

# Connecticut Weekly AGRICULTURAL REPORT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor  
Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner  
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Connecticut Department of Agriculture  
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**Wethersfield farmer Chris Anderson tends to some of the 90 acres of corn he began picking late last week in time for the July 4th weekend—the traditional start of the corn season.**

## **SEASON-EXTENDING TECHNIQUES HELP FARMERS MEET DEMAND FOR EARLY CORN**

*By Steve Jensen, Office of DoAg Cmsr. Steven K. Reviczky*

The countless thousands of Connecticut residents who got their first taste of local sweet corn over July 4th weekend probably never gave a thought to the months of work it took to produce those first ears by the traditional start of corn season.

Farmers Chris Anderson and Tom Baggott may run vastly different-sized operations, but they tell similar stories of how they managed to meet early demand in a year that started with a stubbornly chilly spring.

Both men say they never would have gotten their product ready for market if they had not given nature a helping hand from an increasingly-popular growing aid: row covers.

The mesh fabric covers help warm the soil and speed germination, root growth and maturity – an especially invaluable tool this year.

“If we didn’t use the row covers we probably wouldn’t have had corn until the 10<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>,” of July, said Anderson, a retired New Britain firefighter who farms about 90 acres in Old Wethersfield.

East Windsor-based Baggott - whose 700 acres of corn likely makes him the state’s largest grower – planted about 100 acres with row covers and/or clear plastic mulch in early April. That allowed him to start picking in mid-June, and be the first to deliver sweet corn to Connecticut farm stands and supermarkets.

“It was very difficult to do this year,” Baggott said while tending to an enormous cornfield he has worked for more than 40 years along the Massachusetts border and the Connecticut River. “It’s easy to sell corn right now, but it’s expensive to grow it.”

Raising an acre of corn under cover costs about \$1,200 an acre, he said, roughly double that of a “regular” acre. Baggott says he is lucky if he gets three growing seasons out of a 52-foot-wide roll of cover, which he removes when the plant reaches about waist high.

“The wind tears it up, the deer trample it – only bad things happen after you put it down,” he said.

But the unacceptable alternative is simply not having any corn at all until mid-July.

“Nobody has corn now without using some kind of forcing method,” like the covers or plastic, he said. “You plant it as early as you can and just hope it doesn’t frost too much.”

Following the poor spring and a harsh frost on April 18, growing conditions have been close to ideal.

“Once we got through the bad weather, it’s been an excellent growing season,” he said. “We have a fantastic yield of corn this year.”

For Baggott, however, there is a business downside to the increased use of the covers and the early, consistent product they help deliver.

“Ten years ago this early corn was a niche crop,” he said. “There was never enough for the farm stands. Now it’s a commodity, and there might even be too much. It’s not a bonanza anymore.”

**(Continued on Page 3)**

**NEW HOLLAND, PA, HOG AUCTION**

Sold by actual weights; prices quoted by hundred wt.

		Low	High
49-54	200-300 lbs	85.50	91.00
	300-400 lbs	76.00	81.00
54-58	200-300 lbs	92.00	97.00
	300-400 lbs	82.00	86.00
Sows,US1-3	300-500 lbs	60.00	68.00
	500-700 lbs	71.00	74.50
Boars	400-720 lbs	39.00	43.00

**PA GRADER FEEDER PIGS**

Lancaster, PA, per cwt. June 18

		Low	High
GR US 1	WT 20-40	310.00	360.00
	WT 50-75	235.00	250.00
	WT 80-100	175.00	175.00
GR US 2	WT 20-50	285.00	330.00

**MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION**

Middlefield, CT, July 7, 2014

	Low	High
Bob Calves:		
45-60 lbs.	70.00	75.00
61-75 lbs.	160.00	180.00
76-90 lbs.	190.00	195.00
91-105 lbs.	220.00	225.00
106 lbs. & up	230.00	235.00
Farm Calves	240.00	245.00
Starter Calves	80.00	85.00
Veal Calves	130.00	170.00
Open Heifers	135.50	155.00
Beef Steers	153.00	156.00
Beef Heifers	123.00	137.50
Feeder Steers	155.00	165.00
Stock Bulls	n/a	n/a
Beef Bulls	122.00	150.00
Boars	n/a	n/a
Sows	n/a	n/a
Butcher Hogs	1 at	70.00
Goats each	100.00	245.00
Kid Goats	70.00	175.00
Canners	up to	115.00
Cutters	116.00	120.00
Utility Grade Cows	121.00	125.00
Replacement Heifers	n/a	n/a
Replacement Cows	n/a	n/a
Rabbits each	5.00	15.00
Chickens each	5.00	26.00
Ducks each	3.00	5.00
Feeder Pigs	n/a	n/a
Lambs	185.00	360.00
Sheep	125.00	135.00

**EASTERN, PA HAY**

average price per ton

	PREMIUM	GOOD
ALFALFA	205.00-300.00	160.00-160.00
MIXED	205.00-390.00	150.00-195.00
TIMOTHY	200.00-220.00	155.00-400.00
STRAW		100.00-250.00

**WHOLESALE FRUITS & VEGETABLES  
NEW ENGLAND GROWN**

	LOW	HIGH
RHUBARB,20LB	32.00	35.00
ARUGULA,4LB	12.00	12.00
CUCUMBERS,SELECT,1 1/9BU	20.00	28.00
SPINACH,1 1/9BU	12.00	12.50
CUKES,PICKLES,1/2BU	14.00	16.00
CORN,5DZ	20.00	20.00
CABBAGE,GREEN,12HD	12.00	12.00
CILANTRO,30'S	16.00	17.00
SQUASH,YELLOW,FCY,1/2BU	9.00	10.00
SQUASH,YELLOW,MED,1/2BU	7.00	8.00
SQUASH,GREEN,FCY,1/2BU	8.00	10.00
SQUASH,GREEN,MED,1/2BU	6.00	7.00
PEA,SUGAR,10LB	20.00	20.00
PEA,ENGLISH,BU	40.00	45.00
PEA,SNOW,10LB	20.00	20.00
BEAN GREEN,BU	28.00	28.00
DILL,24'S	18.00	18.00
MINT,12'S	8.00	12.00
PARSNIPS ,25LBS	21.00	23.00
RADISHES 1/2BU	18.00	18.00
KALE,12'S	12.00	15.00
BEAN,FAVA,BU	45.00	45.00
LETTUCE,RED LEAF,24'S	12.00	12.00
LETTUCE,GREEN LEAF,24'S	12.00	12.00
ROMAINE,24'S	12.00	12.00
SWISS CHARD,12'S	18.00	18.00

**WHOLESALE CUT FLOWERS  
NEW ENGLAND GROWN**

CORNFLOWER,BNCHD 25	7.50	7.50
GERBERA,PER STEM	1.25	1.25
LILIES,PER BNCH,ASIATIC	12.50	12.50
GARDENIA,PER STEM	5.00	5.50
LISIANTHUS,BNCHD 10	16.50	16.50
PEONY,PER STEM,SMI-DBLE	2.00	3.00
SNAPDRGON,BNCHD 10	13.50	13.50
GOMPHRENA,PER BNCH	8.50	8.50
LARKSPUR,BNCHD 10	8.50	8.50

**WHOLESALE BROILER/FRYER PARTS  
NORTHEAST, PER LB.**

	Low	High
BREAST-B/S	2.20	2.20
TENDERLOINS	2.35	2.40
LEGS	.66	.67
LEG QUARTERS	.49	.50
THIGHS	.74	.75
B/S THIGHS	1.36	1.37
WINGS	1.40	1.41
LIVER,5LB TUBS	.55	.60
GIZZARDS	.75	.80

