

Final Report to
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
For
SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM
Agreement No. 12-25-G-0615

Submitted by
Connecticut Department of Agriculture

March 17, 2010
Resubmitted April 14, 2010

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**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE
PRESERVATION PROJECTS**

CT FARMERS' MARKETS PROJECTS

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

Utilizing SCBG funds the Connecticut Department of Agriculture set out to increase the number of consumers at Connecticut Farmers' Markets. To execute this, 5'x 3' customized banners were purchased and distributed to all 114 farmers' markets. These banners read "*(Market Name) Farmers' Market Open Today!*" and included the CT Grown logo. The increased visual presence brought additional customers to the markets, increasing the awareness and profits of specialty crop producers.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

Two banners per market were ordered and distributed to all Connecticut Farmers' Markets. These banners were prominently displayed at all markets Department representatives attended.

How the goal of the project was achieved.

The year this program was initiated, the state of Connecticut saw a dramatic 24% increase in the number of farmers' markets. These new markets were able to utilize the banners, helping establish themselves among their communities. Every new market experienced some level of success and continued on into the next year. These banners were primarily used for street-level signage, allowing the markets to concentrate their resources on other projects. The street-level signage drew attention of passersby, stimulating an interest in the market. These banners undeniably assisted in the markets success and will continue to do so for years to come.

The 2008 Connecticut farmers' market attendance compared to the 2009 market attendance showed an increase just below 10%. This was determined by comparing client redemption rates of both the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) and Senior FMNP. The measured outcome shows an increased by 9.4%. This figure of traffic flow was obtained based on cash receipts and the amount allotted to each WIC/Senior client. These figures were provided by the bank receipts for FMNP. These results fell just short of our anticipated 10% goal.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

Confidence levels were high that the projected goals would be met. Unfortunately, even a well thought-out and planned project could not ward off less-than-deal growing conditions, loss of good market days, and a down economy. Through personal interviews and market visits by staff from the Department of Agriculture, farmers told of an overall increase in customer attendance and dramatic increase in the number of Department of Agriculture sponsored farmers' markets. But most farms revenues were flat or off by as much as 20%. This was not due to a poor promotional project, but actually due to poor weather and a difficult economy. The weather affected not only the specialty crops produced by Connecticut farmers, but also customer attendance levels at farmers markets throughout the state.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

While this market season was challenging at times, these banners are made of a durable, long lasting material. Their usage will continue for many market seasons.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

A sample of a farmers' market banner appears below.



Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

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CT FARM-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAM PROJECTS

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COSTUME PROJECT

The CT Department of Agriculture Farm-to-School (FTS) Program wanted increase the support from school food service directors, schools, wholesalers, farmers and other groups to purchase and use CT Grown in a fun, creative way. The FTS program wanted a connection to the agency that created this opportunity for us to discuss the purchase and use of specialty crop products in the state's schools and at homes across Connecticut. Local has been a hot topic, and we needed to build on the success of our small costume project, reaching out to groups that were turned away because we had so few costumes.

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COLORING BOOK PROJECT

The CT Department of Agriculture Farm-to-School (FTS) Program wanted increase the support from school food service directors, schools, wholesalers, farmers and other groups. The problem is that we need more schools to purchase and use CT Grown. We needed to encourage the purchase in all age groups, using different strategies. The FTS program wanted a connection to the children, to encourage and educate the kids in the growing of and the use of specialty crop products in the state's schools, and to their parents, an essential group of people to the farm to school effort. The parents have been champions in encouraging their school systems to use more CT Grown. We felt an activity book explaining a bit about the process of growing and were the best way and would have a greater impact with children. A FTS color book could be a tool to educate school students, and could help recruit new schools and school systems for the program. It also could continuously promote the program, and keep the program visible.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COSTUME PROJECT

By investigating, pricing, ordering and purchasing costumes using the grant dollars, the four new costumes enabled FTS usage of the new and old costumes, increasing the number of schools, farmers markets and farmers using the costumes. We have a huge spike in the use by farmers markets so the costumes are promoting the purchase of CT Grown specialty crops farther than the scope of the original grant. Word of mouth, the website, newsletter notices and emails got out the word we had costumes to borrow free. We have more people aware of our agency, our FTS and all of this publicity, goodwill, and energy helps bring new customers to our farmers.

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COLORING BOOK PROJECT

By using the grant dollars to develop Color Books, we had a meeting of staff and intern to discuss a storyboard for our coloring book, discussing how to incorporate the costumes, farmer and school children and how to create a message bridging the gap from farm to school. Staff and the designing intern worked out a schedule, and began to work on pages. Our intern work on the artwork and periodically the staff reviewed and critiqued her efforts. Approximately 67 percent of the internship, 150 hours, were spent on the coloring book development. As soon as a rough draft was in place, the Governor

was asked for approval of her lead-in page, and two outside proofreaders with strong educational backgrounds were asked to read for content. The intern supplied an InDesign file and pdf versions of the project. The State of Connecticut printing contracts got cancelled during this project. At that point, the document was sent to the print shop for printing assembling and stapling.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COSTUME PROJECT

The FTS looked at the demand patterns for existing original costumes, which could not meet the demand for the schools, farmers markets, farms and special events. We tried to supplement and enhance the costume program by adding to the collection. We improved and revised the rental agreement forms, addressed the need for firmer rules for borrowing costumes. To better organize, an on-line form showing all costumes was posted, and an internal Microsoft Outlook calendar is now kept by two individuals to maintain control and keep us organized. More rules and a formal policy on rainy/wet/inclement weather keep the costumes in good shape for all to use. This enabled us to provide the services the increased demand required efficiently. None of the grant monies were used for administrative expenses. Year One actual expenses were \$3,856.90 for four costumes and four carrying bags. Year One of this project was \$303.10 under budget using state purchasing power. The goal to increase the number of schools in the FTS Program was accomplished. On March 14, 2008, 71 schools and school systems had pledged to be farm to school program participants. We now report we have 87 schools or school systems, an increase of 26 per cent. This is approximately 40 percent of the public school systems in the state using CT Grown.

Eighty-three groups borrowed the costumes, from December 6, 2008 to December 30, 2009, 83 times, up from only 27 rentals in 2007 before the additional costumes were purchased. During the grant period, the farmers markets used them 31 times. Farms used them 12 times. Non Profit groups used them 15 times. We are helping to generate interest in the CT Grown to schools' lunch program movement. There were 46 *farmers* in the program at the end of the grant period, a 2.2 percent increase in direct sales farmers. The wholesale houses remained stable at 9. We have even added non-specialty crop commodities to the program, above and beyond the scope of the grant.

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COLORING BOOK PROJECT

The intern used approximately 70 percent of a 224 hour internship, over 150 hours of time. Student met with staff and interpreted our feelings about the message, and produced pages for review, critiquing, and editing to compile into a final 24 page booklet using InDesign software. This was sent to our State of Connecticut Printshop at CT Department of Administrative Services, the only printing venue we are allowed to use at this point. The DAS staff quickly printed up the book on a heavy cover stock for the cover and lighter weight for coloring pages. With the delay in starting the actual development (because we originally were doing a brochure, changing mid-stream to a coloring book), it moved back the project right to the end of the deadline, so the coloring books have yet to be distributed. We now have a good template that will be able to distribute them across the state at schools, libraries, town halls, cooperative extension offices, state USDA offices, and given to food service director—through the farmers in the program. Year One of the Farm-to-School project (costumes) was \$303.10 under

budget using state purchasing power. This amount was added to the \$4015.66 designated for Year Two (coloring book) activities. The actual cost of the 3,915 coloring books was \$4,303.62. None of the grant monies were used for administrative expenses. Year One actual expenses were \$3,856.90 for four costumes and four carrying bags. Year One of this project was \$303.10 under budget using state purchasing power.

We now report we have 87 schools or school systems, an increase of 26 per cent. This is approximately 40 percent of the public school systems in the state using CT Grown.

We are helping to generate interest in the CT Grown to schools' lunch program movement. There were 46 *farmers* in the program at the end of the grant period, a 2.2 percent increase in direct sales farmers, missing the 10 percent goal. The wholesale houses remained stable at 9. We have even added non-specialty crop commodities to the program, above and beyond the scope of the grant.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COSTUME PROJECT

We learned that costumes were not going to increase the number of farmers in the program. We did learn it really helps to open the doors to schools. We feel that we underestimated the labor and cleaning costs of running this little program. You must remember to add in repairs, organizing, protocols for usage, and policies for damaged costumes, as we just did not think about that at the beginning. Looking ahead, the costumes are already seeing wear. We hope that we can use them for a couple more years, but it is evident from the popularity of this program that we should anticipate having to replace the costumes. We recommend that high quality costumes to anyone else considering this program. The average cost is about 800.00 per costume. The dry cleaning costs \$50.00 to \$75.00 per costume per cleaning. This can add up quickly.

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COLORING BOOK PROJECT

The goals were left to be accomplished now for the coloring book. Our newest intern has written a simple but effective plan to introduce and distribute the book to the schools and other potential partners in educating kids, like libraries, but by getting our farmers to help in this distribution, we hope to get our farmers more business. We suggest that if you make a coloring book, you find a person with that particular skill set/experience. Drawing these books is a special talent. Also, coloring books are more expensive than brochures, so we do not have enough to distribute fairly. We hope to find a funding source to print a large order of the book.

Coloring books cost more than brochures. We only have 3915 books. Because the intern did not get paid, we moved the money left over from the cheaper costumes, and the dollars allotted for a paid designer, into the purchase of books. We spent \$1.09 per book.

We learned that in order to get more farmers, this coloring book should be their project, having them distribute the coloring book to their schools. We also can change the character in the book and create another coloring contest, extending the shelf life of the coloring book.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COSTUME PROJECT

Since the establishment of the paperwork for the rental program has been established, we are now going to track costume usage for future reference, and will add how many students and adults are at events where the costumes are used. This will enable us to show outreach figures. It is our hope that more schools and organizations mean more sales of CT Grown specialty crops. We hope to be able to add more farmers to reach our 10 percent goal.

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COLORING BOOK PROJECT

Since the establishment of the basic coloring book, the staff has agreed that after December 2010 deadline for the apple naming contest, a designer will be asked to put in another costume to be named, re-working some pages of the booklet to extend the life of the coloring book indefinitely, and continue to do this until we feel the booklet needs a complete overhaul. We hope to reach the original goal of increasing the farmers in the program by 10 per cent by forcing people to reach out to the farmers/as the contacts to receive copies of the coloring books.

To get more life out of this one booklet, there is a contest on the last page, where the heavy paper comes into play—the kids can color and name the apple in the book (which is one of the costumes purchased with this same grant). They can mail it back to us, and the nice stiff cover paper of the back cover was designed to be a mailer back to the agency.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COSTUME PROJECT

Photos of the costumes are available on this page

<http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=2225&q=308746>

The Farm-to-School website is located at

<http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=2225&q=299424>

FARM-TO-SCHOOL COLORING BOOK PROJECT

A copy of the coloring book cover and sample page will be found, with an explanation of how to receive copies, at

<http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=2225&q=309572>

after the announcement of the booklet in May 2010.

The Farm-to-School website is located at

<http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=2225&q=299424>

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FARM-TO-SCHOOL COSTUME PROJECT

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FARM-TO-SCHOOL COLORING BOOK PROJECT

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CT FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM PROJECTS

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

CHEFS' CT GROWN FARM TOURS/WORKSHOPS

Chefs generally have excellent food preparation and presentation skills, but frequently lack a solid understanding of where food comes from and how it is produced. In addition, their awareness of the quality and diversity of CT Grown specialty crop products has been limited.

CT GROWN CULINARY DEMOS AT FARMERS' MARKETS

Local farms and farmers' markets offer many specialty crops and other items not readily available at supermarkets. Consumers often are intimidated by unfamiliar products and, as a result, are reluctant to purchase them.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM MEETING

From the inception of the Farm-to-Chef Program in October 2006, opinions regarding delivery and distribution, pricing, availability, and other related issues have come up repeatedly. Farmers tend to view these issues one way, while chefs view them quite differently. These differences in opinion and an apparent communication barrier impaired the two groups' ability to do business together.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

A relatively new and very low-budget program, Farm-to-Chef still remains unknown to many farmers and culinary professionals within the state, as well as to the public at large. Word of mouth is the primary means by which new members learn of the program. Creative, low-cost methods of promoting the program are sought to help increase visibility of the program and increase membership.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

CHEFS' CT GROWN FARM TOURS/WORKSHOPS

Free tours/workshops were conducted at local farms to increase the chefs' understanding, appreciation, and utilization of CT Grown specialty crops and other products.

