

Getting Started – Planning for Agriculture The Ashford Experience

AGvocate Train the Trainer Boot Camp

Art Talmadge

- BS Natural Resources Management, UConn
- Co-owner and Operator, Cranberry Hill Farm
- Certified Forester
- Certified Soil Scientist
- Chairman, Ashford Agriculture Commission



Cranberry Hill Farm

- Ashford, CT
- 25 acres
- Vegetables (30), eggs, strawberries, sunflowers, maple syrup, hay



Cranberry Hill Farm



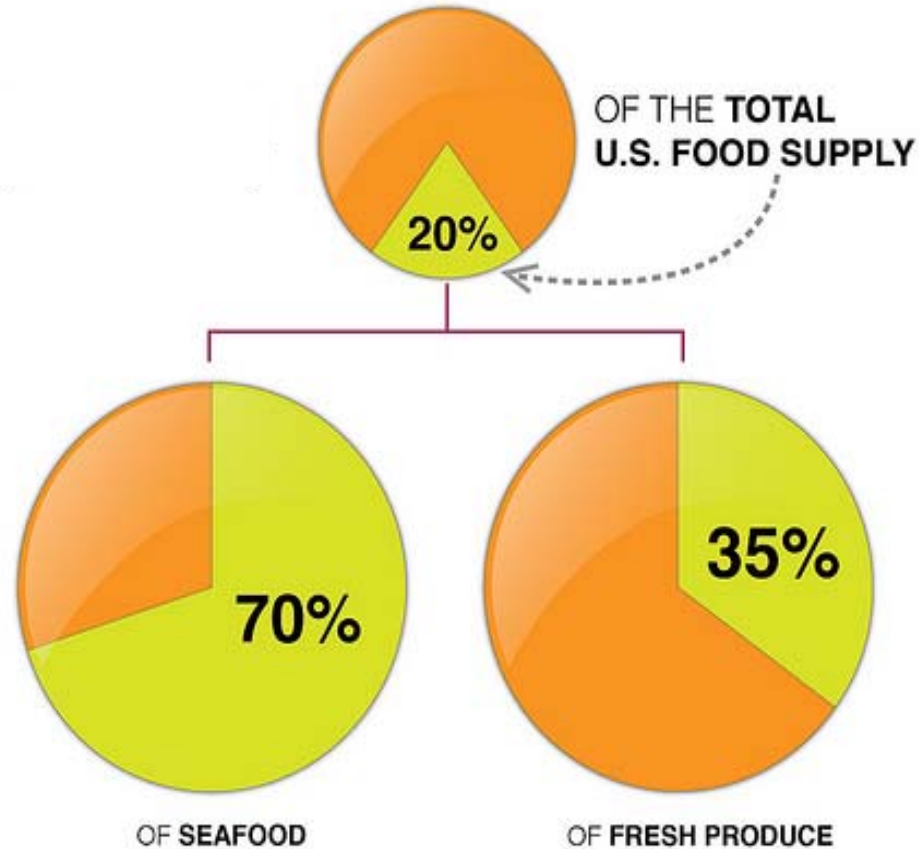
- Education
- Heritage breeds



Why are we here?



How much of U.S. food is imported?