**PA LIVESTOCK SUMMARY**

Average Dressing

	Low	High
SLAUGHTER COWS:		
breakers 75-80% lean	100.00	104.75
boners 80-85% lean	96.25	100.75
lean 85-90% lean	92.75	97.25
CALVES graded bull		
No 1 95-120	251.25	294.75
No 2 95-120lbs	225.75	259.50
No 3 80-120lbs	170.75	224.25
SLAUGHTER HEIFERS		
HiCh/Prm3-4	148.00	153.50
Ch2-3	143.00	147.00
Sel1-2	137.50	141.75
SLAUGHTER STEERS.		
HiCh/prm3-4	150.25	154.50
Ch2-3	146.50	149.75
Sel	143.00	145.75
SLAUGHTER HOLSTEINS		
HiCh/prm2-3	132.50	135.00
Ch2-3	127.00	130.00
Sel2-3	122.50	125.75
VEALERS	41.50	77.75
SLAUGHTER LAMBS: ch/pr 2-3		
40-60lbs	190.00	194.00
50-60lb	182.00	208.00
60-80lbs	n/a	
80-110lbs	181.00	200.00
SLAUGHTER EWES: good 2-3		
80-120 lbs	62.00	74.00
120-160lbs	54.00	62.00
Bucks		
150-200lbs	65.00	82.00
200-250lbs	54.00	74.00
SLAUGHTER GOATS: Sel.1, by head, est.		
20-40lb	n/a	
40-60lb	132.00	152.00
60-80lb	174.00	205.00
80-100lb	180.00	195.00
Nannies/Does: 100-110lbs	182.00	202.00
130-160lbs	180.00	212.00
Bucks/Billies: 130-150lbs	225.00	285.00
150-190lbs	225.00	290.00

**NORTHEAST EGG PRICES USDA**

Per doz. Grade A and Grade A white in cartons to retailers (volume buyers)

XTRA LARGE	1.23	1.27
LARGE	1.21	1.25
MEDIUM	1.00	1.04

**NEW ENGLAND SHELL EGGS**

Per doz. Grade A brown egg in carton delivered store door. (Range)

XTRA LARGE	1.49	1.67
LARGE	1.41	1.62
MEDIUM	1.26	1.36

## ADVERTISEMENTS

## FOR SALE

1-R. Blumenthal & Donahue is now Connecticut's first independent NATIONWIDE Agri-Business Insurance Agency. Christmas tree growers, beekeepers, sheep breeders, organic farmers and all others, call us for all your insurance needs. 800-554-8049 or [www.bludon.com](http://www.bludon.com).

2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or [www.bludon.com](http://www.bludon.com).

3-R. Gallagher electric fencing for farms, horses, deer control, gardens, & beehives. Sonpal's Power Fence 860-491-2290.

4-R. Packaging for egg sales. New egg cartons, flats, egg cases, 30 doz and 15 doz. Polinsky Farm 860-376-2227.

5-R. Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Program, endorsed by the CT Farm Bureau, save up to 23% on your farm insurance and get better protection. References available from satisfied farmers. Call Marci today at 203-444-6553.

56-R. Tomato stakes, tomato twine, fence boards, custom cut lumber. Staehly Products Co. LLC. 860-873-9774.

68-R. Broiler Chicks 3 weeks, \$5 each. Minimum order, 25 chicks. FOB Willimantic. Call Gary 860-716-9064.

93-R. For Sale - As seen at the Old Cider Mill. Completely self contained Apple Fritter and Donut making building mounted on heavy duty 4 wheel running gear trailer. Contains everything you need to start making and selling apple/fruit fritters and donuts: from fryer to cash register. Includes trays, oven, sinks, refrigerator, racks, hot water heater and utensils. Simply plug into 220V power or generator and attach a garden hose. Presently located in South Glastonbury. Pictures available upon request. George 860-918-5442 or email [george.m.purtill@snet.net](mailto:george.m.purtill@snet.net)

99-R. JD 330 Round Baler nice. 1140 Pequae Rake new, \$6,500. JD 6405 2WD with loader. JD 4520 \$8,500. JD 730 Wide front \$7,500. PTO generators 20,000 KW. NH 575 baler with thrower \$10,000. NH 565 baler. JD 456 Round Baler net wrap silage special. Case IH RBX 442 Round Baler. NH 311 Baler \$4,000. 203-530-4953.

100-R. Farm for sale in Bristol. 13 acres-32X36 barn and outbuildings. 1940 farmhouse with 3 bedrooms. City sewer and well water (city water available). Pasture fenced, 2 brooks. 860-635-1376.