CT GROWN CULINARY DEMOS AT FARMERS' MARKETS

Demonstrations by Farm-to-Chef culinary members were planned for farmers' markets around the state. By teaching consumers how to prepare some of these lesser-known specialty crop products, and by letting them sample the results, it was anticipated that they would be more likely to purchase and utilize these products on their own.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM MEETING

A free program meeting open to all members facilitated communication between the chef and producers. The moderated discussion sessions helped both sides better understand each other's points of view and resolve some of the barriers to doing business together. The meeting also provided chefs and producers an opportunity to network and establish relationships, resulting in new markets and enhancing the competitiveness of the specialty crops grown by the producers.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Farm-to-Chef promotional items were designed, purchased, and distributed at program events. The items increase visibility of the program and help identify participating members. In addition, identifying materials help the public to find and support participating businesses, in turn increasing demand for and enhancing the competitiveness of CT specialty crops supplied to and used by Farm-to-Chef members.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

CHEFS' CT GROWN FARM TOURS/WORKSHOPS

The goal of this project was to increase awareness, understanding, and utilization of CT Grown products among the state's chefs and culinary professionals.

This was accomplished through two tours/workshops that brought chefs out into the field to meet with producers, tour their farms and facilities, and hear from them first-hand about how they raise CT Grown food. The first was held in August 2008 in Milford with the second occurring in October 2009 in Bridgewater. The two workshops attracted a total of 99 registrants. As part of each event, a CT Grown culinary demo was conducted by program members to show how specialty crops and other CT Grown ingredients can be used to creating simple, elegant, and delicious menus.

CT GROWN CULINARY DEMOS AT FARMERS' MARKETS

The goals of this project were to educate the public about different types of CT Grown specialty crop products; increase the demand for and sales of CT Grown specialty crop products at farmers' markets; and educate chefs about different types of CT Grown specialty crop products.

Applications were sent to farmers' markets to sign up for a CT Grown culinary demo to be conducted by a Farm-to-Chef culinary professional, and a request went out to Farm-to-Chef members asking them to sign up to do one or more of these demos. While response from markets was excellent, participation by chefs was very poor. As a result, the project was canceled and \$5,800.00 was reallocated to Farm-to-Chef Promotional Items. A Change of Scope was submitted to and approved by USDA on 8/13/09.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM MEETING

The goals of this meeting were to increase awareness, understanding, and utilization of CT Grown products among the state's chefs and culinary professionals; to facilitate communication between the chef and producers; to help resolve some of the barriers to doing business together; and to provide an opportunity to network and establish relationships, resulting in new markets and thus enhanced competitiveness for the specialty crops.

The meeting was held in January 2009 in Farmington and attracted 120 registrants. A moderated panel discussion gave attendees an opportunity to discuss distribution, pricing, use of seconds, effective marketing, contracting in advance of the growing season, and crops desired but not readily available. A CT Grown lunch showcasing local crops available even in the dead of winter was prepared and served by program culinary members. Attendees were provided ample time to talk and network over a leisurely meal and afterward.

The meeting achieved the expected outcome of attracting both chefs and specialty crop producers from outside the Farm-to-Chef Program. Two of the producers in attendance were new to the program, while 11 new culinary members attended, bringing total program membership to just over 600, exceeding our target of 550.

A follow-up survey indicated that the project achieved the expected outcome of increasing culinary attendees' use of CT Grown specialty crops as a direct result of this meeting. A total of 79 people started the survey and 64 completed it. Of those who completed it, 32 of the respondents had attended the 2009 meeting. Of those 32, 18 were culinary professionals, or "users" of CT Grown products. Of the 18, all answered the first question pertaining to increasing their use of specialty crops as a direct result of this workshop, and 17 answered the second.

In terms of CT Grown fruits, vegetables, greens, and herbs

- 83 percent (15 of 18 respondents) had increased their use by at least 10 percent
- 39 percent (7 of 18 respondents) had increased their use by at least 50 percent

In terms of honey, maple, floriculture, and nursery crops

- 65 percent (11 of 17 respondents) had increased their use by at least 10 percent
- 24 percent (4 of 17 respondents) had increased their use by at least 50 percent

The survey also indicated that the project achieved the following goals:

- 100 percent (32 of 32 respondents) felt the event increased awareness, understanding, and utilization of CT Grown products among the state's culinary professionals.
- 100 percent (32 of 32 respondents) felt the event facilitated communication between the culinary professionals and producers who attended.
- 81 percent (26 of 32 respondents) felt the event resolved some of the barriers to culinary professionals and producers doing business together.
- 100 percent (29 of 29 respondents) estimated they had made at least four new business contacts, potential new customers, and/or potential new vendors as a result of the meeting. Fourteen percent (4 of 29 respondents) estimated they had made 25 or more. (These figures were gleaned from a separate survey, to which 29 people responded.)

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

The goal of the production and distribution of Farm-to-Chef promotional materials was to improve the visibility of the Farm-to-Chef Program and identification of its participants. With participating members easier for the public to identify, it is anticipated that the public will be more empowered to support those members, ultimately increasing demand for and enhancing the competitiveness of CT specialty crops.

A variety of materials including baseball caps, t-shirts, window clings, and patches, all bearing the Farm-to-Chef logo, were designed and produced in cooperation with the CT Department of Corrections Graphic Design Division. These items were distributed to attendees of the 2009 farm tour/workshop and the 2010 Annual Meeting.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

CHEFS' CT GROWN FARM TOURS/WORKSHOPS

Both of the free tour/workshops were very popular with attendees, who reported learning a great deal about the production and availability of CT Grown products. A follow-up survey indicated that all respondents who attended either or both events felt the tours/workshops accomplished the goal of increasing awareness, understanding, and utilization of CT Grown products among the state's chefs and culinary professionals.

While a bountiful CT Grown lunch was served at both events, coffee was not offered at either during the morning check-in, in an attempt to reduce overhead. This did not seem to be an issue at the 2008 event, but the 2009 tour/workshop was held in a remote location that was not near any restaurants or coffee shops. Combined with frigid temperatures and an earlier start time, many attendees commented on the lack of hot coffee when they arrived, despite being advised in advance that it would not be provided. In response, some of the chefs offered to provide coffee service for future tours/workshops.

CT GROWN CULINARY DEMOS AT FARMERS' MARKETS

Farmers' markets have great interest in having chefs come do cooking demonstrations. This project relied on Farm-to-Chef members to donate their time and expertise, with project funding going toward reimbursing farmers' market vendors for the product used in the demonstrations. If a similar project were to be attempted in the future, chefs would be compensated for their time and travel. This likely would result in greater chef participation.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM MEETING

The opportunity for Farm-to-Chef members to exchange ideas and provide input on issues surrounding the farm-chef connection was very popular with attendees. Surveys collected from attendees at the meeting indicated that participants found the forum very educational and worthwhile. Informal networking time also appears to be an essential component of this type of event.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

All of the promotional items were very well received by recipients. When t-shirts were purchased, however, only 15 each of size small and size medium were ordered. Far more of the attendees at the 2010 Annual Meeting asked for these smaller sizes than were available, resulting in having to "size up" a large number of shirts. If t-shirts are purchased again, larger quantities of smaller sizes will be ordered.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

CHEFS' CT GROWN FARM TOURS/WORKSHOPS

Responses to a follow-up survey conducted in November 2009, one month after the second tour/workshop, indicated that both workshops had resulted not only in increased awareness, understanding, and utilization of CT Grown products among the chefs who participated, but also in increased use of CT Grown specialty crops by attendees.

Of the survey respondents who attended the 2008 workshop 58 percent (7 of 12

respondents) had increased their use of CT Grown fruits, vegetables, greens, and herbs by at least 50 percent, and 33 percent (4 of 12 respondents) had increased their use of honey, maple, floriculture, and nursery crops by at least 50 percent.

Of the survey respondents who attended the 2009 workshop, 57 percent (4 of 7 respondents) had increased their use of CT Grown fruits, vegetables, greens, and herbs by at least 50 percent, and 29 percent (2 of 7 respondents) had increased their use of honey, maple, floriculture, and nursery crops by at least 50 percent.

Due to the success of these tours/workshops, a series of “mini-tours” (as opposed to a single tour/workshop) is planned for 2010.

CT GROWN CULINARY DEMOS AT FARMERS’ MARKETS

Because this project was canceled and grant funds reallocated, no long-term outcome measures pertaining to this project have been achieved.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM MEETING

A follow-up survey was conducted in November 2009. All of the respondents (31) indicated that they felt the program meeting increased awareness, understanding, and utilization of CT Grown products among the state’s culinary professionals. One hundred percent (32 of 32 respondents) also felt that the event facilitated communication between the culinary professionals and producers who attended, and provided an opportunity to network and establish relationships, while 81 percent (26 of 32 respondents) believed the event helped to resolve some of the barriers to culinary professionals and producers doing business together.

As a result of the positive feedback received, another annual meeting of all members was held in January 2010. In addition, bi-monthly “mini-meetings” have been scheduled for the remainder of 2010 in an effort to keep communication flowing and networking growing.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

A follow-up survey conducted in November 2009, one month after the second tour/workshop, at which hats and window clings were distributed indicated that 88 percent (7 of 8 respondents) had worn or displayed the Farm-to-Chef promotional items since the event.

The Farm-to-Chef Program has launched a t-shirt photo contest to encourage members to submit photos of them wearing the Farm-to-Chef t-shirts that were distributed at the 2010 Annual Meeting. This contest is intended to promote greater wearing of the shirts and thus increase visibility of the program in public.

The Farm-to-Chef patches were not distributed at the two program events, but instead will be used as “merit badges” to recognize Farm-to-Chef Program members who demonstrate exceptional program participation. These patches will help other members and the public at large identify Farm-to-Chef Program “All Stars.”

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

CHEFS' CT GROWN FARM TOURS/WORKSHOPS

A recap of the 2008 tour/workshop is included in the August 2008 Farm-to-Chef newsletter,

http://www.ct.gov/doag/lib/doag/farm_to_chef_files/ftc_august_2008.pdf.

Responses to the follow-up survey conducted in November 2009 can be viewed at

http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=fR9DI5UBaiDM7Y9Czbc_2bKM1W1mexUOnF5RWWQvbRorM_3d

A recap of the 2009 tour/workshop, including participant survey responses, appears in the November 2009 Farm-to-Chef newsletter

http://www.ct.gov/doag/lib/doag/FTC_November_2009.pdf.

Responses to the follow-up survey conducted in November 2009 can be viewed at

http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=fR9DI5UBaiDM7Y9Czbc_2bKM1W1mexUOnF5RWWQvbRorM_3d

Photos from the event are posted at

<http://budney.zenfolio.com/stuartftc>.

CT GROWN CULINARY DEMOS AT FARMERS' MARKETS

Because this project was canceled due to a lack of chef participation, there is no other information available.

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM MEETING

A recap of the 2009 Annual Meeting, along with participant survey responses, appears in the February 2009 Farm-to-Chef newsletter,

http://www.ct.gov/doag/lib/doag/farm_to_chef_files/ftc_february_2009.pdf.

Responses to the follow-up survey conducted in November 2009 can be viewed at

http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=fR9DI5UBaiDM7Y9Czbc_2bKM1W1mexUOnF5RWWQvbRorM_3d

FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Photos of Farm-to-Chef promotional items appear below.



FTC Window Cling



FTC Patch



FTC Hat



FTC T-Shirt (Front)



FTC T-Shirt (Back)

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

CHEFS' CT GROWN FARM TOURS/WORKSHOPS

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CT GROWN CULINARY DEMOS AT FARMERS' MARKETS

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FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM MEETING

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FARM-TO-CHEF PROGRAM PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

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CT FARM STANDS AND FARM STORES BROCHURE PROJECT

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need.

This project was developed to respond to the lack of marketing for farm stands and stores in Connecticut. The lack of marketing for this direct sales option of buying, limited the number of customers and potential business to farm stands and stores in Connecticut. The demand for buying and eating local products has greatly increased in Connecticut. This project better informed consumers of product availability and easier access to CT Grown specialty crops.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project.

This project was accomplished as a result of working cooperatively with producers in Connecticut, a graphic designer, a printer, and the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services (DAS).

Once the project was announced and applications for participation in the brochure were distributed, the response by Connecticut producers was outstanding. In the first year 122 farms applied for the brochure, far exceeding our expectations of 85. This influx of unexpected participants required additional hours to enter the data and design the brochure. A new layout was also required to accommodate the additional participants, including adjusting the paper size which affected overall printing expenses.

The final product was a beautifully designed brochure that provided Connecticut consumers with easier access to CT Grown specialty crops. Thirty thousand brochures were printed and distributed to each of the 122 participating farms, six Connecticut Welcome Centers, 169 town halls and libraries, USDA and Cooperative Extension offices, and was distributed at displays the agency participated in.

In year two, less desirable outcomes were achieved even though the response by Connecticut producers was even more outstanding than in year one. 145 farmers applied to be listed in the 2009 brochure. Unfortunately, due to the state budget crisis, all contracts related to brochure design were cancelled. This prevented the agency from redesigning or even updating the brochure for the new year.

In response to the state-imposed constraints, it was determined the brochure listing online would be updated and maintained and the remaining supply of brochures would be distributed on an as-requested basis. The listing of farm stands and stores can be found online, sorted by county, at www.ctgrown.gov.

The support and contributions of the project partners enabled this project to come together. The professional graphic designer enabled the work of agency staff members to come to life and the printers made this brochure a reality. DAS assisted us in paying the designer and printer. Through the work of the agency, and support of other agricultural organizations in Connecticut, distribution of the brochure was accomplished throughout the state.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

The initial goal of having 85 farm stands and stores listed on the brochure was easily surpassed in year one. The response to the brochure in year two was outstanding with a 10% increase over year one. The additional response in year two is attributed to the positive feedback from year one participants and increased awareness of brochure availability and impact on Connecticut consumers.

