C O N N E C T I C U T W E E K L Y

Agricultural Report

Connecticut Department of Agriculture
M. Jodi Rell, Governor
F. Philip Prelli, Commissioner
Robert R. Pellegrino, Bureau Director

CONNECTICUT GROWN

Marketing & Technology Bureau, (860) 713-2503
Jessey Ina-Lee, Editor
Wednesday, March 4. 2009

NOTES from the DEPARTMENT . . .

ANIMAL POPULATION CONTROL PROGRAM RELEASES 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

By Frank L. Ribaudo, Director, Animal Population Control Program

The goal of the Department of Agriculture's Animal Population Control Program (APCP) is to reduce the overpopulation of surplus dogs and cats in Connecticut. According to Commissioner F. Philip Prelli, "Pet overpopulation is a significant burden on the limited resources of local municipalities. The goal of reducing the overpopulation of cats and dogs and immunizing animals placed through the program significantly impacts the local public health and safety agenda".

For fiscal year 2008, the APCP saw 4,468 (2686 dogs/1782 cats) animals adopted. Benefits were provided for 2,643 (1,640 dogs/1003 cats) pets for a 60% overall sterilization compliance rate. Of that total, 91 pets (71 dogs/20cats) were found to be previously sterilized. In addition, 5,468 pre-surgical vaccinations were issued, of which one-half were rabies vaccines.

The APCP has its own dedicated account and receives no money from the state's general fund. Revenue is received from the following: annual surcharge on Connecticut dog licenses ($2.00 sterilized/$6.00 unsterilized), the $45 mandatory voucher fee, proceeds from the sale of the "caring of pets" commemorative license plate and donations. Dog license surcharge fees are collected by municipalities and forwarded to the Department of Agriculture on an annual basis, deposit fees are sent in quarterly and revenue from pet plate sales are deposited electronically weekly by the DMV into the agency's APCP account. For fiscal year 2008, $488,408 was received from dog license surcharge revenue, $202,690 from the $45 program adoption fee, $38,685 from the DMV for the sale of the "caring for pets" commemorative license plate for a total of $729,783. The program provided benefits for 2,643 pets for a total payment of $363,610 to 218 participating veterinary practices. The monthly average payment to practices was $30,301 and the average benefit for cats/dogs including two coincident vaccinations ($20 per pet) is $116. In addition, $4,770 was paid out as $45 adopter refunds for 106 pets that were previously sterilized, returned to the pound or humanely destroyed. Administrative costs totaled $174,941 for an overall program expense of $543,321.

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) provided $38,685 for 2008, from the sale of the "caring for pets" commemorative license plate. Of the 457 plates sold, 234 ($8,190) were the off the shelf type, 36 ($1,980) remakes, 187 ($10,285) vanities and $18,230 were received from 1,823 biennial renewal fees. More than $400,000 has been deposited into the APCP dedicated account since the unveiling of the plate in 1998. The "caring for pets" plate has maintained its popularity with Connecticut drivers and is still second in sales to only the Long Island Sound plate.

The Department also provided feral cat grant funds for the second year in a row to Connecticut based nonprofit organizations for the purpose of providing vaccination and sterilization benefits to feral cats. Vouchers were awarded during the Fall of 2007 with a sterilization completion date of March 31, 2008. Each voucher provides a benefit of two vaccines and the sterilization of the cat. The average benefit per cat is $80. Five-hundred (500) vouchers were issued to eleven non-profit organizations and 497 were used for a 96% compliance rate.

Of the 4,378 total pets adopted from municipal pounds, the mix breed was once again the primary dog type with 1,209 adopted and 775 sterilized (64 %). The Pit Bull is second with 244 adoptions and 128 sterilized (52%). The top five purebreds are as follows: Chihuahua (92/53 sterilized-58%), Beagle (90/65 sterilized-72%), Labrador Retriever (78/53 sterilized-68%), German Shepard (61/37 sterilized-61%) and the Rottweiler (51/32 sterilized-63%). Cat adoptions totaled 1,782 with 1003 as sterilized (56%). The domestic shorthair lead the way with 1,447/811 sterilized-56%. The domestic longhair was second with 180/99 sterilized-55% and the domestic medium hair third with 121/71 sterilized-59%. A few pedigree cats such as Himalayans, Manx, Persians and Siamese were included in this total.

