

4.3 Develop Agriculture-Friendly Practices

5 Points

10 Points

15 Points

20 Points

25 Points

Action Updates

This action has been revised for the **2019 certification cycle**. A version of this action from the prior program year is [available for comparison](#). Edits are highlighted in yellow.

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).

If you apply for points under this action, you may not apply for points for the same activities under action 4.1.

1. Adopt land use policies and regulations that allow and support active agricultural uses. Such policies or zoning regulations could include: a right-to-farm ordinance; allowing farming as-of-right in certain zones in your zoning regulations; allowing farm support activities (e.g., roadside farm stands) in certain zones; or reducing barriers and/or encouraging agriculture, agri-tourism, and use of renewable energy (including anaerobic digestion) on working farms. Policies or regulations submitted for 4.6.1 may not be applied to any sub-action listed below. **(5 points)**

Submit: A copy of the policy formally adopted by your governing body or a copy of the relevant section(s) of your zoning regulations.

2. Allow active agricultural use of municipal land or provide outreach on [CT Farmlink](#) (linking available municipal or private land to farmers looking for land to farm) **(5 points)**

Submit: Documentation showing active agricultural use of at least one municipal parcel (such documentation may include a lease or other written agreement between the municipality and a farmer, specifying the parcel location and the type of agricultural use); 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 (and a hyperlink to the program 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. Establish an open space and/or farmland acquisition fund. **(10 points)**

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

6. 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.

Credit for Past Action

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

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.

- [Urban Act Grant Program](#)
- [Municipal Grant Program \(MGP\)](#)
- [CHEJ Small Grants Program](#)
- 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

- [AGvocate](#)
- [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

- [2018 Glastonbury - Extensive Documentation](#)
- [2018 New Milford - Extensive Documentation](#)
- [2018 South Windsor - Extensive Documentation](#)
- South Windsor: ["Resolution Creating a Farmland Purchasing Development Rights Policy and Farmland Purchasing Development Rights Account"](#)