One hundred and forty five farms benefited from the free marketing resource both in print and online. 30,000 copies of this brochure were printed and distributed throughout Connecticut. While the number of impressions 30,000 brochure could have made, it could be much more than one impression per brochure. The number of page visits to the online listings are not tracked at this time, but future plans to enable such a function have been proposed.

A goal of increasing direct sales of specialty crops by five percent was established. A survey was sent to all brochure participants in November 2009. The average increase in direct sales of specialty crops by respondents was 4-7% as a result of participating in the brochure.

An additional goal of increasing on-farm revenue by five percent was also established. Based on the same survey sent to all brochure participants, the average increase of on-farm revenue as a result of this brochure was 1-3%.

The shortfall of achieving the second goal can be explained through the possibility that farmers were not tracking their on-farm sales or relating on-farm sales to their participation in the brochure. In future years, brochure participants will be asked to track the correlation between the two so we can have a better understanding of the benefits of this brochure.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

Overall, the project in year one went very well. A new brochure was offered to Connecticut producers. It was compiled, designed, and 30,000 copies were printed and distributed. Year two was a different situation given the status of our state's economy. A graphic designer could not be hired to update or redesign a new brochure. The compromise was to give producers the opportunity to be included in the county listing for the farm stand brochure on our website.

In the future, establishing a system to assist producers with tracking their sales and identifying why consumers are purchasing from their stand or store will need to be developed. The lack of information prevented the agency from getting a clear response to determine if the goal of increasing on-farm revenue by five percent was achieved.

Approximately \$4000 was unspent on the second year of this project. Due to budget constraints within the state, all printing and design work was unable to be completed as a result of state contracts being closed. In response to the challenges, the listing was maintained and updated frequently on the Department of Agriculture website. Should the situation change in the future and funds are accessible, an accurate, up to date

listing will be available.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

This brochure has been established within the agency and the project shall be maintained and continued in the future. The producers in Connecticut have shown a demand and justified a need for such a publication and marketing tool. The agency will do its best to maintain the project in both published and electronic formats in the future.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

The brochure can be viewed at

http://www.ct.gov/doag/lib/doag/marketing_files/2008_farm_stands_and_stores_brochure_web.pdf

The listings by county can be viewed at

<http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=3260&q=418062>

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

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CT PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS PROJECT

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

The awareness of the CT Grown logo has increased over the years but still needs to be developed with Connecticut consumers. Utilizing SCBG funds the Connecticut Department of Agriculture purchased promotional materials for use by eligible producers to promote their CT Grown specialty crops. These promotional materials aided in sales and brand recognition of CT Grown specialty crops.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

The promotional products were offered to all eligible specialty crop producers. The materials were incorporated and used by retail operation including supermarkets, roadside markets, farmers markets, and other outlets such as schools and groups looking to promote CT Grown specialty crops.

How the goal of the project was achieved.

The overall goals were to promote the use of the CT Grown logo to increase brand recognition, increase the sale of CT Grown specialty crops, increase the demand for CT Grown specialty crops, and educate the consumers at large about the availability of CT Grown specialty crops. These goals were achieved by purchasing promotional materials which consisted of CT Grown farmers' market tents, pens, pencils, magnets, t-shirts, pins, hats, sweatshirts, aprons, and price cards.

To achieve these goals, all promotional materials were available to eligible specialty crop organizations and growers for distribution at agricultural and on-farm events. By providing the promotional materials to growers, organizations, etc., there was increased usage and therefore increased promotion to consumers.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

Originally, 75 CT Grown tents were going to be purchased. Due to popularity of this project, 36 additional tents were purchased. This still did not meet the demand of our Connecticut specialty crop producers and a waiting list was established.

Due to a difficult growing year, large crop losses prevented the estimated 5% increase in both producers' on-farm direct sales and an increase of CT Grown specialty crops in supermarkets as a result of the CT Grown promotional materials.

Specialty crop producers, commodity groups, etc., greatly appreciate the promotional materials and look at the items as a way of branding their product. The items provided are useful and effectively spread the message about CT Grown specialty crops. This expansion and flood of marketing products increases public awareness and the demand. This awareness provides better food security and new opportunities for Connecticut agribusinesses featuring specialty crops.

It is anticipated that the efforts and promotional items supplied through this grant will net

positive results, just not immediate positive results. In future years, the marketing materials will provide additional visibility of diversified CT Grown specialty crops. There was a noticeable increase in the amount of producers requesting marketing materials that in the past. This was a surprising bonus that was not originally planned for.

Approximately \$7000 was unspent on this project. These returned funds are a result of incorrect processing of payments by our business office. Unfortunately, they posted a purchase twice but only paid it once. It was after the end of the program year was the mistake discovered and the funds needed to be returned. We were very frustrated by this as it prevented us from making the most of the overall program.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

These materials continue to be requested and will be distributed as long as supply lasts. We anticipate purchasing more items to continue the program as the state budget allows.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

Information on items that were purchased can be found on the CT Department of Agriculture website at <http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=3243&q=398984>

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CT GROWN ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN MARKET RESEARCH PROJECT

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

In 2007, the CT Department of Agriculture (CT DoAG) hired a consultant to conduct a state-wide, multi-media advertising and marketing campaign promoting CT Grown products. CT DoAG received positive feedback from farmers about the campaign but had no clear picture of the campaign's impact on consumers and the public at large, or whether similar investments would be warranted in future years.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

CT DoAG partnered with The Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) at the University of Connecticut to conduct a telephone survey of CT residents to learn whether or not they had any recollection of the marketing campaign, and, if so, which components were most effective.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

CT DoAG met with CSRA to develop a telephone survey to be given to 500 CT residents, representing a cross-section of the general population. The survey consisted of 25 questions regarding consumers' recollection of the campaign materials, recognition of the CT Grown logo, use of www.CTGrown.gov, and food buying habits. CSRA produced a final report and analysis based on the survey findings.

The study found that 27 percent of CT residents surveyed remember seeing, hearing, or reading advertisements for CT Grown products. Of the five different marketing campaign materials (television, posters, radio, billboards, and bus tails), television ads and posters were cited as the most memorable. Sixty-six percent of those who saw the advertisements remembered seeing television spots, while 48 percent recalled seeing CT Grown posters or signs.

Eighty percent of respondents who recalled seeing advertisements thought ads' message was effective in showcasing CT Grown variety and availability.

The study also found that 37 percent of respondents, overall, said they have seen the CT Grown logo, and 28 percent of those that have seen it said the first thing that comes to mind when seeing the CT Grown logo is purchasing CT Grown foods.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

Television advertisements were fairly effective, but expensive. The 2007 CT Grown marketing campaign was made possible through a one-time line item in the state budget. As the state continues to face severe budget challenges, it is highly unlikely that similar funding will be provided in the near future.

The posters and signage had the second-greatest impact. These materials can be produced and distributed at much lower cost than television spots and can be an effective means of promoting CT Grown specialty crops.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

CT DoAG has continued to use CT Grown posters and signage and plans to do so on a long-term basis. CT Grown price cards and signage are provided to specialty crop producers and retailers free of charge for use in promoting products at farm stands, farmers' markets, grocery stores, and other locations where CT Grown specialty crops are sold. CT DoAG also has begun producing vinyl CT Grown banners, which it provides to farmers' markets and retailers to help identify them to consumers as sellers of CT Grown specialty crops.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

Pictures of the CT Grown signage and posters can be viewed on CT DoAG's website at <http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=3243&q=398984>

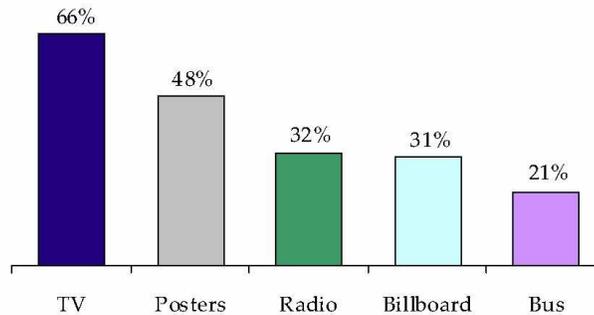
Following is one of the summary pages from the final report and analysis.

The Campaign's Reach

Many Connecticut residents remember seeing, hearing, or reading advertisements for Connecticut Grown products, primarily through television commercials or on posters displayed at various locales throughout the state.

The CT Grown advertisement campaign included five media—television and radio spots, posters on buses, a billboard, and posters at various locales (grocery stores, farm stands, farmers' markets, etc.). Over one-quarter of Connecticut residents (27%) recall the recent advertisements for CT Grown products. Of those that recall the advertisements, two in three (66%) remember them from television, and nearly half (48%) recall posters or signs advertising CT Grown products. Just under a third recalls the radio promotions (32%) or the billboard advertisement (31%). One in five Connecticut residents who saw the advertisements mentions seeing ads on CT Transit buses (21%).

Where did you see, hear, or read advertisements about CT Grown foods?
Combination of "Yes" to Q2 & follow-up questions



Campaign mediums

The ads were disseminated through five different mediums and residents were asked specifically where and when they recall encountering the advertisements.

Television

Of the 66% of residents that saw ads on television---

- Nearly one in five (19%) saw it on WTNH (ABC TV8/MyTV9),
- 17% saw it on WFSB (CBS TV3), and
- 10% saw it on WVIT (NBC TV30).

Prepared by CSRA

2

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

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SPECIALTY CROP ASSOCIATION PROJECTS

CT APPLE MARKETING BOARD PROJECT

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

GROWER AND RECIPE BROCHURES

The CT Apple Marketing Board has, for several years, produced and distributed two brochures. The first is a directory of Connecticut orchards listing apple products offered, hours of operation, and directions for each location. The second brochure is a guide to apple varieties grown in Connecticut and their culinary uses, including recipes. While in-house publication of these brochures has been adequate in the past, the Board of Directors felt the industry needed a professionally inspired and produced publication. The CAMB will update the two brochures every two years to reflect changes in the Connecticut apple industry.

WEBSITE DESIGN AND HOSTING

The CAMB Board of Directors hired Zagnutz Interactive to host its website, www.CTApples.com, and to design a new website incorporating the Connecticut apples logo. The website includes grower information, apple information and uses, and links to the Connecticut apple industry. Information gathered for redesigning the grower brochure would also be used for the website development.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

GROWER AND RECIPE BROCHURES

Zagnutz Interactive was hired to develop a Connecticut apples logo and redesign the two brochures. Collection of grower information, apple varietal information and recipes was coordinated by the Marketing Division of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture. New England Apples, a private grower-funded organization, provided graphics for the recipe brochure. While collection of grower information exceeded the time frame planned, both brochures were finalized, printed, and distributed on time for the 2008 harvest season.

WEBSITE DESIGN AND HOSTING

It was decided that www.ctapples.com would be redesigned with new photos and graphics but would continue to use the listing by county format. By doing so, potential customers could search a specific area of the state without scrolling through all the 80+ orchards listed statewide. Information included was determined to be: orchard name and address, hours of operation, products offered, market or PYO (or both), orchard website, and phone number. Links directly to individual orchard website would be available. CAMB and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture would collect information and Zagnutz Interactive would assemble and design the website.

How the goal of the project was achieved.

GROWER AND RECIPE BROCHURES

The goals of this project were:

1. Create a Connecticut apple logo: Zagnutz Interactive designed a new Connecticut apple logo to represent the Connecticut apple industry in all advertising and promotional activities.

2. Redesign Grower Brochure: Zagnutz Interactive created a state map organized by counties and located Connecticut orchards, hours of operation and products offered.
3. Redesign Recipe Brochure: Zagnutz Interactive created a brochure to identify apple varieties grown in Connecticut and their uses. Recipes were included.

All goals were achieved on time and within budget. Brochures with the new Connecticut apple logo were printed and distributed. Twenty-five thousand brochures initially were printed for distribution at tourist centers, growers' farms, and at agricultural fairs and events. At the end of the first grant year (12/31/08), 50% of these brochures had been distributed to consumers. An additional 18,500 were ordered to ensure enough brochures for the 2009 growing season, bringing the total number of brochures printed and distributed to 43,500. The additional order demonstrates an increase in brochure requests above the goal of 10-20%.

WEBSITE DESIGN AND HOSTING

The goal of this project was to create a website that was easy for customers to download or link to, and a website containing information that would encourage a visit to a Connecticut orchard. Zagnutz Interactive integrated the grower and recipe brochures into the website, and so achieved that goal. Navigation around the website is very easy, and direct links to grower websites make all orchards, large and small, accessible. Data included in this report shows the thousands of hits to the website from both domestic and international users. The Connecticut apple industry has been very pleased with the responses and results of this redesign.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

GROWER AND RECIPE BROCHURES

1. Expect delays: Timetables can easily double when working with multiple agencies and businesses.
2. Use resources from within the industry: New England Apple was invaluable in providing graphics and text for the recipe brochure. This helped contain costs and added uniformity.
3. Use creative talents efficiently: By having Zagnutz Interactive produce both the logo and the brochure layouts, duplication and time loss was reduced.

