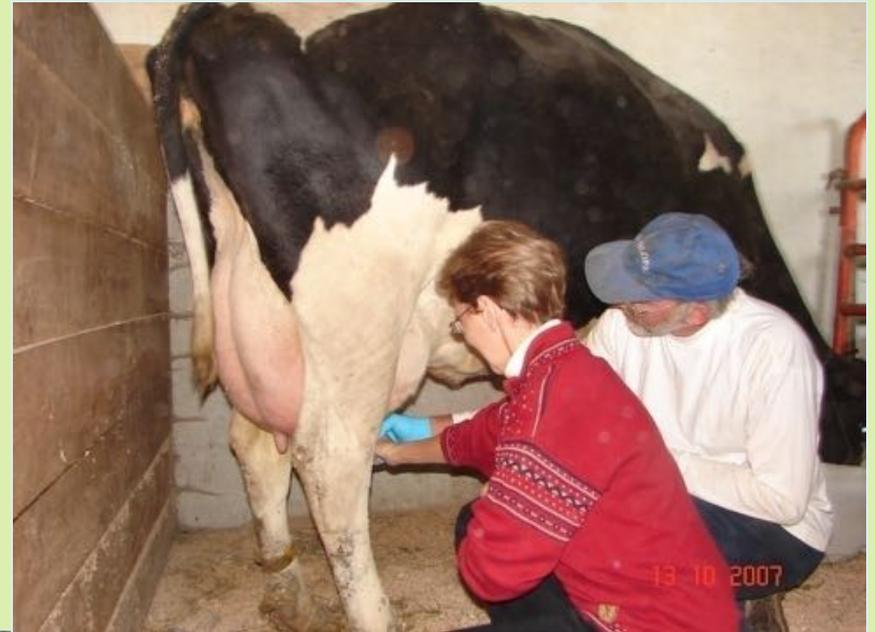


# Local government and regulations

- **Planning and zoning regulations**
- **Zoning of parcel**
- **Definitions of agriculture and use**
- **Presence of an Ag Commission**
- **Use of PA 490 and ag tax exemptions**
- **Knowledge and attitude of Town  
Commissions/Board/staff towards agriculture**
- **Plan of Conservation and Development**
- **Opportunity to share your time and talents**

