



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

**GOV. MALLOY: PLANT GRANTS ALREADY HELPING STATE'S
FARMS RECOVER AND REBUILD**

(Hartford, CT) — Governor Dannel P. Malloy today announced that the state's Production Loss Assistance Needed Today (PLANT) grant program is already helping Connecticut farm families recover from this year's earlier storms and flooding that damaged crops, buildings and equipment. Last month, 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. DoAG began distributing approved awards on October 31st and has since delivered 90 percent of the emergency assistance to recipients.

"Despite the many strengths of Connecticut's agricultural industry, our small farms are vulnerable to the whims of Mother Nature and many are not well served by federal crop insurance programs designed for larger producers," said Governor Malloy. "During the first part of 2013, we saw [that](#) farms around the state incurred a significant amount of crop loss, production interruptions and structural damage due to excessive precipitation, flooding and storms. I am happy that we were able to help mitigate the economic impact of these losses so quickly and effectively, and respond to our hardworking farm families' needs during those difficult times."

Governor Malloy established the PLANT Grant Program in June after touring flooded farms in the highly productive Connecticut River Valley. Awardees may use the assistance to 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

“Severe weather events—the kind that were seemingly unheard of in Connecticut when I was growing up—have become the new normal,” said DoAG Commissioner Steven Reviczky. “These grants are helping farm businesses not only recover today, but also strengthen agricultural infrastructure to better weather tomorrow’s tornados, hurricanes, and blizzards, when—not if—they occur. These are wise investments in Connecticut’s future and its essential supply of food and farm products.”

Joe Dzen, Dzen Brothers, Ellington

As a recent recipient of a PLANT Grant, I would like to extend thanks to Governor Malloy and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture. This program came along at a time in which many adverse conditions had a significant negative impact upon the agricultural industry, and our farm in particular, and this will be a big help. Thank you!

Robia Semkow Cruse, Semkow Farm, Colchester

Dealing with the passing of a family member is hard enough without having to worry about running a business as well. Receiving a PLANT Grant helped fuel my drive to relocate my family from Las Vegas, Nevada, and continue the operation of a farm that has been in my family for four generations. Without the support from the state, this would not be possible. Thank you, Governor Malloy!

Marti Zhigailo, Melrose Place Farm, Broad Brook

Especially as a transitioning farm, the challenges this year have been particularly difficult. We felt overwhelmed. It is so nice to see the state supportive of local farms and taking care of where our food comes from. Governor Malloy offered support from the state and it happened – it came through when we needed it, and it’s so nice to see that the state tried to help everybody get back on their feet.

Ed Kasheta, Kasheta Farms, South Windsor

We had to replant our fields three times, the last time by hand. We would have been struggling to repay the funds needed to replace what we’d lost, and who knows what would have happened. It’s so great to have the state be a true partner in Connecticut agriculture. On behalf of our farm and all farmers in Connecticut, we’d like to thank Governor Malloy for his support.

Peter Orr, Fort Hill Farms, Thompson

I appreciate the initiative that Governor Malloy has taken to recognize the severity of the weather impacts on agriculture over the past year. A program like the PLANT Grant underscores the importance of Connecticut agriculture to our state’s economy and aids in keeping the industry viable for the future.

Fred and Stacia Monahan, Stone Gardens Farm, Shelton

With the many obstacles we must navigate as food producers here in Connecticut, the catastrophic weather we have experienced lately has not helped our uphill battle. As a farm whose goals are to provide locally grown food, year round, greenhouses are a

necessity here in Connecticut. The PLANT Grant will help us rebuild the greenhouse that was leveled in the February 2012 blizzard and we will continue to move forward in our mission to provide year round Connecticut Grown food.

Steve Weinstein, CT Hydroponic Farm, East Hartford

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.

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.

David Zemelsky, Star Light Gardens, Durham

The PLANT Grant has enabled us to put our farm infrastructure back on a more solid footing and is an investment in the future. Agriculture has a friend in Hartford.

Grant applications were reviewed, approved, and processed through a partnership between the state departments of Agriculture and Community and Economic Development, with additional administrative assistance from the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association.

On Friday afternoon, Governor Malloy will attend the 94th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association, a non-profit, 5,000-member organization dedicated to farming and the future of Connecticut agriculture. The Governor will discuss various agriculture initiatives undertaken by his administration, including CT Grown and the PLANT grant program, as well as his vision for the future of agriculture in Connecticut and expanding the role the farming community plays in the state's long-term economic growth.

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