WEBSITE DESIGN AND HOSTING

1. Combine projects: By gathering information for both the brochure and the website projects, greater efficiency was achieved.
2. Time of year is critical: Final reviews should not be planned during the harvest season.
3. Be open to how others perceive your industry: Have a committee for reviewing the project; this can include individuals from outside the apple industry.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

Both growers and consumers have expressed the importance and benefit of the brochures and website. These programs will be continued in the future through the help of the industry.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

The New Connecticut apples logo appears below.

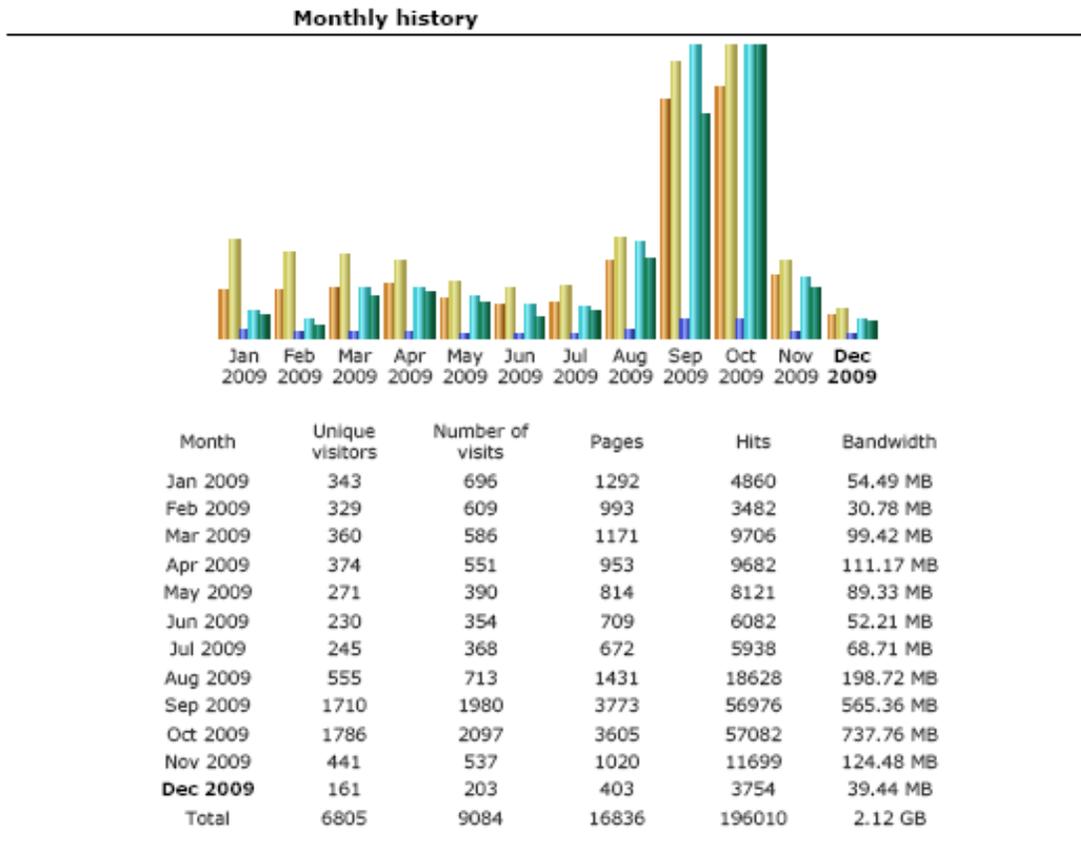


Connecticut Apple Marketing Board Website: www.ctapples.com

Summary

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Reported period | Month Dec 2009 | | | | |
| First visit | 01 Dec 2009 - 04:55 | | | | |
| Last visit | 15 Dec 2009 - 11:41 | | | | |
| | Unique visitors | Number of visits | Pages | Hits | Bandwidth |
| Viewed traffic * | 161 | 203 (1.26 visits/visitor) | 403 (1.98 Pages/Visit) | 3754 (18.49 Hits/Visit) | 39.44 MB (198.94 KB/Visit) |
| Not viewed traffic * | | | 973 | 1291 | 24.53 MB |

* Not viewed traffic includes traffic generated by robots, worms, or replies with special HTTP status codes.



A Guide to Connecticut Apple Growers and Retailers:
http://www.ct.gov/doag/lib/doag/marketing_files/2008_apple_growers_brochure.pdf

Apple Varieties & Their Uses Brochure:

http://www.ct.gov/doag/lib/doag/marketing_files/2008_apple_varieties_and_their_uses.pdf

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CT BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION PROJECTS

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

BEE SCHOOL

This project addressed the lack of education of the general public about honeybees and recruit potential beekeepers. With the current problem on the demise of the honeybee, the public began to ask questions about what they could do to help the honeybee and/or how to become a beekeeper.

WEBSITE

The original website was designed to be used by the members of the Connecticut Beekeepers Association for information on the meetings, forms that might be needed by the membership to report bee loses and some basic information. Links to other organizations and industry information was minimal. We discussed a variety of ideas that could be included on a web site at the executive meeting of the Connecticut Beekeepers Association. Outlining what was most important to create a web site that would service our members and the general public. We discussed the needs, as we saw them, with several web designers before choosing a designer that seemed to understand what we wanted.

This new design was needed to answer some of the questions from the general public, provide links for further information and serve the membership of the Connecticut Beekeepers Association. An attractive front page that was easy to navigate was the first objective. Having the web site easily accessible was another criteria, when people google Honeybees in CT; we wanted our site to come up.

BROCHURE: "WHERE ARE THE HONEY BEES?"

The disastrous loss of the honeybee nationwide required the Association to share information about the problem and offer suggestions to the general population on what they might be able to do to help the situation. A brochure that outlined the problem then gave helpful ideas of how to change what was happening on an individual level seemed to be the answer. There was a need to share the damage being done by over use of pesticides by the local homeowner and how their practices were harming the environment. Turning the concern over the honeybee into a positive brochure, one where the homeowner could be part of the solution was the main intent.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

BEE SCHOOL

Our first objective was to address the growing need to educate people about keeping honeybees as a hobby. A one day Bee School was designed. This made for an excellent opportunity for the new beekeepers to meet and talk to experienced beekeepers and many connected with someone in their area and were able to form a bond as new beekeeper and mentor.

WEBSITE

Many lengthy discussions on what could and could not happen on the web site were held with the designer. Trial and error of what the site could offer were looked at before

giving the final approval of the site design. The web designer was the one who did all this work, checking in on any new ideas that he had to offer. Our web designer proved to be excellent resource and went beyond any expectations.

BROCHURE: "WHERE ARE THE HONEY BEES?"

There was a great deal of study of the Colony Collapse Disorder, or what was known about it at the time. Many conversations with beekeepers from Connecticut and outside of Connecticut proved invaluable to designing the brochure. While it had to be kept concise, the brochure needed to address several areas. One area to address was the question of why the honeybee was so important to the human race especially in regards to our food supply and why they needed to support the honeybees. Some general information about honeybees was necessary to give people some prospective as to how much the honeybee did for us in the environment and what their job description was. Then they needed to have some type of solution, one that they could do on a local basis. Something they could do in their backyard or neighborhood. Finally, some links for more information for those people who wanted to go to the next level of involvement.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

BEE SCHOOL

The initial goal was to increase awareness of the honeybee and hopefully increase the number of hobbyist beekeepers by about 25-40 beekeepers. This was done through advertising in the local media, on the website and with other clubs, we had over 170 new beekeepers sign up for the school. We provided a text book and the school free of charge to the participants. One of the speakers brought in for the bee school was the original author of the text, now from Mississippi State University and the other speaker is a nationally known authority on honeybees. A last minute family emergency prevented one speaker from attending; however another nationally known researcher/ extension apiculturist offered to cover for that speaker. Both speakers helped to outline the talks for the day, following the text book. Everything from the biology of the honeybee to the building of equipment was addressed during the day. Covered in the school were the problems that face beekeepers, such as the weather, the pesticides used by homeowners, the various pests and diseases that attack the honeybee and how to be a good neighbor with your hive in the backyard.

Of the 170 who attended the class, about 160 started a hive in the spring of 2008. Several established beekeepers from the club also attended the class.

WEBSITE

The goals for the website were achieved through the design and wording used on the home page. The ease of use on the homepage encouraged consumers to explore the 'Links' section where they could easily navigate to other websites that are dedicated to using honey in, beekeeping, and issues with honeybees.

BROCHURE: "WHERE ARE THE HONEY BEES?"

The brochure design allowed the Association to achieve our goals of educating the public about the importance of the honeybee and honey in our diet. A portion of the brochure talks about the need of our food supply to have the honey bee for pollination. Throughout the brochure, there is mention of being a beekeeper and what beekeepers

do, the back page makes a clear, compelling argument for becoming a beekeeper and helping enjoying the fruits of their labor.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

BEE SCHOOL

The first Bee School was a tremendous success. The number of new beekeepers who started and have stayed with beekeeping was about 85% above our projected numbers. One new beekeeper is said to impact a minimum of 10 other individual. So the overall impact reached well beyond the 25-40 new beekeepers or 250-400 individuals reached. With the 160 new beekeepers, we estimate that 1600 people are now being educated about honeybees. It was determined that running a Bee School every February would be the best way to education the general public. Even if the participates do not go into beekeeping, they are now more informed as to the issues facing the honeybee.

All future Bee schools will utilize the local beekeeping talent as well as rely on the nationally known experts in the field. It has been determined that the text we use is the best one for this area. Most books about beekeeping are written in the southern states, relating to the more southern temperatures. Our text, Beekeeping Basics, was written at Penn State, the same general latitude as Connecticut and therefore keeps the focus on the timing in beekeeping more accurate for us.

The experienced beekeepers have improved their skills as beekeepers and are now expanding their hives and honey production. Several are now selling their honey and other products of the hive at their local town farmer's markets and providing pollination for the small farmer down the road and/or avid gardener in the neighborhood.

BROCHURE: "WHERE ARE THE HONEY BEES?"

The end result was a tri-folded brochure that could easily be distributed to a large number of venues to be passed out to the public. Getting to that point was much more difficult. After gathering all the information that might be of importance, the challenge was to streamline that information so as not to be completely overwhelming and to remain positive. Most of the information touches on the surface, yet it does tell enough of the story to be informative for everyone, and then it also provides the opportunity for those who want more to access a variety of other links for further information. This is a brochure that is timeless and can be reproduced for years to come. It can also be shared with other parts of the country, as it is not specific to just Connecticut. The organizations listed are national organization, except for the Connecticut Beekeepers Association and most of the links have a more local presence that can be tapped into by individuals.

WEBSITE

The result of the work done was a very attractive and interactive website. People now have the opportunity to view short videos on honeybees, obtain the history of the club, view a variety of links that direct them to manufactures of bee equipment, industry journals, and national and local organizations. Meetings for the CBA are listed and directions can be obtained online. Forms for membership, bear damage reporting, and hive registration can all be obtained from our new website. Everything a person is interested in regarding beekeeping can be found on the new site. Getting an interactive website

up and running was a lot more work than anticipated. Finding the person to do it was easy, but the task of getting all the information to him was overwhelming. The website is and will always be a work in progress. We now realize there needs to be a club member who will be in charge of gathering information and making sure the site is kept current with meeting information, national news, and information pertinent to beekeepers.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

BEE SCHOOL

The executive board of the Connecticut Beekeepers Association believe that hosting a one day Bee School every February would benefit the general public as well be a good refresher for established beekeepers. They have set the standard for all future Bee Schools to follow the initial Bee School held under this grant in order to continue to educate the general public and start new beekeepers. Review of each Bee School will continue to ensure that the topics are covered, the school is promoted and the educational value is kept at a high standard.

WEBSITE

The designer has been formally asked to continue monitoring the web site. He does all the changes to the site when needed. It is being discussed to add a line item to the Connecticut Beekeepers Association budget to cover this servicing of the web site. The original contract was for two years of service.

BROCHURE: "WHERE ARE THE HONEY BEES?"

The brochure was written to be timeless. No matter what year or decade, there will be honeybee losses from something, the positive information in the brochure inform the public on how to ensure the safety our honeybees for the environment and how they as individuals can help the situation.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

BEE SCHOOL

None. The Bee School did not create any publications or web sites; it was strictly a one day event utilizing a text book bought from Penn State and national and local speakers.

WEBSITE

The website is www.ctbees.com.

BROCHURE: "WHERE ARE THE HONEY BEES?"

Honeybees play an important role in our food.

Most people do not think about the necessary role that honeybees play in the source of our food in Connecticut. The honeybee is responsible for over 2/3's of our native foods. Without healthy honeybee colonies, many of our crops would be severely diminished, including apples, blueberries, strawberries, cherries, pears, peaches, squashes, pumpkins, peppers, cucumbers and onions, to name a few. While honeybees can survive in the wild, most are dependent on the local beekeeper who can ensure their survival with careful management of their colonies. Honeybees play an important part in the pollination of the local farms, so we can have locally grown, fresh produce.