# Does the Town view Ag as economic development?

*Blue Slope Farm Museum  
Franklin, CT*

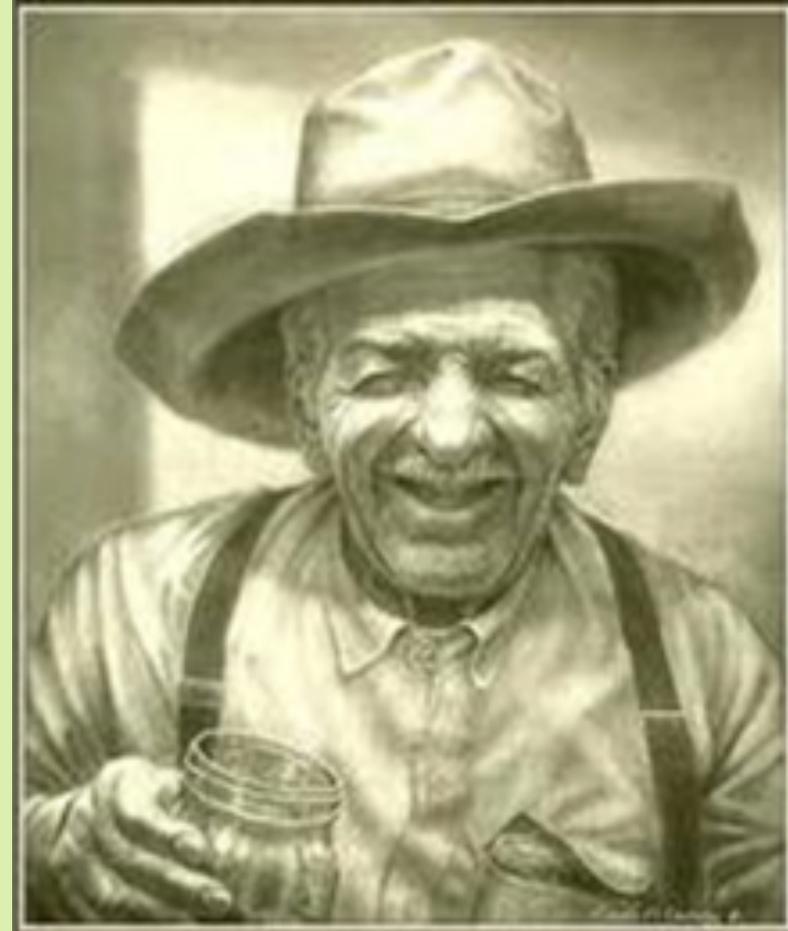


*Freund's Farm  
East Canaan, CT*

# Community and Surroundings

**Don't be afraid to talk with:**

- **Neighbors**
- **Current tenants**
- **Local volunteers on town planning , agricultural and conservation commissions**
- **Area Farmers**



# Ag Regulations of Concern

- *Regulations that conflict with state statute:*
  - CGS 19a-341 Right to Farm Law*
  - CGS 1-1(q) Definition of Agriculture*
  - CGS 12-107 PA 490*
  - CGS 22a-40(a)(1) Permitted Uses in Wetlands*
- *Minimum acreages for farms*
- *Fencing setbacks*
- *Livestock husbandry*
- *Animal density*
- *Costly/time consuming permitting process*



# Ag Friendly Regulations

- ✓ *Compatible with state statute*
- ✓ *Flexibility: regulations and permitting*
- ✓ *Site suitability*
- ✓ *Farm parcels in different ownerships*
- ✓ *Lease agreements*
- ✓ *Flexibility for on-farm marketing*
- ✓ *Subdivision regulations that require a buffer between building lots and the farm where the buffer is on the building lot.*





## Part 2: Finding Land Strategies



# Finding Land Overview

- Select a target location for your land search based on your personal and business goals
- Know what you're looking for
- Find out about real estate/rental values
- Identify resources that might provide access to suitable land
- Develop a plan!

# How can I find land to rent or buy?

- Word of mouth – e.g. from family and friends
- Real estate market
- Online resources
- Community networks



# How Can I find Farmland to rent or own?

- Land in the family
- Privately owned –unprotected
- Privately owned- protected
- Land Trust owned
- Municipal owned
- State owned
- Water Company/Utility owned
- Bring new land into production

# Accessing Land in the Family

- Estate Planning needs
- Transferring business/land to the next generation
- Use of Farmland Protection –sale or donation of easement reduces cost of the land for purchase
- Use of Lease Agreements

# Where to Look for Land

- **Outreach in the Community**
- **Land linking Services**
  1. **CT Farmlink**
  2. **New England Farmland Finder**
  3. **New England Landlink**
- **NOFA, Grange and other farm orgs**
- **Market Bulletin, Country Folks, etc.**
- **Town , State, Land Trust**
- **Incubator/ Community Farms**
- **CT MLS (Multiple Listing Service)**

# Types of Ag Landowners

- Owner Operators
- Operator landlords
- Non-operator landlords
  - Individuals – some of whom have farmed
  - Partnerships and trusts
  - Institutions and organizations, like land trusts
  - Federal government
  - State and local governments

# Many Motivations to Sell or to Lease

- Financial
- Estate/succession planning
- Property Maintenance
- Qualify for agricultural tax assessment
- Achieve a group/agency's mission – like supporting local food production
- Stewardship of natural resources

# Tap the Real Estate Market

- Review classified ads in local papers or farm/ranch publications
- Find a realtor – preferably one who specializes in agricultural land
- Use web searches through Multiple Listing Service (MLS) such as Realtor.com, Zillow, etc

# Build your Community Social Network

- Tap community organizations
- Connect with an incubator or community farm
- Join a farm or beginning farmer organization
- Reach out to conservation organizations
- Reach out to other producers and agricultural organizations
- Agriculture-related business owners