102. Canton-Historic post & beam Colonial on 11 acre mini-farm. Barn and outbuildings. Perfect for horses, livestock & vegetables. \$469,000. Call Clint Charter, 860-558-3908. Wallace Tustin Tetreault Realty.

## MISCELLANEOUS

10-R. Farm/Land specializing in land, farms, and all types of Real Estate. Established Broker with a lifetime of agricultural experience and 40 years of finance. Representing both Buyers and Sellers. Call Clint Charter of Wallace-Tustin Realty (860) 644-5667.

101-R. Greenhouse space available for lease in Guilford. 75,000 sq. ft. glass houses can divide into 25,000 sq. ft. sections. Excellent access to I-95. Call Tom at 203-885-6885.

## WANTED

98-R. Standing timber wanted, Hardwood/softwood. Top prices paid. Licensed and insured. 15 acre minimum. 860-798-4039.

SEASON-EXTENDING TECHNIQUES HELP FARMERS  
MEET DEMAND FOR EARLY CORN

(Continued from Page 1)

Anderson Farms' small crew picks from their fields throughout the day depending on demand. They also wholesale to about ten other stands in Connecticut and Rhode Island, and typically harvest yearly about 10,000-15,000 bags that each hold 60 ears.

A few years ago we picked 17,000 bags," said Anderson's brother, Craig. "That's a million ears of corn. All by hand."

Baggott also does not use a picking machine, which can pinch and damage the ears.

His fluctuating workforce of between 100 and 250 typically hand-picks about 10,000 bags a week in mid-summer. That output is doubled to perhaps 20,000 bags a week starting in September, when he begins to ship more product to the South.

Baggott's corn and other produce can be found in North Carolina Wal-Mart stores and the Publix grocery chain in Jacksonville, Florida. He also plants another 1,600 acres of vegetables, including squash, cucumbers, eggplant and peppers. His workers on this day were picking and packing 4,000 boxes of squash holding 20 pounds apiece.

Of course, being that large can have a flip side. Baggott says he lost more than \$2 million worth of crops to flooding and wind damage during Hurricane Irene in August of 2011. Crop insurance only covered a small fraction of the damage.

Both he and the Andersons stagger their planting through the summer so they have fresh corn to sell, hopefully, as late as Columbus Day.

"We normally sell as much after Labor Day as we do before," Chris Anderson said.

They began offering their first ears last Thursday morning, and by afternoon his pickers were hustling to keep up with the demand at their Broad Street stand – a prelude to an even bigger weekend rush.

"It's been really busy," said worker Briana Flannery as she bagged order after order. "Everybody wants corn because it's the first day we have it."

A day earlier, as he drove his tractor through a dusty field that will be harvested in the weeks to come, Chris Anderson confessed that he couldn't hold out for the weekend to sample this year's first butter-and-sugar.

So there's early corn, and then there's the kind of insider-early corn that only comes with being a grower who has worked for months to get it to the table.

"I picked eight today for dinner," he said with a smile. "So technically I got the first ears of the year."

FARMERS' INPUT SOUGHT FOR 2014 GROWERS'  
PERSPECTIVE SURVEY

The Farm Fresh New London County Schools Council is asking farmers to take a brief survey designed to develop a 5-year plan to improve Farm to School programs across the state.

Opportunities for local farmers to participate in the Farm to School movement are growing, as the USDA funds more programs here in Connecticut and schools are being asked to purchase more local produce and build relationships with local farmers. The survey's goal is to hear directly from farmers about the challenges and rewards of participating in a Farm to School program, and the reasons why farmers may not be doing so.

The survey is available online at:

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/2014growersperspectivesurvey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2014growersperspectivesurvey)

Paper copies can be obtained by contacting Cindy Barry at:

860-448-4882 (ext. 302) or [cbarry@llhd.org](mailto:cbarry@llhd.org)





**Top Left: The first ears of sweet corn are put out for sale last week at Anderson Farms in Old Wethersfield.**

**Above: Tom Baggott samples some of his 700 acres of corn that will be sold across Connecticut, as well as several other Eastern and Southern states.**

**Left: Rolls of mesh fabric row cover crucial to getting corn to market by July 4th or earlier are stacked next to one of Baggott's fields.**

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