Become a hobby beekeeper

Look into beekeeping as a hobby to help the environment, the wildlife and your gardens. A rewarding hobby that takes as little or as much time as you have to devote to it. Check out www.ctbees.com for the membership form and more information. Attend a meeting to see what it is all about.



Support your local beekeeper Buy local honey

The Connecticut Beekeepers Association meet 4 times a year, bring in top speakers, help to educate the public about the importance of honeybees, offer representation at the national level in the beekeeping industry.

Photos and design by Becky Jones for Connecticut Beekeepers Association

Where are the Honeybees?



What can I do to help the Pollinators?



www.ctbees.com

Plant a honeybee friendly garden

"Farming feeds the world, and we must remember that pollinators are a critical link in our food systems."

PAUL GROWALD, CO-FOUNDER, POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP

Consider planting to attract all Pollinators

Trees: maple, willow, blueberry, rose, buttonbush, dwarf sumac, elderberry.

Perennial flowers: sage, lupine, phlox, milkweed, purple cornflower, sunflower, aster, bee-balm, blazing star, wild columbine, false blue indigo, sweet william, cardinal flower, violets.

Vines: trumpet vine, honeysuckle.

Information from The Pollinator Partnership/North

American Pollinator Protection Campaign
www.pollinator.org and www.nappc.org



Why should we support honeybees?

In recent years the number of native pollinators and honeybees have been declining. They are threatened by loss of habitat, disease and the excessive and inappropriate use of pesticides. Our wildlife depends upon the natural habitat to live. Wildlife and humans depend on the pollinators to survive. We are all interconnected. You as an individual can help preserve the pollinators that we need, by planting a bee friendly garden, limiting the use of pesticides in your yard and gardens, encouraging your town to keep the natural habitats and becoming a hobby beekeeper. These are a few ways for you to be a part of the solution to the problem. Honeybees are currently threatened by Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Research helps us understand the need for proper hive management by beekeepers and the role that people in general play in helping the bees survive.

Here's the Buzz about Honeybees

-  A honeybee visits 2 million flowers to make a single pound of honey
-  A colony of honeybees flies 55,000 miles to make a pound of honey
-  On average, a single honeybee makes 1/12 of a teaspoon of honey in her lifetime
-  The honeybee visits 50-100 flowers on each collection trip.
-  A honeybee has five eyes and four wings
-  The honeybee is the only insect to produce food that is consumed by people.
-  Honey never goes bad
-  There are more than 300 floral sources of honey in the U.S.
-  Honey's color is determined by the floral source.

Links about honeybees

CT Beekeepers Assoc., www.ctbees.com
National Honey Board, www.honey.com
Mid-Atlantic Apiculture Research and Extension Consortium, <http://maarec.cas.psu.edu>
Carl Hayden Bee Research Center, Tusco AZ, <http://gears.tucson.ars.ag.gov/>

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

Jaime Smith

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CT CHRISTMAS TREE GROWERS ASSOCIATION PROJECT

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

EXPERIMENT STATION GRANT

Christmas tree growers need to be educated and updated on all the practices of being a successful grower. Members seeking answers to their questions about growing precipitated the need for research and education. By awarding CAES scientists, they are able to perform experiments and share their results with the growers. This information is necessary for proper weed management and pest control which is imperative to enhance the Christmas tree crop and allow better plantations to flourish.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Annually, CCTGA awards three scholarships (\$500.00 each) to help students defray their expenses while attending a college or university. Candidates must be Connecticut residents pursuing studies in plant science, horticulture, forestry or the Christmas tree industry. These monies will encourage today's youth to become involved in agriculture and save today's farms for tomorrow. Out of the six winning candidates, only four received the money.

COLORING CONTEST

This year CCTGA sponsored its 8th annual coloring contest. This contest is offered to all Connecticut school children in grades kindergarten through three. Eight winners and their families are given the opportunity to go to any choose & cut tree farm of their choice and harvest a real tree. Children are the next generation of consumers. By educating school-age children about live Christmas trees and providing them the opportunity to actually experience a trip to a real tree farm, may make a difference in real tree sales.

WEBSITE, UPDATES AND MAINTENANCE

CCTGA's website is maintained for the public who buy real trees and want to know about Christmas trees, how to care for them and where to purchase their tree at Christmas time. The site also provides a list of officers, members, and membership information.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

EXPERIMENT STATION GRANT

CAES scientists were able to perform experiments throughout several farms in Connecticut achieving the best possible answers to individual problems. Collectively, the results are beneficial for all members. At farm meetings, the scientists are able to show attendees potential problems and/or success stories attained through their research.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Several candidates applied for CCTGA's scholarships. Most of these students were Vo-Ag students, and some were from local farm families. Applications were available in the Real Tree Line, on the website and handed out personally to students attending Ag Day at the State Capitol. All CCTGA members were informed of the scholarships and encouraged to promote it to their farm help or qualifying family members. The rules were

clearly reiterated on the website and in The Real Tree Line, stating the rules and qualifications to apply.

COLORING CONTEST

The contest was announced on the website, in The Real Tree Line, and by a mailing to all 708 elementary schools in CT. Over 900 entries were received from CT school children.

WEBSITE, UPDATES AND MAINTENANCE

www.ctchristmastree.org is a well maintained website managed and updated by a grower and member of CCTGA. Fairs, meeting notices, activities sponsored by CCTGA, farm listings, members, and educational tips are provided on the website. Any member can contact the web manager at any time to make changes. The website remains current by posting important announcements, meeting locations and upcoming events.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

EXPERIMENT STATION GRANT

A primary goal is to educate the tree grower on plant health programs, environmental concerns, conservation, product development, fire safety and sales. This goal was achieved through articles written by the scientists and published in the Real Tree Line (a quarterly newsletter), at seminars sponsored by CCTGA, at two annual meetings, six twilight meetings and one fall field day held through the grant period where CAES scientists presided.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Four scholarships (totaling \$2000.00) were awarded during the grant reporting period. Interest peaked, especially in early May, about the scholarships via emails, phone calls and letters. Over the last five years, applications have increased over 60%. News releases were sent out announcing the winners who are pursuing their passions; furthering their education in Agriculture.

COLORING CONTEST

The goal of CCTGA's coloring contest is to increase awareness of CT Grown real Christmas trees. The contest is promoted to school-age children, but it is their parents and families that need to submit the entry, surf the web for choose & cut farms, and take their children to harvest a tree thus increasing tree sales locally. Winning pictures are posted on the front cover of the Real Tree Line and the web site for the general public to review. Website hits were up over 16% during this period of time.

WEBSITE, UPDATES AND MAINTENANCE

CCTGA's goal is to reach out to as many people possible to encourage them to buy a real tree. This goal was accomplished by advertising the website on all promotional materials distributed at agricultural fairs, Ag Day at the State Capitol, the choose & cut brochures, agricultural websites, meetings, and logo items.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

EXPERIMENT STATION GRANT

It is imperative to have a working relationship with the CAES scientists. The improper use of chemicals or invasion of pests can completely destroy a Christmas tree plantation. Early detection is key to any problem and it is the education from the scientists that have helped the growers become cognizant of potential dangers.

SCHOLARSHIPS

CCTGA's scholarships help students take their love of the green industry to the next level of learning. Students can take this knowledge and increase their agricultural awareness through participating in activities offered in the agricultural centers at their schools.

COLORING CONTEST

Children can be very persuasive and demanding. If they are shown the importance of a real Christmas tree and know how great the experience to a tree farm can be, traditions are made for years after. Children can get their parents to the farms to choose a real tree making it a family event. As family traditions grow, so do tree sales among those families.

WEBSITE, UPDATES AND MAINTENANCE

Educating the consumer is most important in today's competitive market to keep the Christmas tree industry viable. The internet has proven to have replaced newspaper advertisements. It is a must for CCTGA to provide information via its website to promote real Christmas trees. The website received 281,246 hits in 2009 an increase of 6% from 2008.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

EXPERIMENT STATION GRANT

These grants enables long term outcomes by allowing CCTGA to offer necessary credits for recertification and licensing at meetings conducted by CAES scientists. These continuing educational units keep growers up to date with the latest chemicals and their proper usage for weed and pest control. In every issue of The Real Tree Line, CAES scientists have committed to writing articles discussing current problems, issues and updates from their experiments performed. Power point presentations and handouts are available at most of the meetings and can be obtained from the website. In the last two years, CCTGA has gained 18 new members as a result of CCTGA's relationship with the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

SCHOLARSHIPS

By promoting scholarships to today's youth, CCTGA is encouraging students to continue their education in Agriculture. CCTGA has plans to continue offering scholarships through their memorial/research fund to students who wish to become involved in agriculture.

COLORING CONTEST

It is important to continue to educate and inform children and their families about real trees and the location of tree farms throughout Connecticut. Through additional CCTGA funds, this program will be continued in the future.

WEBSITE, UPDATES AND MAINTENANCE

CCTGA is attempting to enhance the Christmas tree crop in Connecticut by reaching out to the computer audience. The more information provided on the website allows prospective consumers to learn about harvesting a real tree and the advantages of having a real tree verses an artificial tree or no tree at all. The website will be maintained in the future.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

EXPERIMENT STATION GRANTS:

The following is from the August 2009 issue of The Real Tree Line

Diversity . . . Perseverance . . . Hard Work . . . Sustainable Farming

Story and Photo
By Fabienne Audette
CCTGA Secretary

Receiving a business card from Staehly's Farm is like reading the ingredient list of your favorite year round recipe: Hanging Baskets, Bedding Plants, Vegetable Plants, Perennials, Fresh Fruit and Vegetables, Pumpkins and Mums, Christmas Trees and Firewood. The only thing missing is the dedication and hard work needed to mix it and bake it.

Over 60 people attended our first Twilight Meeting of the 2009 season on June 17. We were welcomed with enthusiasm by Chris and Gail Staehly. Before heading out to the fields, Gail served a splendidly prepared meal for everyone.

We were very lucky as we squeezed out the only rain free day and evening Mother Nature allowed us. Staehly Farms is in East Haddam and most attendees from the west enjoyed crossing over the Connecticut River on a metal bridge at one of its most picturesque points overlooking the Goodspeed Opera House.

Chris told us that the first trees, white spruces, were planted in 1985. Six years later in 1991, they sold their first tree, six to be exact and almost gave up. But perseverance ruled and they sold a larger number in 1992. As a result, they began expanding the following year.

That led them to purchase acreage from

their neighbor in 1998 and a mass planting of 9,000 trees the following year. Between the effects of the drought that year and the ravages of deer, much of that crop was lost and replanted. In addition, an 8foot high fence was installed after the electric fence proved unsuccessful in holding back deer.



Dr. John Ahrens, emeritus plant scientist from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, briefs growers on weed control at the first 2009 twilight meeting at the Staehly Farm in East Haddam.

Diversification began in 2004 when a greenhouse and farm stand were built. Annual plant material grown in the greenhouse in the winter is sold in the spring. Vegetables and fruits, mostly grown on the farm, are sold starting in the spring and continuing through the summer. Mums, pumpkins and apples carry

through to Halloween when the farm stand closes.

Christmas tree and wreath sales follow the day after Thanksgiving along with firewood sales through the winter months. Not much down time to say the least.

As we walked to the Christmas tree field, we saw the massive fence Chris installed to keep the deer away. Sometimes they still get through, he said, but at least the damage is minimal. There are other issues that concern him more: Drainage, Cryptomeria and elongate Hemlock scales, weeds and that awful oriental bittersweet.

Chris has dramatically improved the water situation on his plantation by trenching, tiling and using the raised bed method. He has struggled with this issue as we have experienced two years of wet weather.

Dr. Richard Cowles addressed the scale issue. He again detailed the life cycle of these pests, and provided us with a clearer understanding of the importance of timing and thoroughness of spraying. He demonstrated the equipment and spraying techniques to use against these scales. He also recommended the use of Safari as a systemic which requires a completely different spraying technique.

Dr. John Ahrens discussed the management needed to control weeds on the farm. Chris has used composted manure to fertilize

(continued on page 13)

SCHOLARSHIPS

The scholarship press release is below:

Three students receive CCTGA scholarships

By Kathy Kogut

The Memorial/Research committee has awarded 3 high school students each a \$500.00 scholarship. These students will be pursuing studies in plant science, horticulture, or forestry.

Joshua Miller, son of CCTGA members Robert and Alicia Miller, recently graduated from Coginchaug High School in Durham. He will be attending Paul Smith's College in Paul Smiths, NY, where he will study forestry and natural resources management. "Growing up in Connecticut, I have watched beautiful oak; maple and beech forests disappear for the purpose of suburbanization. Watching this happen, in what was once a rural area has helped me to grow a perspective on the importance of our natural resources. I hope to return to Connecticut and pursue my passions, preserving our most important natural resources, farming with my family, helping future generations by giving back to the community" says Joshua. Joshua has performed various tasks on his family's Christmas tree farm.

Michael Scheyd, a recent graduate of Berlin High School, lives in Kensington with his parents Rick and Mandy Scheyd. He will be entering Penn State University's College of Agricultural Sciences this fall. His main focus will be turf management inspired by his love of golf. He hopes "to become a successful golf course superintendent at a top golf course".