# Reach out to Government Agencies

- Cooperative Extension
- State Department of Agriculture
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- Soil and Water Conservation District
- County or Town Commissions, Depts. that manage or plan land use

# Use Online Resources

- Use FarmLink and other online listing-linking-matching sites
- Use Social Media to communicate with potential organizations and landowners

# Connecticut Farmlink

[Home](#) [Apply](#) [CT Farmlink FAQ](#) [Resources](#) [Farmland](#) [Farm Seekers](#)

A clearinghouse for the transition between generations of landowners with the goal of keeping farmland in production. There is a new generation of farmers who want to be tomorrow's stewards of the land today, but they need land to work.





Improving access to information about farmland acquisition and tenure opportunities for farmers



This project was made possible  
by support through USDA BRACF

## Recent Postings

January 28, 2012

[LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT AMET >](#)

January 22, 2012

[CONSECTETUR ADIPISCING ELIT >](#)

January 25, 2012

[DONEC VEL CONSECTETUR METUS >](#)

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January 28, 2012

[LOREM IPSUM DOLOR CONSECTETUR SIT AMET >](#)

January 22, 2012

[CONSECTETUR ADIPISCING ELIT ADIPISCING ELIT >](#)

January 25, 2012

[DONEC VEL ADIPISCING ELIT/CONSECTETUR METUS >](#)

January 28, 2012

[LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT AMET >](#)

[See More](#)

[Post a Listing](#)

Let's make a plan and find some  
land!



Networking/Activity Break  
**Finding Land Action Plan Worksheet**  
**15-20 min**

# Part 1: Leases and their features



# How to Find Out About Land Prices?

- Census of Ag and other NASS resources
- USDA-Farm Service Agency
- National Multiple Listing Services
- Local realtors
- State departments of agriculture
- Talk to people in the community!

# Cost of Farmland

*Trend in Farm Real Estate values:*

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2017
Connecticut \$/acre	12,100	12,700	12,700	12,000	11,200

*Source: USDA National Agriculture Statistical Service*

# Ownership

- **Financing the purchase: know requirements**
  - **Conventional**
  - **Subsidized (FSA)**
  - **Farm Credit**
  - **Family (including intra-family purchase)**
  - **Owner-financed**



# Why Lease Farmland?

- Cost of purchasing land
- Opportunity to save money for purchase
- Opportunity to invest in equipment
- May be less responsibility, costs
- Allows participation in state and federal programs
- Helps with risk management of crops, infrastructure, business

# Leasing

## □ Disadvantages:

- Impermanence (depending on the lease)
- No equity building (depending on the lease)
- Landlord relations
- Less control
- Emotional connection (myth versus fact)
- Legacy



# What Is a Lease?

- A lease is a contract between a landlord and a tenant – or landlords and tenants
  - It identifies the parties and
  - Creates an agreement on the tenant's control of the property and the return of rights to the owner at the end of the term
- Key elements of a lease include:
  - A property description
  - The length of the lease term
  - Payment terms/rental rate

# Leases May Be Oral or Written

- Written leases offer more protection to the tenant
  - Often are required by state law if they exceed one year
  - Provide security and clarity for both parties
  - Spell out: property description, time frame, rental rate
  - Require signatures of landowner and tenant
- Oral – or “handshake” leases are valid
  - But usually only for a year
  - Offer few protections

# Leases Come with Rights Subject to Lease Terms and Purposes

- For the Tenant:
  - To use a property, including land and potentially buildings and other infrastructure
  - To transfer the lease
  - To privacy
- For the Landlord:
  - To sell or transfer the property
  - To “encumber” – e.g., to take out a mortgage, sell or donate an easement
  - To enter the property and to exclude entry to others

# Understanding Lessors in CT

## Private Landowners, Land Trusts & Towns

### *Why lease?*

- Financial
- Quality of Life
- Maintain PA 490 tax rate
- Support for agriculture

### *For what purpose?*

Mission & Objectives

### **To whom?**

- Considerations in Finding a Farmer
- Leasing Procedures

### **For how long?**

- Tenure Options....