As the APCP continues its success by decreasing the population of dogs and cats at the municipal level, the assistance to feral cats and low-income residents is anticipated to increase. Long term, a consideration to increase the percentage of benefits for either the feral cat or low-income programs or both should be considered, but only after a thorough review of the statistics and results of the new programs.

NORTHEAST EGG PRICES U.S.D.A.

March 2, 2009

Prices To Retailers, Sales To Volume Buyers, USDA Grade A and Grade A, White Eggs In Cartons, Warehouse, Cents Per Dozen

EXTRA LARGE	87-91
LARGE	86-90
MEDIUM	79-81

MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION MIDDLEFIELD, CONN. MARCH 2, 2009

Sale was cancelled due to inclement weather. The cattle that were brought in were sold directly to Cargill Packing.

NEW HOLLAND LIVESTOCK AUCTION, MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2009

	Bulk/ High/ Low Dressing
SLAUGHTER COWS:	
Premium White 65-75% lean	
49.00-51.00	---------- ----------
Breakers 75-80% lean	
45.50-49.00	49.00-50.50 ----------
Boners 80-85% lean	44.00-
45.50	47.50-48.50 42.00-44.00
Lean 85-90% lean	
40.00-44.00	---------- 33.00-37.50
SLAUGHTER BULLS: Yield Grade 1	
1110-1555 lbs	61.00-64.00
high dressing 1255-1685 lbs	65.00-69.50
low dressing	54.50-59.00
Yield Grade 2 1035-1995 lbs	54.00-56.00
low dressing	47.00-54.00
Bullocks: 680-1225 lbs	58.00-61.00
low dressing	55.00-58.00
SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Wooled & Shorn	
Choice and Prime 2-3	
40-50 lbs	226.00
50-60 lbs	186.00-200.00
70-80 lbs	166.00
80-90 lbs	164.00-168.00
90-110 lbs	138.00-150.00
110-130 lbs	140.00
Choice 1-3	
70-80 lbs	126.00-146.00
90-110 lbs	118.00-134.00
110-130 lbs	112.00-130.00
130-150 lbs	104.00-126.00
Good and Choice 1-3	
60-70 lbs	116.00
90-110 lbs	108.00-124.00
110-130 lbs	100.00-112.00
130-150 lbs	86.00-94.00
SLAUGHTER EWES: Good and Choice 1-3	
110-130 lbs	58.00-76.00
120-160 lbs	54.00-70.00
160-200 lbs	50.00-56.00
200-300 lbs	48.00-54.00
Utility and Good 1-3	
120-160 lbs	40.00-52.00
160-200 lbs	30.00-46.00

SLAUGHTER GOATS: All goats are Selection 1, sold by the head, estimated weights.

Kids:	50-60 lbs	72.00-87.00
	60-70 lbs	76.00-92.00
	70-80 lbs	82.00-98.00
	80-90 lbs	96.00-110.00
	90-100 lbs	100.00-114.00
	100-110 lbs	110.00-125.00
Nannies/Does:	80-130 lbs	80.00-96.00
	130-180 lbs	68.00-80.00
Bucks/Billies:	100-150 lbs 1	14.00-130.00
	150-250 lbs	148.00-164.00

FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES

NEW ENGLAND GROWN		
ALFALFA SPROUTS, 5lb	9.00	11.00
APPLE CIDER, 9-1/2 gallons	17.00	17.00
APPLES, Mcintosh 120ct fancy	15.00	16.00
APPLES, Mcintosh 80ct ex.fancy	25.00	26.00
APPLES, Mcintosh 100ct fancy	18.00	20.00
APPLES, Cortland ex fcy 80ct	29.00	30.00
BEAN SPROUTS, 10lb bag	5.00	6.00
CELERY ROOT, 20lb organic	20.00	20.00
POTATOES, Russet 50lb 90ct	11.00	11.00
POTATOES, Round White Chef 50lbs US1	12.50	13.00
SQUASH, Acorn organic 35lb	32.00	32.00
SQUASH, Butternut 1-1/9 bu lge	24.00	24.00
SQUASH, Delicata organic 35lb	37.50	37.50
TOMATOES, 11lbs greenhouse	21.00	21.00
SHIPPED IN		
ARRUGULA, Baby 3lb bag FL	14.00	14.00
ASPARAGUS, 11lb Green lge MEX	18.00	19.00
BEANS, Green bu Handpicked FLA	34.00	36.00
BLUEBERRIES, 12/1pt lge CHILE	28.00	30.00
BRUSSELS SPROUTS, 25lb CA	18.00	21.00
CABBAGE, Green 50lb med/lge NY	9.00	10.00
CANTALOUPS, 12ct GUAT	9.00	12.00
CARROTS, 48/1lb med/lge CAN	15.00	17.00
CARROTS, 48/1lb organic, med/lge CAN	42.00	42.00
CLEMENTINES, 5lb CA	5.00	5.00
CUCUMBERS, 1-1/9bu med MEX	24.00	26.00
GRAPEFRUIT, Red 32ct FL	13.00	14.00
LETTUCE, Green Leaf 24's CA	14.00	15.00
LETTUCE, Iceberg 24's FL	14.00	17.00
ONION, Yellow jbo 50lb WASH	31.00	31.00
ORANGES, Navel 88 ct CA	15.00	15.00
PEACHES , 40ct CHILE	14.00	16.00
PEPPER, Green lge 1-1/9bu FL	14.00	16.00
PEPPER, Jalapeno ½ bu FL	12.00	14.00
RHUBARB, greenhouse, 10lbs,MICH	32.00	32.00
SWISS CHARD, colored 12's CA	12.00	14.00

Above quotations are based on Boston Terminal Prices

NEW HOLLAND,PA HOG AUCTION MON MARCH 2, 2009

Hogs sold by actual weights, prices quoted by hundred weight.

Percent Lean	Weight	Price
49-54	220-270 lbs	44.00-47.00
	270-300 lbs	42.00-45.00
	300-350 lbs	40.50-43.00
45-49	220-270 lbs	41.00-44.00
	270-300 lbs	40.00-42.00
	300-350 lbs	38.50-40.00
40-45	220-270 lbs	37.00-40.00
	270-300 lbs	36.00-39.00
Sows: US 1-3	300-500 lbs	48.00-53.50
	500-700 lbs	55.00-57.50
Boars:	300-700 lbs	15.00

METROPOLITAN AREA U.S.D.A. NEW YORK PRICES WHITE EGGS TO RETAILERS

For 1 dozen, Grade A eggs on:

March 2, 2009

EXTRA LARGE	95-99
LARGE	93-97
MEDIUM	86-90

Above quotations based on CARTON sales to retailers.

NEW BEDFORD WHALING CITY SEAFOOD DISPLAY AUCTION

SEA SCALLOPS LANDINGS & PRICES IN 1, 000 LBS DATE 3/2/09 - PRICES INCLUDE DEALERS FEES

SPECIES SEA SCALLOPS	LBS	MIN	HIGH
U/12 CHANNEL	1.2	920	920
10/20	0.3	745	745
20/30	3.5	735	750
U/10 ELEPHANT TRUNK	5.9	965	990
U/12	0.1	920	920
10/20	8.1	750	770
10/20 MID ATL	15.7	750	770
20/30	34.4	735	755

NEW BEDFORD WHALING CITY SEAFOOD DISPLAY AUCTION FISH LANDINGS & PRICES IN 1,000 LBS & $/CWT DATE 3/2/09 - PRICES INCLUDE DEALERS FEES

SPECIES	LBS	MIN	HIGH
HADDOCK	2.1	189	200
HADD SCRD	19.4	159	170
GILLNET LGE COD 1/	0.0	212	212
MKT	1.3	197	210
SCRD	0.3	190	193
COD LGE	3.3	210	231
COD MKT	20.2	202	217
SCRD	11.5	182	201
MIXED COD	0.1	150	150
POLL	0.9	134	142
MED	3.4	93	100
SCRD	0.6	90	96
YELLOWTAIL LGE	7.5	167	188
SML	4.6	164	181
HAKE LGE	0.2	242	244
MED	0.4	230	230
SML	0.2	142	142
SOW	0.0	250	250
HLBT	0.1	715	740
OCN PRCH	1.8	80	115
FLUKE JUMBO	0.2	192	192
SELECT	0.6	193	193
MED	0.6	212	214
MONKTAIL LGE	2.8	299	316

ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE

1-R. CT. Christmas Tree Growers, CT. Sheep Breeders and CT. Beekeepers Associations Special Insurance Packages available through Blumenthal/Donahue Insurance Agency--Toll Free 1-800-554-8049, 1-877-267-8323 or ddonahue01@comcast.net. Farm Commercial Auto Coverage now available.