Claudia Szerakowski, daughter of Jack and Inga Szerakowski, has been accepted to the University of Connecticut's School of Engineering as an Environmental Engineering major. "My career goals include helping the environment through the creation of technological innovations to ease the preservation and conservation of the world's natural resources."

While attending Simsbury High School, Claudia led the Environmental Club which involves many community clean-ups and events, planting trees and initiating a recycling program at the school. She also joined the town's Recycling Committee and Clean Energy Task Force as a student ambassador to further the development of recycling in the school system. ▲

COLORING CONTEST

Information about the coloring contest rules and picture to be colored can be found on the CCTGA website: <http://www.ctchristmastree.org/index.html>

WEBSITE, UPDATES AND MAINTENANCE

www.ctchristmastree.org

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

Jaime Smith

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CT FARM WINE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL PROJECT

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

The past two years the Connecticut Farm Wine Development Council (CFWDC) has worked closely with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture and all Connecticut farm wineries to enhance the competitiveness of this specialty crop.

The main issue for the farm wineries in CT was very few people knew about local wineries. The problem was one of consumer awareness, the consumer did not know the wineries existed, and the wineries did not have the funds needed to promote their products.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

The CFWDC approached the problem by asking the wineries what they needed to help resolve this problem. We then created the Passport program to fulfill their needs. The Passport program lists all the farm wineries in Connecticut. Consumers are encouraged to have their passport stamped by 14 of the 30 wineries. Once 14 stamps are achieved consumers can submit their Passports to win international and local prizes.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

We achieved our goals by working closely with the wineries and other partners assuring complete delivery of the product.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

The end result is we have much better business environment in an otherwise bad economy. The Passports have increased traffic flow at wineries throughout Connecticut by accomplishing the following:

- A. 50,000 Passports were distributed to customers
- B. All wineries reported an increase in the number of people visiting during the program (May to November).
- C. Wineries reported a steep drop in customer count as soon as the program ended.
- D. Wineries reported each customer purchased at least one bottle of wine (avg. value \$15.00 plus the value of tasting total of \$22.00). This adds up to approx. \$15-22,000. To the cash flow of each winery.

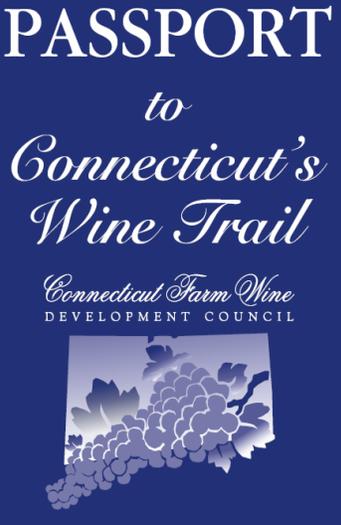
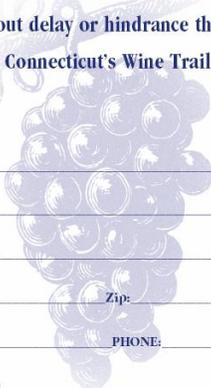
Lessons learned from this project included that more lead time in developing and printing the Passports is needed. Promotional materials provided to each winery would also be helpful in unifying the message and consistency of promoting the Passport program to consumers when wineries get busy.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

The CFWDC has committed to running the Passport program in the future based on the importance and need expressed by the industry.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

Below is a portion of the 2008 Passport.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
|  <p>PASSPORT to <i>Connecticut's Wine Trail</i> Connecticut Farm Wine DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL</p> | <p>Welcome to the <u>Connecticut's Wine Trail's Passport Program</u>. Start by visiting the wineries along the Ct. Wine trail and have your CT. Winery Passport stamped and signed at 14 of the wineries visited. Submit your passport to a participating Connecticut winery by Nov. 7, 2008 and you will be entered to win one of two unforgettable trips for two to Spain. Must be at least 21 years of age to participate.</p> <p><u>Prizes include:</u> One room double occupancy and room tax at each property. Round-trip airfare for 2 people to Spain, provided by the CT. Farm Wine Development Council. Transportation to & from airports not included.</p> <p>FIRST PRIZE - 13 night stay at the BENALMADENA PALACE, Benalmedena Costa, SPAIN A four star property complete with indoor & outdoor pools, fitness center, spa, restaurant and great views of the Mediterranean Sea. Must take trip Feb.1-14, 2009.</p> <p>SECOND PRIZE - 13 night stay at the BENALMADENA PALACE, Benalmedena Costa, SPAIN A four star property complete with indoor & outdoor pools, fitness center, spa, restaurant and great views of the Mediterranean Sea. Must take trip Feb. 15-28, 2009.</p> <p>Additional Prizes-15 Weekend Getaways A weekend getaway, two nights, one room double occupancy, at the Courtyard by Marriott Norwich, Norwich, Ct. Swimming pool, Fitness Center, Hot Tub. One passport will be selected for each of the 15 weekends.</p> | <p>The Connecticut Farm Wine Development Council of the United States of America hereby requests all whom it may concern to permit the citizen/national of the United States named herein to pass without delay or hindrance through Connecticut's Wine Trail.</p>  <p>Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____ PHONE: _____ Issue Date: _____</p> |
| | <p>Sharpe Hill Vineyard PO Box 1, 108 Wade Road, Pomfret, CT 06258. 860.974.3549, fax 860.974.1503. Come and visit us Friday through Sunday from 11AM-5PM to taste our wines in our historic setting. From I-395 North to Exit 93. Go West on Rte 101 (which becomes Rte 44) for 7 miles to Rte 97 (in the Abington District of Pomfret). Go South on 97 for 4 miles to Kimball Hill Road (on your left). Turn left onto Kimball Hill Road. Winery is 1.8 miles on your right. From I-84 take Exit 69. Go East on Rte 74 to the end. Make a left onto Rte 44 East and stay on Rte 44 until the Abington District of Pomfret. Make right onto Rte 97 South. Then same as above. Email: sharpehill@snet.net. Website: www.sharpehill.com</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Rate your visit: 10 (excellent) to 1 (needs improvement)</p> <p>Wine Quality: _____</p> <p>Overall Experience: _____</p> <p>Comments: _____</p> <p>_____</p> | <p>Priam Vineyards 11 Shalior Hill Road, Colchester, CT 06415, 860-267-8520. Open Fri-Sat-Sun., and major holidays, 11am-5pm, for tastings. Tours by reservation. From the North, I-91 South to Rte 2 East, Exit 16 (Westchester/Rte149), right going South on Rte 149 for about 1.5 miles. Turn right onto Shalior Hill Road. The entrance is the first left. From the West, I-84 to Rte 2 East, then follow as above. From the South, I-95 North to 395 Exit 77, take Rte 85 North to Rte 2 West, Exit 16, then continue as above. Email: priamvineyards@sbcglobal.net Website: www.priamvineyards.com</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Rate your visit: 10 (excellent) to 1 (needs improvement)</p> <p>Wine Quality: _____</p> <p>Overall Experience: _____</p> <p>Comments: _____</p> <p>_____</p> |

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

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CT GREENHOUSE GROWERS ASSOCIATION PROJECT

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

We created a Connecticut Garden & Landscape Trail as a way of marketing the facilities that display, grow, and sell ornamental garden plants. Sales and growing of ornamental plants in Connecticut account for more than half of all of agriculture in Connecticut. Very little coordinated statewide marketing has been done in the past that focuses on increasing consumption of these plants. Also, the general public was unaware of many of these facilities. Further, there was the opportunity to tie in for-profit green industry companies with the non-profit garden-related facilities, such as arboretums and botanical gardens.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

We have created a program to establish the first-ever *Connecticut Garden & Landscape Trail*, a joint marketing and promotion project partnered with the Connecticut Nursery & Landscape Association. We designed a logo that will be used by the state's green industry companies to signify that they are on the "trail". We mailed out solicitations to 3,000 green industry companies asking their participation in the project, and their placing of ads in the initial Trail brochure. We also opened a web site that will be expanded for the general public to see and use. The CTGardenTrail.com web site was created and maintained entirely in-house by our two Associations, CGGA and CNLA. We funded the website ourselves. We also printed and distributed 50,000 Garden Trail full-color brochures. Companies on the Trail purchased official Garden Trail metal signs for highways to direct customers. The signage also gave a unified theme across the state, with people looking for the signs. The maps were folded and inserted into the center-folds of the Garden Trail brochures.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

We released and unveiled the new Trail during the Connecticut Flower & Garden Show February 19-22, 2009 in Hartford (30,000 attendees). We received over 70 advertising orders from green industry companies to help support the Trail brochure and publicity. This is better than what we expected. We also promoted the Trail to the news media, successfully getting valuable on-air time in the major television market. Also, many local newspapers carried numerous stories on the Trail. Also, for the first time ever in one place, we compiled and publicized the many gardening seminars and demonstrations that our green industry companies put on for the public. The "Special Events" section of the Trail website lists all of these programs, which help funnel thousands more visitors to our facilities. All in all, this program was such a success that the two partnering Associations—CGGA and CNLA—both decided to continue it in the year 2010 without federal/state funding fully sustained solely by green industry money.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

We suspected that the Trail concept would fit perfectly with the public's appetite for discovery and exploration, and their love for the great outdoors. We were right. One newspaper columnist wrote that going from garden center to nursery to greenhouse on the

Trail was as exciting for many people as a trip to Disney or a national park. There are another potential 100-150 company facilities that could be participants, which is an opportunity for us to grow the Trail in the future. There was some hesitance from some companies, wondering about the long-term viability of the Trail program. Also, we launched the Trail at the same time as a major recession hit the state of Connecticut, which probably had some negative effect also. But we know that when times are tough, people stay closer to home, so we used the “staycation” angle many times to encourage people to go on the Trail as a cheap way of entertainment. The one goal we had that was not achieved was including the Trail in the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s agricultural signage program. DOT declined with a backhanded compliment: we had too many companies on the Trail which they feared would lead to “sign proliferation.”

We are still awaiting sales figures for 2009, which are provided by the CT Department of Revenue Services. We expect, however, they will show that our industry’s sales were either flat or down as much as 5%-10%, mostly due to the recession. Our companies on the Trail did notice increased customer traffic, however.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

The demand and response from the industry has been outstanding. This program, through the assistance of the industry, will be carried on in the future.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

CT Garden Trail Website: <http://www.ctgardentrail.com/>

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

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CT NOFA (NORTHEAST ORGANIC FARMING ASSOCIATION) PROJECT

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

This project was created to address the growing interest from Connecticut residents, businesses, and institutions in buying local and organic food from Connecticut's organic and sustainable farmers, and the symmetrical interest of those farmers in selling more of their specialty crops, that is organic and Farmer's Pledge fruits and vegetables.

In addition, each year there are new farms which are just beginning their marketing and the *Guide* is especially useful to them as they begin to establish themselves.

In both 2008 and 2009, CT NOFA produced and printed the annual *CT NOFA Farm and Food Guide* to connect farmers and consumers. We distributed 10,000 copies of the 2008-2009 Guide and 15,000 of the 2009-2010 Guide and each year posted these guides on our website, www.ctnofa.org, as a pdf for reading or downloading.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

The process for producing the *Guide* each year included gathering farm and business data to include in the *Guide*, selecting additional content to educate consumers about the value of purchasing local and organic specialty crops and designing and printing the *Guide*. Once the *Guide* is published, a press release is sent out announcing its availability and copies are distributed to nearly 800 members and through the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Marketing Division. The *Guide* is also the primary outreach tool to promote Connecticut organic and sustainable specialty crops to a wide range of consumers at fairs, conferences, agricultural events and other venues, including food stores and health care practitioners' offices.

In the winter of 2008 and again in the winter of 2009, we sent out a call for farm listings through our various email and print publications as well as directly to farms and businesses that were listed the previous year and to farms listed as certified organic by certifiers active in Connecticut.

In the winter of 2008 and again in the winter of 2009, CT NOFA contracted with a graphic designer to produce a beautiful *Guide to Farms and Food* that is user friendly and includes a convenient index of crops listed by county. In 2008, we printed 10,000 copies of the *2008-2009 Guide*. We ran out of those Guides before the next one was ready, so in 2009 we printed 15,000 copies of the *2009-2010 Guide*. The *Guides* are distributed through a great variety of venues including direct mailing to our 800 members, through the Connecticut Department of Agriculture marketing division, at dozens of events, fairs and conferences throughout the year and at food stores.

Since these farmers sell at a variety of outlets, each farm listing includes the venues where farmers sell their specialty crops. The *Guide* also lists some of the stores and restaurants that sell specialty crops grown by these farms.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

The goals for this project were:

1. To promote the abundance and diversity of organic products available from Connecticut's organic farms;
2. To make it easy for consumers to find Connecticut organic products;
3. To educate the public about the benefits of buying local and organic products;
4. To support Connecticut's organic farms and farmers.