# Who relies on leased farmland in CT?

- 38% of principal farm operators

(defined as the “person primarily responsible for the on-site, day-to-day operation of the farm”)

- 29% of all farmers

Source: USDA 2010 Census of Agriculture &  
[www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0828.xls](http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0828.xls)

# Financials of Farmland Leasing

## *Estimated benefit to landowner from land stewardship*

- After 3-5 years of not farming = \$1,500/acre or more to return the land to farming
- Benefit to landowner is \$300-500/acre a year

## *What is the land worth?*

- Depends on the variables of the property for lease - length of lease, location, quality of soil, infrastructure (irrigation, storage, etc.)
- Depends on market demands for the area the property is located in
- Suitability of soils, location in the State

# How To Find Out About Rental Rates?

- NASS cash rent survey
- Extension regional benchmark reports for various farm or ranch enterprises
- Local realtors
- Classified ads
- Talk to people in the community!

# Financials of Farmland Leasing

*Rates are calculated per acre, per year*

## Rough estimates of Farmland Leasing Rates

- hay/pasture and a short-term lease: \$0 - \$50/acre (even more for alfalfa hay with a longer-term lease)
- good hayland and land in silage: \$0 - \$70/acre
- vegetable production on best soils/grain corn (75-80% prime farmland soils): \$0 - \$500/acre (top price includes long-term lease and irrigation)
- veg. production outside of River Valley: \$0 - \$250/acre
- *As the ranges above attest, there are many variables to consider!*

# Tenure Options

- TWO MAIN OPTIONS: OWN OR RENT
- RENT OPTIONS:
  - Short term lease; rolling lease term
  - Long term lease
  - Ground lease
  - Lease-to-own
  - License



# Leases

## Leases in family succession

- Enable gradual transfer of assets
- Enable possession and control of land, buildings, machinery and/or livestock
- Financial advantages to both generations



# Leasing

## □ Basics:

- Get it in writing
- What constitutes a contract
- Exit strategies for both parties
- Renewing and revising
- Is a longer term better?  
When and why



# Leasing

## What constitutes a contract?

1. Names of the parties (landlord, tenant)
2. Description of the Premises
3. Start and end dates
4. Consideration
5. Signatures