2-R. Farm Insurance for all types of farming at very competitive rates. 1-800-554-8049, 1-877-267-8323 or ddonahue01@comcast.net, Blumenthal/Donahue Insurance Agency. Farm Commercial Auto Coverage now available.

3-R. CT Grown Mesh Bags - The Connecticut Department of Agriculture has CT Grown Mesh Bags for sale. These bags are super strong and exceptionally attractive. The dimensions are 16" l x 5" w x 12" h. They are being sold by the case (40 per case) for $156.16. For more information or to order, please call (860)713-2503.

4-R. Gallagher High Tensile and portable electric fencing for farms, deer control, gardens. Sonpal's Power Fence (860) 491-2290.

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

9-R. Rough sawn lumber, fence boards, trailer planks, stakes, custom and portable sawing available. (203) 788-2430.

24-R. Sempervivum – Hens and chicks, perennial 15 vars offered as assorted 4000 available, 48 tray, $22 delivery possible, pickup Somers (860) 749-5535.

25-R. Greenhouse ventilation – excellent condition. 7 – 36" Coolair slantwall exhaust fans - $200 each; 15 – 45" Coolair aluminum shutters – $80 each; 2 – 36" Dayton exhaust fans - $80 each; 6 – 36" Dayton shutters - $30 each. Call (860) 575-6465.

26-R. INT. fast hitch drawbar $125. 550 gal. skid fuel tank $300. Hale irrigation pump with 18hp motor used two seasons $1,250. For more information call (203) 265-6012.

27-R. Hay- Excellent 2nd cut wrapped round bales. $50 PU we load. (860) 886-0716.

WANTED

1-R. Producers Wanted: Connecticut Farm-to-Chef is a free program that helps connect local culinary professionals with producers and distributors of CT Grown products. Additional Connecticut producers and distributors are needed for this popular and expanding program. Contact Linda at the CT Department of Agriculture, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106 Linda.Piotrowicz@ct.gov or phone 860-713-2558, for more information.

13-R. John Deere 3940, 50, 60 or 70 corn chopper wanted. Running or parts. Prefer 3960. Also wanted, 1 or 2 point sub soiler. Call for more information at (860) 875-0280.

20-R. Wanted: Land to Lease/ Rent - Small, outdoor recreational club seeks lease of land. Possible long term arrangements. References available. Leave message 860-303-5252.

26-R. Used or new 15-20 bushel apple bins wanted. Need 4-6 bins. Call (203) 272-6593.

MISCELLANEOUS

7-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.

8-R. Horse properties, Farms and Land. Ralph's the man specializing in all types of Real Estate. With a lifetime of agricultural and business experience he is the best choice to represent both buyers and sellers and make your dreams come true. Call Ralph Winn, with Century 21 Alaimo & Corrado at (860) 648-6902 or visit the website at www.winwithWINN.com.

DAIRY PRICES TO TRIGGER MILC PAYMENTS

Changes to the program will slow payments to producers

Bonnie E. Burr, State Executive Director for USDA's Farm Service Agency in Connecticut has announced that due to low milk prices FSA will be making payments in April to producers through the FSA's Milk Income Loss Contract, or MILC, program. The 2008 Farm Bill made changes to the MILC program, most notably the addition of a dairy feed ration cost adjustment in addition to changes to the payment rate and modifications to the per-operation poundage limit, depending on when the milk is produced.

"We will be making MILC payments as a result of the low prices but because of the changes to the program ordered in the 2008 Farm Bill, the payments may be higher but will take a bit longer to gather the required data before payments can be made," SED Burr explained.

FSA makes MILC payments on a monthly basis when the Boston Class I milk price falls below $16.94 per hundredweight (cwt) as adjusted for feed costs. The monthly Boston price is posted online at: http://www.fmmone.com/Northeast_Order_Prices/NE_Prices_mainnew.htm#Advance. FSA determines the per hundredweight payment rate for the applicable month by subtracting the Boston Class I price for that month from the $16.94 MILC payment trigger price as adjusted for feed costs, and multiplying the difference by 45 percent. The payment factor of 45 percent will decline to 34 percent on September 1, 2012.

