

SOLID GROUND NEWSLETTER

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Summer's Ending

Summer's ending is right around the corner and that means the Solid Ground team are wrestling themselves away from the fields, and coming back together to plan all the great learning opportunities we will be presenting you with!

On the docket of things that we'll begin planning? Our Ag Mechanics trainings, Climate Smart Programming, the Farm Management Summit, Business of Farming class/trainings and much more.

All of this work is done for you, and with you in mind, but we ALWAYS love hearing first hand from farmers what would help. Do you have an idea for what should be included in some of our signature workshops that are coming up? A topic that you would like to see covered? A skill you want to hone? Email Rebecca.Toms@uconn.edu to let us know and we'll bring it into the conversation!

FLOWER FARMER TWILIGHT



For cut flower farmers, or those looking to expand into cut flowers, we have a great opportunity to visit not one, but two cut flower farms in CT: Appleberry Farm in Newtown and Muddy Feet Flower Farm in Ashford. Both farms grow, design and work with cut flowers/greenery year round!

At each farm, participants will go on a tour of the operation and learn about topics such as, event work with farm grown florals, how and where to sell flowers, harvesting and post harvest care, growing in tunnels vs fields, and the sustainability of floral design. Great for new and seasoned flower growers!

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

Net Rental Land Use Value

Connecticut, as well as other states in the Northeast and beyond, has experienced steady losses of agricultural and forest lands toward other uses. In recognition that these lands provide value and flows of benefits to the general public, and that once developed losses of these public benefits are largely irreversible, state governments have adopted a number of policies to reduce such losses. To provide updated and reliable PA 490 land use values, the state conducts this farm-level survey to collect data representative of land characteristics, soil types, rental rates, and other supplementary information.

[Fill out the survey here](#)

SOLID GROUND

Upcoming Events

[Flower Farming Twilights](#)

Date: Monday, September 15
Time: 5:30PM-7:30PM
Location: Appleberry Farm, Newtown

Date: Tuesday, September 30th
Time: 4:30PM-6:30PM
Location: Muddy Feet Flower Farm, Ashford

SEPTEMBER FARM TASKS: STORING CROPS FOR WINTER SALES

Many of us farmers are reaping the benefit of those days weeding the carrot row, yet again, in the midst of intense heat. It's harvest time, when many long season crops are coming to fruition and we are putting that harvest in any open space to store for as long as we can.

But just dropping a crate of potatoes in the back of a shed someplace won't ensure you're going to keep it free from rot (which eats away at potential income.) So what are the best practices for storage crops to help bring things to market after the first frost has come? Well, Ohio State University Extension [wrote up an article to help you](#) navigate all the particularities you have to consider with multiple crops. Here is what they recommend:

- Choose only high-quality crops from the harvest (no blemishes!)
- Harvest at peak maturity
- Cure crops before storage (as needed per crop)
- Maintain proper storage conditions (the right temperature and humidity for the right product!)
- Ensure good ventilation and that the storage area is dry
- Monitor regularly by inspecting crops and removing decaying produce.

Even with all this there are certain particulars that each product can benefit from to increase its longevity. For example:

- Potatoes: 40–50°F, high humidity, no light (avoid sprouting).
- Sweet potatoes: 45–60°F, high humidity.
- Pumpkins & squash: Store best in low humidity.
- Garlic: 35–40°F, low humidity, no light.
- Onions: ~35°F, moderate humidity.
- Apples & pears: Cool, well-ventilated, no light; avoid freezing.

Here's hoping that you are able to store plenty for those late fall/early winter markets, and if you ever have a question about food safety throughout this process, contact Our Food Safety Specialist [Indu Upadhyaya](#)
Happy Harvesting!

- The Solid Ground Team



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Upcoming:

Partner Events

[From Pasture to Processing: Making Poultry Work in the Northeast](#): Sept 15, Online- 9AM to 10AM

[Seed Farm Tour at the Hickories](#): Sept. 17th and Oct 15th, The Hickories, Ridgefield CT- 4PM to 5:30PM

[From Carcass to Consumer: Communicating Cuts, Cookery & Confidence](#): Sept 18, Online- 7PM

[Climate Anxiety Workshop](#): Sept 22, Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County in Millbrook, NY- 9AM to 1PM

Grants

[Women's Business Development Council Ignite Grant](#)- DUE SEPT 16

[CT Grown for CT Kids Week](#)(Track 1)- DUE SEPT 17 (microgrant) and OCT 24 (full grant)



With the aim of providing technical support to farm businesses, CT NOFA is reaching out to better understand how the new Strengthening Organic Enforcement (SOE) Rule affects Connecticut-based organic handlers, co-packers, and processors—and how they can support you.