These goals were achieved through publishing and distributing 10,000 copies of the *2008-2009 CT NOFA Guide to Farms and Food* and 15,000 copies of the *2009-2010 CT NOFA Guide to Farms and Food*. Each year we also posted the *Guide* on our web site, www.ctnofa.org as a .pdf for reading or downloading.

The data we gathered were also used to create a Google Map including all the farms and businesses listed in the *Guide*. There is a link on our web site to this map so that consumers can find organic and sustainable specialty crop producers in their area.

The *Guide* is our primary outreach tool and its attractive cover each year enticed people to pick it up from our table at many outreach venues and events.

Results, conclusions and lessons learned for each project.

We saw an increasing demand for our *Guides* over these two years and plan to build on the distribution networks we've developed to continue to get this publication into the hands of consumers.

In 2008 we had 93 farm listings. In 2009, probably due to the economic stress, only 88 farms were listed. We are now working on the data collection for the 2010-2011 *Guide* and have 89 farms wanting to be listed and more on the way.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

Although CT NOFA is going paperless with some publications and using post cards instead of brochures in other cases, the popularity and usefulness of the *Guide* encouraged us to keep it as a printed publication for 2010-2011.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

CT Farm and Food Guide and Google Map:

<http://www.ctnofa.org/Farms.php>

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

Jaime Smith

[CT Department of Agriculture](http://www.ct.gov/DepartmentofAgriculture)

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CT NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION PROJECT

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

We created a Connecticut Garden & Landscape Trail as a way of marketing the facilities that display, grow, and sell ornamental garden plants. Sales and growing of ornamental plants in Connecticut account for more than half of all of agriculture in Connecticut. Very little coordinated statewide marketing has been done in the past that focuses on increasing consumption of these plants. Also, the general public was unaware of many of these facilities. Further, there was the opportunity to tie in for-profit green industry companies with the non-profit garden-related facilities, such as arboretums and botanical gardens.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

We have created a program to establish the first-ever *Connecticut Garden & Landscape Trail*, a joint marketing and promotion project partnered with the Connecticut Greenhouse Growers Association. We designed a logo that will be used by the state's green industry companies to signify that they are on the "trail". We mailed out solicitations to 3,000 green industry companies asking their participation in the project, and their placing of ads in the initial Trail brochure. We also opened a web site that will be expanded for the general public to see and use. The CTGardenTrail.com web site was created and maintained entirely in-house by our two Associations, CGGA and CNLA. We funded the website ourselves. We printed and distributed 50,000 Garden Trail full-color brochures. Companies on the Trail purchased official Garden Trail metal signs for highways to direct customers. The signage also gave a unified theme across the state, with people looking for the signs. The maps were folded and inserted into the centerfolds of the Garden Trail brochures.

How the goal of the project was achieved.

We released and unveiled the new Trail during the Connecticut Flower & Garden Show February 19-22, 2009 in Hartford (30,000 attendees). We received over 70 advertising orders from green industry companies to help support the Trail brochure and publicity. This is better than what we expected. We also promoted the Trail to the news media, successfully getting valuable on-air time in the major television market. Also, many local newspapers carried numerous stories on the Trail. Also, for the first time ever in one place, we compiled and publicized the many gardening seminars and demonstrations that our green industry companies put on for the public. The "Special Events" section of the Trail website lists all of these programs, which help funnel thousands more visitors to our facilities. All in all, this program was such a success that the two partnering Associations—CGGA and CNLA—both decided to continue it in the year 2010 without federal/state funding fully sustained solely by green industry money.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

We suspected that the Trail concept would fit perfectly with the public's appetite for discovery and exploration, and their love for the great outdoors. We were right. One newspaper columnist wrote that going from garden center to nursery to greenhouse on the

Trail was as exciting for many people as a trip to Disney or a national park. There are another potential 100-150 company facilities that could be participants, which is an opportunity for us to grow the Trail in the future. There was some hesitance from some companies, wondering about the long-term viability of the Trail program. Also, we launched the Trail at the same time as a major recession hit the state of Connecticut, which probably had some negative effect also. But we know that when times are tough, people stay closer to home, so we used the “staycation” angle many times to encourage people to go on the Trail as a cheap way of entertainment. The one goal we had that was not achieved was including the Trail in the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s agricultural signage program. DOT declined with a backhanded compliment: we had too many companies on the Trail which they feared would lead to “sign proliferation.”

We are still awaiting sales figures for 2009, which are provided by the CT Department of Revenue Services. We expect, however, they will show that our industry’s sales were either flat or down as much as 5%-10%, mostly due to the recession. Our companies on the Trail did notice increased customer traffic, however.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures

The demand and response from the industry has been outstanding. This program, through the assistance of the industry, will be carried on in the future.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

CT Garden Trail Website:
<http://www.ctgardentrail.com/>

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

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MAPLE SYRUP PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION OF CT (MSPAC) PROJECTS

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

PUBLIC AWARENESS SIGNAGE

Historically, maple syruping is associated primarily with Vermont. Much needs to be done to make Connecticut residents aware that maple syruping is a viable part of Connecticut's farming economy.

MAPLE SAMPLER KITS

The majority of customers are confused between the color of maple syrup and its flavor. There is much need for education in this area.

EDUCATION FOR PRODUCERS

Making maple syrup is an art as well as a science. The art is a result of years of experience – in many cases spanning generations in a family. The science continues to evolve, resulting in better, safer, and more efficient tools and technology. There is a great need to continually re-educating folks about the fine points of syruping as well as initiating novices into this industry as hobbyists.

CONNECTICUT MAPLE COOKBOOK

Most states and provinces producing syrup have signature cookbooks, which are a great source of pride when marketing their products nationwide. They reflect the interests and lore of their state or province. They also present an opportunity to educate the public on the history of syruping as well as providing them with popular recipes.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

PUBLIC AWARENESS SIGNAGE

The target of this project was to create a sign advertising the presence of a Connecticut maple sugar house and announce that pure Connecticut maple syrup is available for sale.

MAPLE SAMPLER KITS

One thousand decorative and informative cardboard kits which hold four glass sampler bottles of the major grades of maple syrup were developed and made available to Association members. These glass bottles must be filled with the appropriate grades of syrup by the individual syrup producers.

EDUCATION FOR PRODUCERS

By providing high-quality programming at semi-annual association meetings, producers had the opportunity to learn more about the craft of making syrup and be better informed to make minor and/or major upgrades to their operations.

CONNECTICUT MAPLE COOKBOOK

Several members of the association with an abiding interest in producing a maple cookbook were the motivating force behind this project. The fact that Connecticut will host the 2010 international meeting in Mystic was another motivating force.

How the goal of the project was achieved.

PUBLIC AWARENESS SIGNAGE

A graphic designer was employed to create the signage and contracted to have the signs printed. Two hundred and fifty double-sided, two-color, 18" X 24" signs were produced and distributed to producers. Allowing us to reach our goal of gradually creating a consciousness that Connecticut maple syrup and maple products are just as good as Vermont's are and easily available.

MAPLE SAMPLER KITS

The packaging with a wide window in which all the four grades of syrup appear, allows the consumer to see the differences in color and the corresponding name for each color grade. Then tasting each sample by name allows the consumer to note the subtle differences in maple grades. The educated consumer is now in a better position to make an informed choice in future syrup purchases. The Maple Sampler kits have given producers another option of marketing their products to consumers while providing an educational aspect. While we're unclear if the initial goal of increasing sales by 5-10% was achieved we're confident some increase in sales took place given the new product offered from the sugar house.

EDUCATION FOR PRODUCERS

There are presently 180 MSPAC (Maple Syrup Producers Association of Connecticut) members and many more unaffiliated producers in Connecticut. Regardless of the size of the operation, everyone is welcome to participate in the educational programming offered by the Association. As a result producers have become better informed on techniques to make higher quality syrup and value-added products. Knowledge of the latest technology will equip producers to make minor and major upgrades to their operations resulting in larger production to meet their needs.

CONNECTICUT MAPLE COOKBOOK

A template was created and added to our website so that membership and visitors could submit recipes for inclusion in the cookbook. Very few of the producer's recipes were ever actually submitted. Producers had to be coaxed in person or by phone to share their favorites.

The enthusiasm of the original creator of the cookbook was the motivating force for making this project a reality. She had been collecting recipes for years with the intention of seeing them put together in a cookbook format. Her intent was for the cookbook to have only town-wide appeal. The advent of this grant enlarged the scope of the cookbook to Association and state-wide coverage and appeal.

A first draft has been submitted to the Association for perusal and its approval. Discussions have ensued as to editing, format, layout, photographs and other areas. It has become obvious that in order to have a cookbook make the transition from a local (church ladies type of appeal) to a professionally created state-wide cookbook, considerable sustained effort will be needed to bring this project to completion. Our goal of producing 500 cookbooks is in progress and production is anticipated within the next six months.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

PUBLIC AWARENESS SIGNAGE

The completed signs and the wire stakes used to display the signs were available at the Association's January, 2010, preseason meeting. In the original grant proposal these signs were part of the first year's project. Due to the extended time it took to create the Maple Syrup Sampler Kits (to be discussed next), this project was deferred to year two of the grant. The timing on completing this project was intentionally delayed until the period between the Association's annual meeting in November 2009, and the spring meeting scheduled in January 2010, prior to the beginning of the maple season. This was done because the time between inception and completion of the project would only take a few weeks.

MAPLE SAMPLER KITS

These kits have been enthusiastically received by the Association members. They are a perfect vehicle for educating consumers about the differences in the taste of syrup made very early in the season from that made much later. They also provide a perfect vehicle for discussions about sugar differences, bacterial contamination and other facts about the sugaring process. Because of the attractive packaging, customers are often purchasing these kits as gifts.

EDUCATION FOR PRODUCERS

Two MSPAC educational events were held during the 2008-9 season. The first was on November 7, 2008 at the Middlesex County Extension Center, Haddam, CT and the second was on January 17, 2009 at Sessions Woods CT State Park, Burlington CT, open to members and the general public. Both events were half day in duration from 9 AM till 1:30 PM. Approximately 125 people attended both sessions.

Speakers included Gary Graham, PhD, Professor and Natural Resource Specialist at Ohio State University, spoke at the November meeting and Dave Chapeskie, Executive Director of the International Maple Syrup Association (IMSI), spoke at the January meeting. Dr. Graham's topic was the importance of sanitation in an address entitled "What meets the eye and what may be unseen...sugarhouse sanitation and quality go hand-in-hand." Mr. Chapeskie spoke on worldwide trends in the maple products industry on how they may impact maple producers in Connecticut and then spent time explaining the new maple syrup grading system that had just been approved by IMSI and the North American Maple Syrup Council at their respective annual meetings.

A survey was done by Dr. Graham at the end of his session and the results were overwhelming positive. Mr. Chapeskie did not take a survey, but judging by the questions following his talk and the people that lingered after the meeting to talk to him it was very well received.

Both programs fulfilled the objectives of helping maple producers increase their knowledge and skills to produce and sell high quality maple syrup. From the feedback of the survey we learned that new and experienced maple syrup producers are always open to new ideas on how to increase their production, quality and marketing and sales capabilities.

CONNECTICUT MAPLE COOKBOOK

This project has been by far the largest, most complex and difficult project of the entire grant. Recipes bridge the gamut of family, online, and cookbook recipes. Although recipes cannot be copyrighted, care will continue to be taken to credit the sources of our material. Initial editing of the first draft was graciously done by a volunteer with computer expertise. As the scope of the cookbook increases editing continues.

Present plans include the addition of an introduction by a local author and a forward by the Association president. Professional photographs will also be added. Hiring a professional graphic designer with layout experience to put the cookbook in final form has delayed the completion of this project. We believe that the grantor (USDA) and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture as grant manager, would want to see as fine an end product in this cookbook as possible. Therefore, we will take the proper steps in editing and seeking professional advice that will result in a polished product.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

PUBLIC AWARENESS SIGNAGE

Experience has shown that visitors to sugarhouses relate an interest in making their own syrup. Some tap a few trees and relish the experience of making their own, while others are “bitten by the bug” and become converts to this fascinating endeavor. Membership in the Association is growing as the interest grows. Locally grown farm products are in high demand; the retail price for maple syrup is at an all time high.

MAPLE SAMPLER KITS

Educating the public on the differences between various grades of maple syrup has been an ongoing challenge in the industry as a whole. Vermont has always had its own descriptors that are not used by the rest of producers nationally and internationally. The national and international maple syrup associations have been dialoguing for twenty years to come up with more appropriate descriptors upon which we can all agree. At our Fall 2009, international meetings the new agreed upon descriptors were unveiled. Because we have a product packaging in place, the process of re-educating consumers with the updated labels when they are implemented in a few years, will be much simpler and efficient.

EDUCATION FOR PRODUCERS

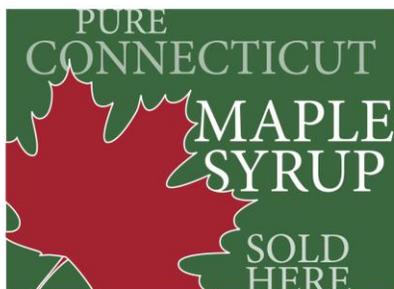
As producers gain more confidence in discussing their trade and its evolving technology, the dialogue with consumers becomes more meaningful. “Show and tell” will always be the best means of educating the public. However, it can now be coupled with meaningful information for the consumer and potential syruper. Folks attending farmer’s markets throughout the state, where syrup and other maple products are sold have expressed enthusiasm for Connecticut produced syrup and promise to visit during syruping season to view the process, continuing the educational process.

