

SOLID GROUND NEWSLETTER



SEE YOU AROUND!

Hello Farmer Friends!
After 6 years at UConn Extension I'll be moving on from my position here. I've been so lucky to work here over the past 6 years and the biggest reason? All you farmers in our state. Working on programs like Solid Ground, Grown ConNECTed, Put Local on Your Tray, and others, has given me an opportunity to meet many of you, either in person or online, and see the quality of people that we have producing food in our state.

You all are compassionate, thoughtful, caring, so generous, and of course, determined. I wish ALL the residents in the state could see you all the way I do (because then your sales would be through the roof!). You all impact our communities in powerful ways despite the challenges you face on a regular basis.

So this is not goodbye (as I'll still be farming in Woodbridge) but it will be "see you around-" because I can't keep farming without you all. We as a community hold each other up and I know I'll depend on you, just as I hope you'll depend on me.

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There are a few spots left in the remaining Ag Mechanics classes! Our Women's Chainsaw is full but we still have our Small Engine II (2-stroke) and our Intermediate Chainsaw classes coming up! Both of these class are definitely hands on, so you have a way to practice your skills before you try it out on the farm! These will be the last Ag Mechanics classes of the season, so if you're looking to fit some of those skills in before the spring gets fully underway, now's the time to sign up! Of course, we'll be doing this series again, but some of the subjects may be different. Hope you'll join us!

[Join the Class](#)



MARCH FARM TASKS: SPRING LIVESTOCK TO-DOS

If you're a livestock farmer, you're probably pretty busy. Either there are plenty of babies running around the farm, or you're getting ready to welcome new animals. The young ones are more susceptible to problems, and parents need regular spring care, as well as monitoring for any issues that could occur after birth -not to mention mud season, choosing the right time to let animals on pasture, and dealing with the temperature shifts that occur this time of year.

There are quite a few resources from Extension programs to help newer farmers be aware of, and prepare for, what their livestock need. If you have questions around feeding your livestock, you should check out [this article from University of Oregon Extension](#) that encourages you to:

- Delay spring turnout
- Continue supplemental feeding
- Monitor body condition regularly
- Investigate causes of poor condition in livestock
- Increase feeding for energy during cold snaps

In addition, [an article from University of Missouri Extension](#) provides insight for cattle spring management, but there are many things here that can apply to all livestock. They encourage you to:

- Involve Your Veterinarian Early
- Optimize the Breeding Herd
- Prioritize Male Fertility
- Reduce Weaning Stress
- Update Spring Vaccinations

So, whatever you are raising on your farm, make sure you do your research to help your animals make it healthy and happy to the summer season. We know it's a lot of work, but if you ever need help, you can always sign up for a [FREE consultation with our Livestock Educator, Mackenzie White](#).

Best of luck and Happy Farming! - The Solid Ground Team



March Market Madness

It's almost market season which means you're thinking about your farmer's market setup! Maybe you're not getting the lines you see at other market stands. Maybe you want marketing/branding advice. This could also be your first year or so at a market and you're curious about pricing, supplies, and what to expect. Tackle these topics and more at our **FREE March Market Madness**.

Presented by NCTFA, this interactive workshop is a chance to get real time feedback and ideas for your market set-up. You'll walk away with tools and tips to maximize your market week after week. We are inviting attendees to bring their supplies and set up as they normally would at the farmers market, find areas of improvement and see what's working for fellow farmers!

When: March 17, 10AM to 11:30AM
Where: Meriden Public Library

[Find our More here](#)

SOLID GROUND

Upcoming Events

[Woman's Chainsaw \(Full, Waitlist\)](#)

Date: new date TBD, 9:30AM-3:30PM
UConn Forest, Storrs

[Small Engine II \(2 stroke\)](#)

Date: Mar. 25, 4:30PM-7:30PM
Middletown High School

[Intermediate Chainsaw](#)

Date: Mar 28, 9:30AM- 3:30PM
UConn Forest, Storrs

[And more on our trainings page!](#)

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Upcoming:

Partner Events

[Developing Strong Systems for Communication, Feedback, and Decision Making](#): Mar 12, virtual- 2PM to 3:30PM

[Northeast Food Systems Forum](#): Mar 13, Foundation House, Greenwich- 8:30AM to 11:30AM

[Farm Profitability Strategies for Connecticut Growers](#): Mar 17, virtual - 12PM to 1PM

