



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

**GOV. MALLOY TOURS EAST HARTFORD LETTUCE FARM
RECOVERING AND GROWING WITH HELP FROM PLANT GRANT**



(HARTFORD, CT) — Governor Daniel P. Malloy today toured Connecticut Hydroponic Farm in East Hartford, which received a Production Loss Assistance Needed Today (PLANT) grant of over \$79,000 to help recover from damage incurred as a result of February’s severe snowstorm. Governor Malloy established the [PLANT grant program in June](#) to provide emergency assistance to the Connecticut farms that suffered unrecoverable losses in production and property damage in 2013 due to severe weather events.

“Our agricultural sector is a significant driver of our state and local economies, and I want our state’s farmers to know that I support them and am committed to seeing their small businesses succeed and thrive. I am happy to see our PLANT grant program is doing exactly what it was intended to do - help get farms like this one back on their feet and into production again as soon as possible,” said Governor Malloy. “Because of a PLANT grant, Connecticut Hydroponic Farm was able to quickly recover from this year’s earlier storm that damaged buildings and equipment and is already back in business supplying fresh, Connecticut Grown lettuce to local restaurants and wholesalers.”

Connecticut Hydroponic Farm, a year-round grower and wholesaler of hydroponic Bibb lettuce, has used the grant to repair three greenhouses rendered unusable as a result of the February blizzard. Following the storm, the farm had only one of five greenhouses left in operation, which caused production to drop and customers to purchase lettuce from out of state. The farm is now producing 11,200 heads of lettuce per growing cycle - up from 2,800 heads before storm recovery - and will purchase and replace another greenhouse in March, further ramping up production capacity for the spring cycle. In addition, the farm is replacing equipment that controls water and fertilizer in its ebb-and-flow system that allows for the healthiest, highest quality plants possible.

“I wanted the Governor to know that the effect of the funds from this grant will help us immediately; by allowing us to replace the damaged equipment and repair the damage to our greenhouses, this will help us increase our production of hydroponic lettuce,”

said Connecticut Hydroponic Farm owner Steve Weinstein. “For the past year we have been unable to produce enough lettuce to supply our clients--they have been purchasing lettuce from both out-of-state and out-of-county producers. We will soon be in a position to retrieve some of that volume from those producers and add it to our capability, adding revenue and additional staff to our farm.”

In October, the state Department of Agriculture (DoAg), in cooperation with the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), approved 239 PLANT grants totaling \$4,922,280. [Last month](#), DoAG began distributing awards and has since delivered over 90 percent of the emergency assistance to recipients.

“The severe weather this year caused a daunting series of challenges for Connecticut farms,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky. “While farmers are very resilient by nature, these repeated blows put many small, economically important businesses in peril. Governor Malloy’s rapid recognition and response has made it possible for many farm families in Connecticut to continue working and providing for our state. These are wise investments that will have an exponential payback over time.”

PLANT grant awardees may use the assistance to make repairs and recover from weather-related farm losses in a variety of ways:

- To repair property and equipment damaged
- To replant lost crops
- To plant new/different crops in place of lost crops
- To purchase feed to supplement lost hay, corn, and other crops for livestock
- To apply fertilizer and other soil amendments
- To apply any necessary products to prevent disease and/or pest outbreaks
- To perform other activities needed to recover from the storms, as deemed appropriate by the commissioner of agriculture

Grant applications were reviewed, approved, and processed through a partnership between DoAG and DECD, with additional administrative assistance from the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association.

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