

# A Look at Connecticut Agriculture



Capital: Hartford

Population: 3,518,288

Founded: January 9, 1788 (5<sup>th</sup>)

State Bird: Robin

State Tree: White Oak

State Flower: Mountain Laurel

Number of Counties: 8

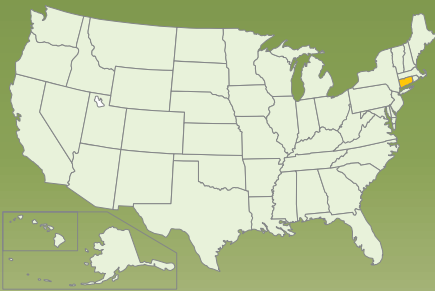
Largest City: Bridgeport - 139,008

Nickname: The Constitution State

Number of Farms: 4,900

Average Farm Size: 83 acres

Total Farmland: 405,616 acres



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## Climate & Soil

- Connecticut's weather is relatively mild
- On average, there are only 12 days a year when the temperature goes above 90°, and about six days when it falls to zero or below.
- The growing season is fairly long, with the first killing frost generally in mid-October and the last in mid-April.
- Despite Connecticut's small size, there is some variety in climate, with temperatures in the northern hills as much as 10° lower than those in the central valley year-round.
- The state has moderate rainfall, with an equal distribution of precipitation among the four seasons.
- Connecticut soils are glaciated, formed by glacial processes.
- The state soil is Windsor, soils consisting of very deep, excessively drained, rapidly permeable solids formed in glacial meltwater sediments. These soils are important for the production of fruit and vegetable crops, silage corn and ornamental shrubs and trees.
- The richest soils in Connecticut are along the Connecticut River in the Connecticut River valley.

## Crops & Livestock

- Nursery and Greenhouse products are the top crops in Connecticut accounting for 45% of farm receipts.
- Top crop items include forage (hay, haylage, grass silage and greencrop), corn for silage, and vegetables.
- A listing of farm-raised livestock in the order of importance to the Connecticut economy is dairy cows, chickens, horses, beef, sheep, dairy and meat goats, as well as hogs.
- More than 70,000 acres of shellfish farms are now under cultivation in Connecticut's coastal waters accounting for \$27 million plus in farm-gate sales annually.
- Niche markets exist for camilds – alpacas and llamas, broilers, buffalo, turkeys and farm-produced pheasants.

## General

- Connecticut's top five agricultural commodities in 2008 were: greenhouse & nursery, dairy products, chicken eggs, aquaculture, and tobacco.
- Connecticut agriculture adds \$5.1 billion dollars to the state economy annually.
- 60% of the land area in Connecticut is in farmland, open space and forest: an important natural resource base and enhancement to the environment.