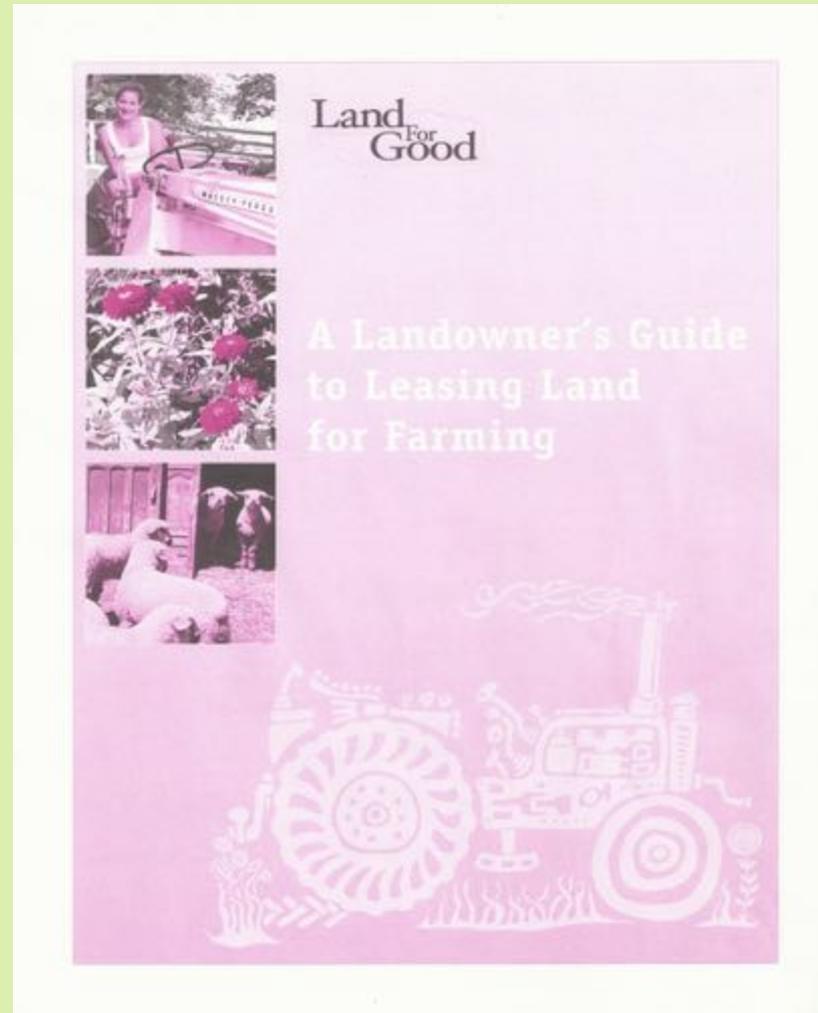
# **18 Elements of a Good Lease**

1. Identification of the Parties
2. Description of the Property
3. Durational Terms of the Lease
4. Rent or Payment
5. Taxes
6. Utilities
7. Uses of the Property
8. Entry
9. Maintenance and Repairs

## **18 Elements of a Good Lease cont.**

10. Alterations and Improvements to the Site
11. Stewardship Guidelines
12. Additional Limits/Restrictions on Farm Practices
13. Subletting
14. Default Provisions
15. Security Deposit
16. Monitoring/Reporting
17. Insurance/Liability
18. Condemnation/Casualty Loss

To download Land For Good leasing guides, worksheets and the new Build a Lease Tool: [www.landforgood.org](http://www.landforgood.org)



# **Farmland Protection in Connecticut**

- 1. CT State Farmland Preservation Program (DoAG)**
- 2. Connecticut Community Farms Program (DoAG)**
3. CT Joint State-Town Preservation Program (DoAG)
4. CT Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program (DEEP)
5. Other Partners: municipal programs & land trusts
6. USDA Agricultural Conservation Easement Program- Ag Lands Easement & Wetland Reserve Easement Programs (NRCS)
7. USDA Healthy Forest Reserve Program (NRCS)
8. Forest Legacy -US Forest Service through CT DEEP)
- 9. Connecticut Farmland Restoration Program (DoAG)**

# CT Department of Agriculture



Farmland Preservation Program  
Community Farms Preservation Program  
Farmland Restoration Program

Cam Weimar, Director of Farmland Preservation: 860.713.2511  
[ct.gov/doag](http://ct.gov/doag) or [ctgrown.gov](http://ctgrown.gov)