The MILC payment trigger price of $16.94 is adjusted upward when the National Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost for a month is greater than $7.35 per cwt. This rate will change to $9.50 on September 1, 2012.

The dairy feed ration cost is calculated each month from the price of feed ingredients used to create a 16 percent protein dairy feed as reported by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

"While the dairy feed ration cost adjustment benefits producers when feed costs are high, it also means we must wait until that month's National Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost is known before the MILC payment rate can be calculated," explained SED Burr. "For example, while the Boston Class I price for February is $13.97 and below $16.94, we still won't know the actual MILC payment rate until late March when we receive final figures from NASS for determining the National Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost. That means the MILC payment for February cannot be made until April."

FSA issues payments not later than 60 calendar days after FSA receives production evidence for the applicable month or the entire month's National Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost is posted for the applicable month, whichever is later.

FSA makes payments on up to the maximum eligible pounds of milk produced and marketed by each operation per fiscal year. The annual maximum eligible pound limit per dairy operation is 2,985,000 pounds per fiscal year. The amount drops to 2.4 million pounds per fiscal year on September, 1, 2012.

MILC participants must select a month for which FSA will begin issuing payments for each fiscal year. Starting with the dairy operation's selected month, FSA will issue MILC payments based on that month's milk production and each consecutive month's production until the operation reaches the production cap or the fiscal year ends.

When dairy producers sign up for the MILC program they may select the current month as their start month. For subsequent years or if they wish to change a previously selected start month the producer must select a start month prior to the 14th of the month for which they want to receive payments and before the selected month's Boston Class I milk price is announced to the public. Producers may contact their local FSA office to sign up for the MILC program.

MORE MILC PAYMENTS ON PAGE 4

MILC PAYMENTS FROM PAGE 3

The 2008 Farm Bill also excludes producers whose non-farm average adjusted gross income (AGI) exceeds $500,000 from receiving MILC payments. Producers will have to sign an AGI statement when signing up for the program. More information about the MILC program can be found on the FSA website http://www.fsa.usda.gov.

ACROSS THE AMERICAS, SQUASH AND GOURD BEES ARE SUPERB POLLINATORS

From the Agricultural Research Service

Acorn squash and other winter squashes at your local supermarket likely got their start months ago, when their colorful blossoms were pollinated by hardworking bees.

An ongoing, science-based census called "Squash Bees of the Americas" is providing new information about the abundance of these bees and their excellence as squash and gourd pollinators.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) entomologists Blair Sampson, James Cane and Frank Eischen are among the researchers and other specialists who document their observations for this international survey of 20 or so wild, indigenous bee species.

Cane, based at the agency's Pollinating Insects Biology, Management and Systematics Research Unit in Logan, Utah, originated the survey. Eischen, at the ARS Honey Bee Research Unit in Weslaco, Texas, has contributed three years' worth of data about squash pollinators of the Rio Grande Valley. Sampson, at the ARS Southern Horticultural Laboratory in Poplarville, Miss., has scrutinized bees pollinating pumpkin, zucchini, and crookneck and straightneck squash in fields near his laboratory.

According to Sampson, the pollinators that he studied--primarily Peponapis pruinosa and Xenoglossa strenua--appear to have all five traits of the world's most proficient pollinators: They're fast, efficient, competitive, abundant, and consistent in their choice of crop.

These and other bee investigations at the three labs provide new insights into how growers, commercial and hobbyist beekeepers, and backyard gardeners can enhance populations of wild bees that pollinate crop plants. These bees augment the work of America's top pollinator, the European honey bee, Apis mellifera.

Today's honey bees not only have to deal with the still-puzzling colony collapse disorder, but also face on-going hassles from the usual sources--mites, beetles, disease organisms and Africanized honey bees.

ARS is a scientific research agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

AGRICULTURE FACTS

◊ Almost all of our breakfast cereals are made of grass. Oats, barley, corn and wheat are all different varieties of grass and are all descended from the same botanical species. Furthermore, most of the sugar we eat also comes from grass (sugar cane), as do most of our alcoholic beverages.

◊ There was no grass during the time of the dinosaurs. Grass evolved from bamboo-like plants only 24 million years ago.

◊ Pollen grains are so tiny and uniform they have been used to calibrate instruments that measure in thousandths of an inch. Forget-me-not pollen grains are so small that 10,000 of them can fit on the head of a pin.

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