



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 20, 2013

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Governor's Council for Agricultural Development Issues Annual Update

Farmer-based panel releases latest findings and recommendations to grow Connecticut agriculture

(HARTFORD, CONN.) Connecticut Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky today announced the Governor's Council for Agricultural Development has presented its 2013 findings and recommendations to Governor Dannel P. Malloy.

The council's December 2013 update (available at www.GrowConnecticutFarms.com) summarizes the council's second year of work on Grow Connecticut Farms, the strategic plan for Connecticut's \$3.5 billion agricultural industry, and includes 12 recommendations to further develop, diversify, and promote agriculture in the state.

"Farming and agriculture represent about 28,000 jobs in the state and are an important part of Connecticut's heritage, economy, and quality of life for residents," said Governor Malloy. "It's an industry with real growth potential, and I'm eager to review these recommendations to the Department of Agriculture on ways to realize that potential. In the coming year, I will continue visiting farms throughout the state to see examples of ingenuity and innovation and figure out how we can further encourage and support smart, creative advancement of the industry."

"Council members, most of whom are farmers themselves, have listened long and hard to hundreds of other producers and people working in agriculture today to develop these recommendations," said Commissioner Reviczky, "They have heard about common challenges, opportunities, and ideas for developing, diversifying, and strengthening agriculture; creating additional jobs; and increasing the quality and quantity of farm products through enhanced education, aggregation and distribution, land-use policy, and more."

The council has organized four working groups for 2014 to study agricultural infrastructure and wholesale markets, producer education and innovation, food safety modernization, and marketing, and will host an agricultural town hall meeting at the state Capitol on January 29, 2014, to hear more from stakeholders on these issues. The council will issue another update on its Grow Connecticut Farms plan next December.

The Governor's Council for Agricultural Development was reshaped by [Public Act 11-189](#), which streamlined membership and tasked the council with making recommendations to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture on ways to increase the percentage of consumer food dollars spent on Connecticut Grown fresh produce and farm products, and on the development, diversification, and promotion of agricultural products, programs, and enterprises in the state. Members are appointed by Governor Malloy and legislative leadership and represent agricultural production, processing, education, sales, and marketing, along with an agricultural trade organization and the greenhouse/nursery sector.

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