The USDA Strengthening Organic Enforcement (SOE) Rule, which took full effect on March 19, 2024, significantly expanded who must be certified organic – now requiring most businesses that handle, aggregate, distribute, broker, import, or facilitate sales of organic products to obtain certification by March 2026. CT NOFA and New CT Farmer's Alliance are conducting this short survey to understand how Connecticut organizations are handling certified organic products and assess interest in a collaborative mentorship cohort through the USDA's Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP), led by CT NOFA. You can read about Vermont's successful model, where seven food hubs achieved certification together through mentorship and peer support.

The survey takes approximately 3-5 minutes to complete.

[Complete Survey Here](#)

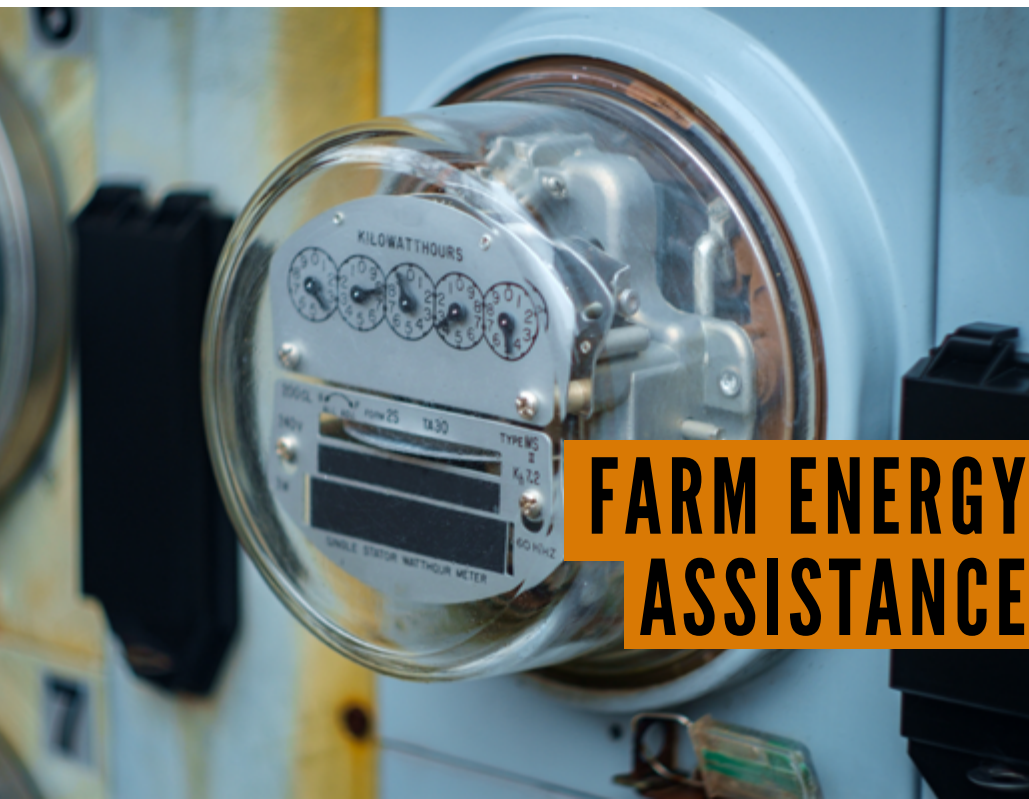


Video Highlight

The CT Grown for CT Kids Grant deadline is just around the bend so we wanted to share some videos with you showcasing farmers that are selling to schools and how it impacts them, their business and their communities. If you want to get into farm to school, this grant is the perfect option and this video series helps to give you a little bit of an idea of what farmers are doing currently with schools.

[View the Videos here](#)





Preparing Farm Operations for Extreme Weather

Though some of the summer storms have passed, that doesn't mean we are past hurricane season, which can bring strong winds and unexpected weather for our farms.

Extreme weather events and seasonal changes, including flooding, strong winds, and first frost, can pose risks for farm operations. Between 2023 and January 2025, over 72 million dollars in weather-related losses were reported to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (Connecticut Department of Agriculture, 2025).

Weather-related events are increasing in frequency and severity. Preparing for extreme weather can help mitigate impacts on farm workers, infrastructure, crops, and animals.

This factsheet focuses on general preparation strategies that may be the best first steps if you haven't considered plans for your farm yet.

[Read the whole article here](#)

CT RC & D and the CT Farm Energy Program

CT Resource Conservation and Development, through the CT Farm Energy Program, is offering third party technical assistance to eligible CT Farms and Agriculturally Based Rural Small Businesses.

If you're a rural farm, you can request an Energy Audit that helps you prioritize energy efficiency measures or a Renewable Energy Assessment that delivers an analysis for the best renewable energy system that is right for your farm (including solar and geothermal technologies.) Estimated cost, sizing, and location siting suggestions included. These are great to get done if you are hoping to apply for some grants or financial assistance to be able to acquire a new energy system for your farm!

Technical assistance is being offered by the Connecticut Farm Energy Program (CFEP) which is administered by Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc. (CT RC&D) with support from the USDA Rural Development.

[Find Out More](#)



*For questions surrounding this newsletter,
please reach out to rebecca.toms@uconn.edu*