CONNECTICUT MAPLE COOKBOOK

A professional photographer is willing to provide numerous photos of Connecticut sugarhouses in action. The services of a professional food editor have been offered for the reading and critique of the manuscript to ensure its quality. We have hired a professional graphic designer with publishing experience to handle the final layout.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

PUBLIC AWARENESS SIGNAGE



MAPLE SAMPLER KITS



EDUCATION FOR PRODUCERS

See the list of 2010 Sugarhouses Open to the Public for syrup makers who are embracing this educational opportunity.

<http://www.ctmaple.com/images/PDF/2010%20Guide%20to%20Connecticut%20Sugarhouses.pdf>

CONNECTICUT MAPLE COOKBOOK

The following pages are from a draft version of the 172- page cookbook.

Connecticut Maple Syrup Producers Cookbook

This cookbook was started in 2008 to honor the Native American's who were the first producers of maple syrup and they taught the immigrants that came to America how to produce maple syrup and all the past and present Connecticut maple syrup producers who tap the maple trees, gather the sap and spend many hours boiling the sap into maple syrup from February until April to provide us with a natural sweetener for eating and cooking.

This cookbook was made possible by a donation of favorite recipes from the members and friends of the maple syrup producers association of Connecticut. Maple syrup producers are a close family and share their knowledge. Many recipes are swapped at family gatherings, church socials, local maple meetings, state and international maple syrup meetings.

Thank You to everyone who made this cookbook possible.

First Edit- Kirsten Walker

Printing- Goulet Printing, Inc.

Conn. Department of Agriculture

Bob and Pat Dubos- support, typing, budget

Proofreaders

Picture Credits

The Random House Achievement Program in Literature

National Wildlife

Lesloyd F. Alleyne

The Maple Syrup Book

Better Homes & Gardens

Kitchen Equipment for Maple Syrup Cooking

When working with pure maple syrup making candy, cream, suckers, etc. at home is a fairly easy process and practice makes perfect. BUT- you need to use extreme care because you are working with a VERY HOT LIQUID. Boiling maple syrup is very hot and can stick to your skin and burn you.

Water: Put water in a pan (no maple syrup) and put the candy thermometer in the pan of water and bring the water to boiling. That is the boiling point of water for that day.

Cookware: Use a stainless steel pan when cooking with maple syrup. The pans maximum capacity should only permit boiling six to eight quarts of maple syrup. The maple syrup level before cooking should not exceed one third of the height of the pot or reach more than four inches in height. One quart of maple syrup needs a four quart pan. Two cups of maple syrup needs a two quart pan.

Utensils: These need to be made of materials which will not alter the taste of the maple syrup. Wooden spoons, stainless steel, spatula that will not alter the taste, measuring cups and other utensils commonly found in a kitchen.

Thermometer: The thermometer must be accurate up to 250 degrees. This is your most important piece of equipment for boiling maple syrup. They maybe purchased at a maple equipment dealer, house wares store or a hardware store. Look for one that is a candy thermometer that graduates to one degree F. *The thermometer will also need to be used to find the boiling point of water for the day you are working with maple syrup. See water above.

Cooling: When making maple products such as maple cream you will need a container larger than the pan you are cooking in. Full of ice water (or a circulating cold water bath will work) to rapidly cool the hot maple syrup.

Maple: When you are working with maple syrup you need to watch the boiling all the time to prevent the syrup from boiling over or getting to low a level of maple in the pan and burning the pan.

Nutritional Information

Maple syrup is a natural sweetener made by boiling maple sap from a maple tree to evaporate the water out until it reaches seven and a half degrees above the boiling point of water that day and is 67% sugar.

NUTRITION FACTS HERE

Raised Doughnuts Mom Palmer

2 packages of yeast
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup lukewarm water
2/3 cup sugar
1 cup scalded milk
2 well beaten eggs
1/2 cup butter
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
7 or more cups of flour

Because yeast will bubble up use a bowl larger than a cup. Pour yeast into bowl of lukewarm water, add 1 teaspoon sugar, stir and let stand 5 minutes. Scald milk and let cool. Cream together the butter, salt and remaining sugar. Add to this the eggs and nutmeg. Add softened yeast to milk when lukewarm, and blend this liquid with 3 cups flour, beating until smooth. Add creamed butter mixture, beating well and enough more flour to make soft dough. Knead until smooth, keeping dough as soft as can be handled without sticking. Let rise in warm place until doubled, fold down and let rise again until nearly doubled. When dough has risen second time, roll out on floured board until 1/3 inch thick. Cut with doughnut cutter. Cover and let rise until doubled. Fry in deep fat 375 degrees. Drain doughnuts on paper towel until cool.

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

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MULTI-STATE PROJECTS

HARVEST NEW ENGLAND PROJECTS

An outline of the issue, problem, interest, or need for each project.

Producers in New England have frequent access to conferences and information on growing methods and production whereas conferences on marketing local products are often infrequent and less developed. With the demand for local products expanding throughout New England, producers expressed the need for a conference on how to market their products to consumers.

A similar marketing conference was held in 2007. The response to it was excellent and as a result, it was expressed that a similar conference be done in the future.

How the issue or problem was approached via the project(s).

The 2009 conference was developed through cooperative efforts between the six New England state departments of agriculture (Harvest New England Assoc.) and agricultural nonprofits, commodity associations, and universities throughout New England. Conference calls were held monthly for conference planners to connect, report on accomplishments, express ideas and concerns, and respond to any issues as they arose.

On each planning conference call, anywhere from five to twelve people participated from around New England. This was a wonderful way of organizing the event as it allowed views from around the region to be brought to the table. It enable multiple aspects of marketing and marketing experiences to develop various workshops and training sessions for conference attendees. Conference planners freely expressed their suggestions or concerns and as a result a comprehensive schedule of workshops was developed for the three day conference.

While Connecticut was the lead organizer of the conference, each member of Harvest New England played a significant role in planning the event.

How the goals of each project were achieved.

As a result of extensive planning and participation from all of the New England state departments of agriculture, nearly 28,000 farms were contacted about the conference. Promotional materials were developed to increase awareness of Harvest New England and the conference. In addition to extensive online promotion provided by a website dedicated to the conference, promotional materials were provided to the six New England states and were requested by commodity associations, agricultural nonprofits, and universities throughout New England. The Harvest New England website directed folks to the Harvest New England Conference website.

In 2007, 700 producers attended the two-day conference. A goal of at least that many, up to a 10% increase in attendance was established for the 2009 three-day conference. Over 800 producers attended, allowing us to meet and exceed the established goals as a result of the extensive marketing and distribution of promotional materials. Of the 800 attendees, 220 were from Connecticut.

Results, conclusions, and lessons learned for each project.

The feedback received on the evaluation forms provided information on how beneficial the conference was to attendees.

It was nice to meet so many great people, the conference was very helpful and well laid out! Nice work folks!

Networking and connecting with the folks working on similar projects in other states was extremely beneficial.

Being surrounded by other farmers and hearing them discuss the variations in their businesses was a great learning experience.

The website session was the best. Meeting new farmers and networking with others was invaluable!

As a result of the evaluations and through a general consensus of the planning group, a conference in 2011 has been scheduled.

How progress has been made to achieve long term outcome measures.

Planning has already begun for a conference in 2011. The hotel has been reserved and the planning committee will have their kick-off conference call in early April.

In the evaluations from 2009, attendees identified other areas of marketing they wanted to learn more about to increase the competitiveness of their specialty crops. This information will be referenced when planning the 2011 conference to respond to the need and interest that has been expressed by New England producers.

Additional information available (e.g. publications, Web sites).

A link to the 2009 conference website, which contains the full agenda, can be viewed at <http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=652438>

Promotional Materials: Below are two pages from the brochure mailer, followed by reminder postcard.



Here's what an attendee said about the 2007 conference:
"The best farming conference we've ever attended - great speakers, great trade show, great lunch. Can't wait for the next one!"
So, don't you want to come??

- Keynote speaker Mel Allen, Editor of Yankee Magazine
- Two pre-conference workshops - Market Mangers Session or Regional Agritourism
- A full trade show featuring the latest agricultural products and services, including specialty food products showcasing unique local products perfect for roadside stands.
- Optional half day farm tours
- Over 20 breakout sessions with topics such as food safety, energy conservation, agritourism, understanding retail, working with the media, and more!

Improve your marketing skills! Learn from hearing the experiences of others!
Network with producers from around New England!
Don't miss out on the largest ag marketing conference in New England!



This event is your best opportunity in 2009 to learn how to:
**Promote Your Business • Advance Your Business
 Expand Your Business • Sustain Your Business**

Who should attend?! You should! If you're a grower, value-added producer, new farmer, farm store manager, farmers' market master/manager or just interested in agriculture, this is the ag conference for you!

- Conference highlights include:**
- **Keynote Speaker Mel Allen**, editor of Yankee Magazine, will give a commentary on New England life through the voices of its people. He will share these "Voices of New England" with conference and trade show attendees.
 - A lively and informative "Best of New England" panel will feature some of the top farm marketers from all six New England states.
 - A session on **Food Safety-A "Must Have" Component of your Farm's Marketing Program**, will tell you how to make your food safety plan a marketing tool for your business.
 - What's better than hearing about successful farm marketing? How about seeing successful farm marketing on a **farm tour!** Half day tours will be available each day to two area farms.
 - Want more? Join us for the pre-conference workshops: the **New England Farmers' Market Managers Workshop** where farmers' market managers from across New England will convene to discuss new ideas and pressing issues or **Expanding Regional Agritourism, One Farm at a Time** which will help attendees discover what works, what's needed, and how to get where you want to go with agritourism.

NEW! To register, and pay with a credit card, go to www.harvestnewengland.org or, complete the registration form on the inside back page.

Trade Show Exhibitors (as of September 2008)

- | | |
|---|--|
| Bliss Bros. Dairy, Inc. | Land4Good |
| BPVS - Berkshire Photovoltaic Services | Litchfield Center of State Auto |
| BusCon, Inc. | MA Office of Dispute Resolution & Public Collaboration |
| Colrain Mountain Candles/works | MA Department of Agricultural Resources |
| Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture | NEEED/DF Seeds |
| Connecticut Cousins, LLC | Northeast SARE |
| CT Department of Agriculture | Premier Marketing Group |
| CT Farm Risk Management Program - University of Connecticut | Resource Management, Inc. |
| Dillman Farm, Inc. | RJW Butternut Squash Peppers |
| Engine Fueling Company | SARE |
| FieldWorks | Stanley Paper Co |
| First Farmers Farm Credit | Swansea Memorials |
| Goodies Pie Company | Target Sales Associates |
| Global Cuisine | Taylor Prosser of New England |
| Harris Seeds | USDA-New England Agricultural Statistics Service |
| Hillside Orchard Farms | USDA - NRCS |
| King's Ag/Seeds, LLC | Walter Nursery |
| Krugger's Family Farm, Inc. | Wheeler Sugarworks, Inc. |

For more information on how to exhibit at the Trade Show go online to www.harvestnewengland.org and click on conference information, or contact David Webber at david.webber@state.ma.us.



Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference & Trade Show

February 24TH - February 26TH, 2009
 Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, Massachusetts

NEW! To register online and for the latest conference updates visit www.harvestnewengland.org.

This event is your best opportunity in 2009 to learn how to:
Promote Your Business • Advance Your Business • Expand Your Business • Sustain Your Business

Conference highlights include:

- **Keynote Speaker Mel Allen**, editor of Yankee Magazine, will give a commentary on New England life through the voices of its people. He will share these "Voices of New England" with conference and trade show attendees.
- Over 20 breakout sessions on a wide range of topics including business development, culinary tourism, branding, online marketing and sales, and much, much more!
- A lively and informative "Best of New England" panel will feature some of the top farm marketers from all six New England states.
- A session on **Food Safety-A "Must Have" Component of your Farm's Marketing Program**, will tell you how to make your food safety plan a marketing tool for your business.
- What's better than hearing about successful farm marketing? How about seeing successful farm marketing on a **farm tour!** Half day tours will be available each day to two area farms.
- Want more? Join us for the pre-conference workshops: the **New England Farmers' Market Managers Workshop** where farmers' market managers from across New England will convene to discuss new ideas and pressing issues or **Expanding Regional Agritourism, One Farm at a Time** which will help attendees discover what works, what's needed, and how to get where you want to go with agritourism.

Keynote Speaker:
Mel Allen will give a commentary on New England life through the voices of its people. His earlier assignments at Yankee were to find New England stories; however, in his search, he found more than just stories – he heard the voices of New England, voices one can never forget. He met interesting and passionate people and from asking them questions and listening to their answers, he discovered the unexpected. He will share these "Voices of New England" with conference and trade show attendees.

For more information please contact
Jaime Smith at 860-713-2559.

Contact person for each project with telephone number and e-mail address.

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