# Protected Farms: CT Farmland Preservation Program

329 PDRs as of Aug. 2016

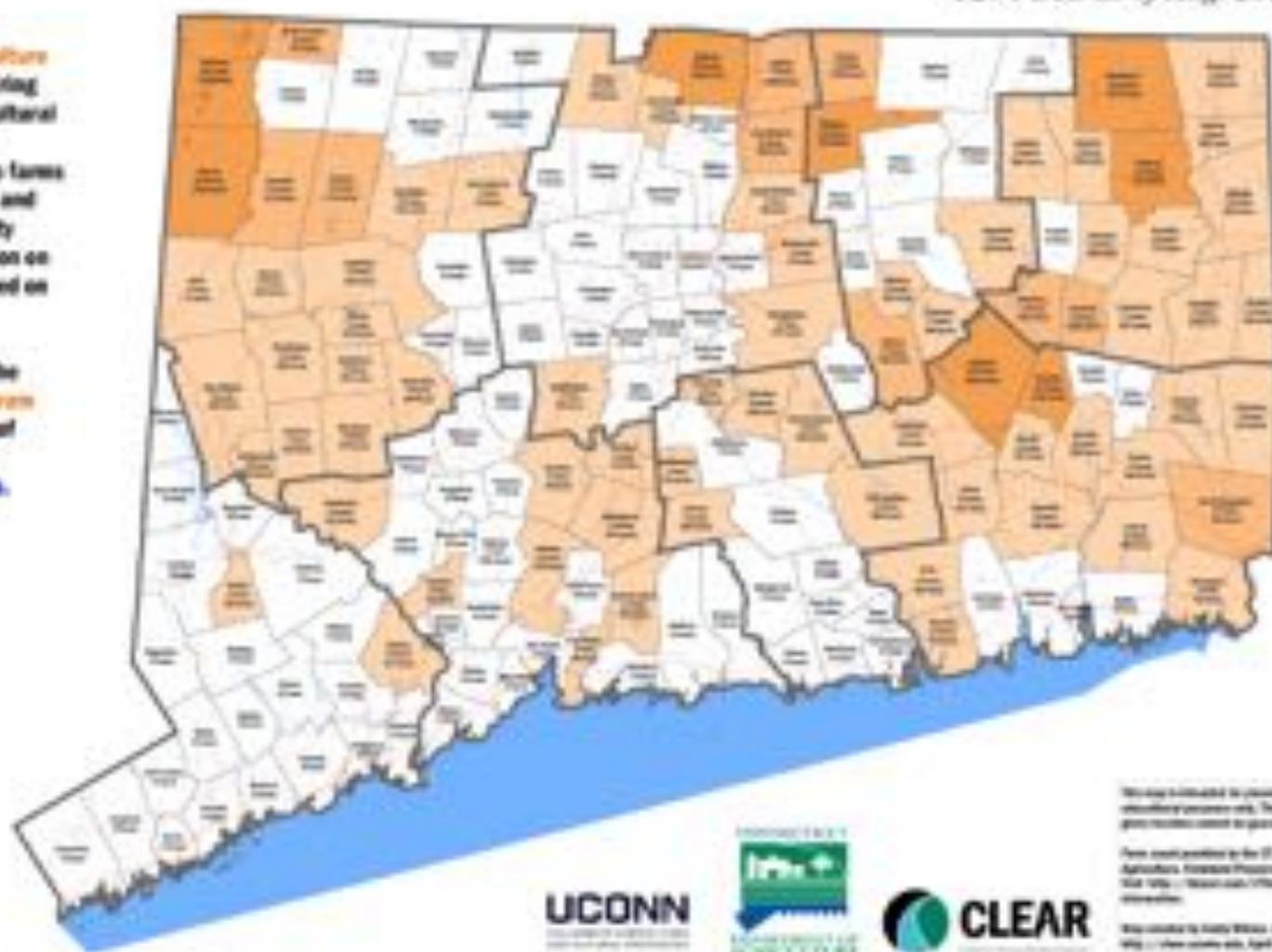
The CT Department of Agriculture preserves farmland by acquiring development rights to agricultural properties in communities throughout Connecticut. The farms remain in private ownership and continue to pay local property taxes. A permanent restriction on nonagricultural uses is placed on these properties.

For more information, visit the [Farmland Preservation Program](http://tinyurl.com/CTfarms) page on the CT Department of Agriculture's website <http://tinyurl.com/CTfarms>.

## Legend



More farms are in blue than are shown and are located in blue.



UConn  
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT  
SCHOOL OF FORESTRY



CLEAR  
CONNECTICUT LAND EVALUATION AND RANGING

This map is intended for planning and informational purposes only. The accuracy of any given location cannot be guaranteed.

Data provided by the CT Department of Agriculture, Farmland Preservation Program. Data as of 8/1/2016. <http://tinyurl.com/CTfarms> for more information.

Map created by Kelly Wilson, Office of Statewide Planning and Information Systems, April 2016.

# Landowner Rights

- **The right to build**
- **The right to cut trees**
- **The right to hunt**
- **The right to cultivate**
- **Etc.**



# Valuation of Development Rights

MARKET VALUE (before value)

- (less the)

AGRICULTURAL VALUE (after value)

= DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS value

Appraisals conducted by  
qualified independent appraisers



# Agricultural Easement

- *A Conservation Easement* is a deed restriction that landowners voluntarily place on part or all of their land
- *An Agricultural Conservation Easement* is specifically designed for agricultural land.