[March Market Madness](#): Mar 17, Meriden Public Library, 10AM to 11:30AM

[Network for Environment and Weather Applications Webinar Series](#): Mar 18, 25, & Apr 1, virtual - 11AM to 12:30PM

[CT Compost Conference](#): Mar 19, Wesleyan University- 9AM to 4:30PM

[Integrating Water Conservation Strategies at the Farm Landscape Level](#): Mar 19, Virtual- 12PM to 1PM

[Connecticut Land Conservation Conference](#), Wesleyan University: Mar 21 -8AM to 5PM

[Organic Soil Ammendments](#): Mar 26, Virtual- 6:30PM to 7:30PM

[Southwest Conservation Local Working Group Meetings](#) Mar 27, DeKaven House, Middletown: 10AM to 12:15PM

[Southwest Conservation Local Working Group Meetings](#): Mar 27, Tolland Ag Center, Vernon: 2PM to 4:15PM

[Nutritional Impacts on Carcass Performance and Meat Quality](#): Apr 2, virtual- 10AM to 12PM

[A Conversation on Physiology and Nutrition in Maximizing Animal Performance](#): Apr 14, virtual- 10AM to 12PM

[Ground Covers and Mulches for Small Scale Urban Producers](#): Apr 30, Virtual - 6:30PM to 7:30PM

Grants

[Ignite: A Women's Business Development Council Grant](#)- DUE MAR 18



You have the world's best salad greens. Every week you put them out for sale at the local farmers market, but they're not selling as well as you would like them to.

You worked hard to get your organic certification and spent so much time and energy getting your paperwork in order, how do you let your customers know in a meaningful way that you're now certified?

Dave - the Organic Outreach Specialist, recently did a whole marketing workshop at CT NOFA, and will be showing up at the NCTFA March Market Madness workshop. Yes, he did/can answer your questions at these events, but where it really helps? When you sign up for a one-on-one with him so you can zero in on the questions (like the above) that you have for YOUR operation.

Any certified organic farm can sign up at the link below! Dave can also help with your website, your farmstand set up, signage, where to market, and more.

[Find Out More](#)



ON FARM BIOSECURITY

Ox Hollow Farm

Join UConn Extension Educators Mackenzie White and Sara Tomis as they join Stephanie at Ox Hollow Farm, a diversified Farm in Roxbury CT, to talk about the biosecurity practices they have in place to keep their animals, workers, and customers safe from potential biosecurity issues that can crop up on the farm. As a farm raising beef, pork, poultry, lamb, and vegetables, Stephanie highlights the importance of her Biosecurity plan and her relationship with her vet to keep everyone healthy and safe!

[View the Video here](#)



COMPOST CONFERENCE

March 19, 2026

Hosted by the Connecticut Compost Alliance (CCA), the CT Compost Conference brings together composters, farmers, educators, municipal leaders, policymakers, and sustainability advocates. Speakers from Connecticut and across the country will share innovative ideas and practical approaches to composting, soil health, and resilient systems.

Didi Pershous, is this year's keynote speaker, author of *The Ecology of Care and Understanding Soil Health and Watershed Function*. An internationally recognized educator and organizer, her work on soil health and watershed function is used in over 100 countries. She is co-founder of Rehydrate California and hosts *The Wisdom Underground on Substack*. Her keynote, "Growing Community and Climate Resilience through the Soil Sponge and Living Climate," will explore how healthy soils strengthen ecosystems, communities, and climate resilience.

The conference is free for all to attend.

Join us March 19, 2026
9AM to 4:30PM
Wesleyan University, Middletown

[Sign up Here](#)



For questions surrounding this newsletter, please reach out to solidground@uconn.edu

UVM Farmer Values Survey

Earn \$25 for your input! Northeast farmers are invited to participate in a research study about farmers and their values. The purpose of this study is to understand what values motivate farmers in their farming decisions, how farmers are able to meet those values, and what factors allow farmers to actualize their values or keep them from doing so.

[Take the survey HERE.](#)

USDA FUNDING & RESOURCES AND UPCOMING DEADLINES

March 13, 2026 - Deadline to complete/correct acreage report in order to apply for [Assistance for Specialty Crop Farmers \(ASCF\)](#) program.

March 16, 2026 - Deadline to file a 2026 [Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) application for coverage for spring-seeded crops.

Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program

If you are a CT farmer of any size or years of experience and/or produce value-added products using CT Grown ingredients who are interested in selling products through this program, [please complete this form](#)