

4.3 Develop Agriculture-Friendly Practices

5 Points

10 Points

15 Points

20 Points

25 Points

Objective

Create an agriculture-friendly community through taking steps to actively support farms and farmers in your city or town.

What to Do

The more you do, the more points you earn, up to 25 points possible.

1. Pass a right-to-farm ordinance. **(5 points)**

Submit: A copy of the right-to-farm ordinance formally adopted by your governing body.

2. Lease appropriate municipal land to farmers or provide outreach on [CT Farmlink](#) (linking available municipal or private land to farmers looking for land to farm) **(5 points)**

Submit: Number of municipal parcels available for lease to farmers; number of municipal parcels leased and description of lease agreement(s); or documentation of outreach provided on CT Farmlink.

3. Develop a Transfer or Purchase of Development Rights program. **(10 points)**

Submit: A description of your Transfer or Purchase of Development Rights program; Hyperlink if available.

4. Hold a farmer forum to identify critical needs or issues for agriculture in municipality. The forum must have occurred within 12 months prior to application submission. **(5 points)**

Submit: The date of the farmer forum and at least one additional piece of documentation related to the forum, such as a promotional flyer, an agenda, minutes, presentations, sign-in sheets or photographs.

5. Adopt regulations that promote open space requirements for subdivisions and/or clustered housing. **(10 points)**

Submit: A copy of the regulations formally adopted by your governing body.

6. Create right-to-farm regulations allowing roadside farm stands and farm signage. Reduce regulations on farming where appropriate (for example, farm stand versus farm store). **(5 points)**

Submit: A copy of the right-to-farm ordinance/regulation formally adopted by your governing body; copies of regulations removed or amended to facilitate farming (if amended, describe how).

7. Establish an open space and/or farmland acquisition fund. **(10 points)**

Submit: Documentation establishing the fund, noting the dollar amount available in fund.

8. Create regulations or reduce barriers to encourage agriculture, agri-tourism, and use of renewable energy (including anaerobic digestion) on working farms. **(10 points)**

Submit: Copies of regulations created or amended and formally adopted by your governing body. If amended, describe how.

9. Develop and promote community garden spaces for residents on municipal land. **(10 points)**

Submit: A photo of each community garden space on municipal land; upload outreach and promotion materials.

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from the town council, planning and zoning, public works, parks and recreation departments and the agriculture, conservation, planning and zoning, and inland wetlands commission, as well as local farming advocates, and local land trusts could be helpful in implementing this action.

Funding

Below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the [Sustainable CT Grants Portal](#), which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the [Sustainable CT Resources for Certification](#) page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- CT Department of Agriculture, [Farmland Preservation Program, Farmland Preservation Application, Community Farms Preservation Program Application](#)

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- American Farmland Trust and Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, ["Planning for Agriculture: A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities"](#)
- Capitol Region Council of Governments, ["Regulating the Farm: Improving Agriculture's Viability in the Capitol Region" Model Regulations](#)
- Acadia Center, ["Community Energy Vision, Action Guide for Connecticut"](#)

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- [American Farmland Trust](#)
- [Connecticut Farmland Trust](#)
- [Connecticut Farm Bureau Association](#)
- [Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station](#)
- [Connecticut Farmlink](#)
- [CT Farm Energy Program](#)
- [Farm Service Agency](#)
- [UConn Center for Land Use Education and Research \(CLEAR\)](#)
- [CT NEMO \(Non-point Education for Municipal Officials\) Program](#)
- [Working Lands Alliance](#)
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, [Connecticut Office](#)
- [Connecticut Environmental Review Team](#)
- [Connecticut Conservation Districts](#)
- [Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.](#)

Why This Matters

Agriculture is part of the fabric of many communities in Connecticut. The state's agriculture industry is a \$3.5 billion industry, and it is invaluable to preserving our Nutmeg character. As municipalities grow and change over time, regulations and policies may limit agricultural development, or may make it challenging for farmers to diversify their income to stay viable and/or meet the needs of the ever-changing market.

Benefits

Farms provide a variety of benefits to a community and the state, from increasing access to fresh, local

produce, dairy and meat; to preserving open space and providing habitat; to celebrating our historical and cultural practices; to providing opportunities for tourism. Farms provide an industry for many businesses such as food manufacturers and processors, garden centers, veterinarians, farm equipment wholesalers and repair shops. Amending existing regulations and creating new regulations to support farms, will help the agriculture sector flourish in your community.

CT Success Stories

- South Windsor: [“Resolution Creating a Farmland Purchasing Development Rights Policy and Farmland Purchasing Development Rights Account”](#)

Credit for Past Action

- Proof of current status for all actions is required prior to application submission.