# CT Department of Agriculture



## Farmland Restoration Program

# Types of restoration activities funded:

- reclamation of grown-over pastures, meadows and cropland
- removal of invasive plants and hedge row management
- clearing and removal of trees, stumps, brush or stones to create or restore agricultural use
- installation of fencing systems to keep livestock in reclaimed pasture areas or out of riparian areas
- installation of wildlife management fencing to protect restored crop fields
- restoration of water runoff and drainage of crop fields to improve cropland areas and restore water runoff patterns and water conservation
- renovation of farm ponds including farm pond management/irrigation and irrigation wells incidental to restored areas
- replanting vegetation on erosion-prone land and riparian areas
- restoration of shellfish beds or aquaculture ponds
- enhancement of farm roads which service restoration areas



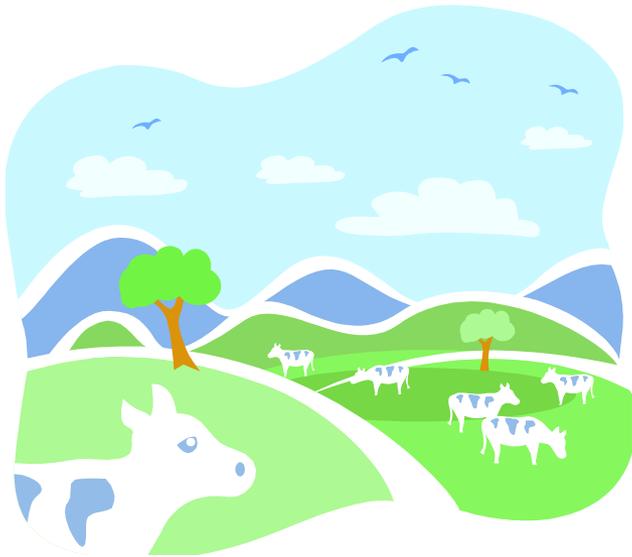
multiflora rose



# Reimbursement also on

## TOWN and STATE LAND with . . .

- qualified application
- minimum five-year agricultural lease to farmer
- concurrence by owner, operator, and any easement holder
- state share 90% of project cost





# Programs and assistance



- **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service:** conservation planning, EQIP Program, web soil survey, some onsite assistance
- **USDA Farm Service Agency-** maps, financing
- **CT Department of Agriculture-** Farmland Restoration Program, Farm Transition Grant, Farmland Preservation Program, CT Farmlink, Onsite assistance
- **Land for Good-** leasing, Succession planning
- **UConn Extension-** Business planning, some onsite technical assistance
- **CT NOFA , CT Farm Bureau, NCTFA**

# **Resources for Acquiring Ag Loans/Grants for land, business, infrastructure**

- 1. USDA Farm Service Agency- *Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program, Microloans, Farm storage loans***
- 2. Farm Credit System- Farm Credit East- *Farm Start Program***
- 3. USDA Rural Development- *business, industry, and housing loans***
- 4. Commercial Banks**
- 5. CT Dept of Agriculture- Farm Transition Grant**

# Related Resources

- New Farmer Bucket List
- UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Lab
- CT Agricultural Experiment Station- soil testing
  - Cornell Small Farm Program
- New Entry Sustainable Farming Project- Farming Guide
  - AgVocate Program- Ag Commissions
- Connecticut Land Conservation Council- Land Trusts
  - Conservation Districts- tech assistance, maps





## Questions?



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**[charlotte.ross@uconn.edu](mailto:charlotte.ross@uconn.edu)**

**Kip Kolesinskas, Land Use and  
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**[kip.kolesinskas@gmail.com](mailto:kip.kolesinskas@gmail.com)**

**Please Complete the Survey!**

**Thank You...**

**SOLID GROUND FARMER TRAININGS**

- *Strengthening Our Farms Across Connecticut*

*provides new farmers with core training and assistance to develop their farm plan, explore production options, and grow their farming enterprise.*

*Visit [www.newfarms.extension.uconn.edu](http://www.newfarms.extension.uconn.edu) for resources, trainings, and events.*