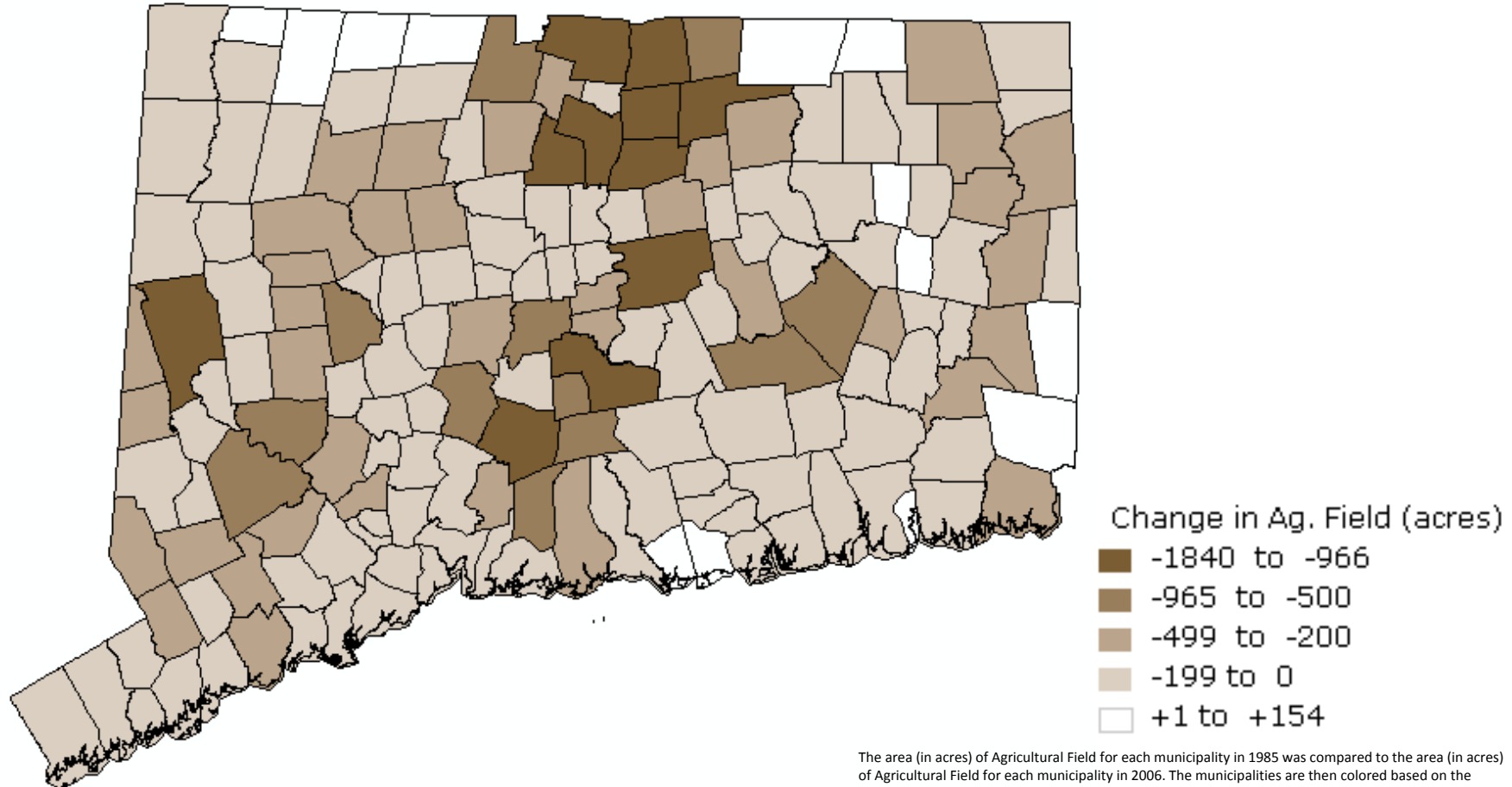
SOURCES:

Hamburg, Margaret, FDA. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Testimony/ucm250710.htm>
Small Business Administration: <http://www.sba.gov/advocacy/7495/8420>

Chart by www.FDAImports.com © 2011

Change in agricultural field in acres

1985 - 2006



The area (in acres) of Agricultural Field for each municipality in 1985 was compared to the area (in acres) of Agricultural Field for each municipality in 2006. The municipalities are then colored based on the change, in acres, according to the legend (above).

Note that there is a bias to the larger towns that have more acres.

Zoning

“3.01.03.1

A. Lot Area: Each lot intended for use as a single family residential lot shall contain two (2) contiguous acres of land (three (3) acres for a two (2) family house) which are exclusive of (i) wetland soils, (ii) bedrock or ledge within four (4) feet of the surface, (iii) slopes fifteen (15) percent or greater, (iv) interior lot line angles of less than sixty (60) degrees, and (v) narrow strips of land less than one hundred (100) feet in width.”

Ashford Agriculture Commission - History

In 2009, Ashford was selected as one of the first
AGvocate towns

- Ashford AGvocate committee started meeting monthly with Jennifer Kaufman
- inventoried agricultural product and service providers in town
- developed an Ashford Agricultural Producers brochure
- met with the Ashford Board of Selectmen to seek input on an Agriculture Commission ordinance
- drafted the Ordinance Establishing The Ashford Agriculture Commission
- brought the draft ordinance to Town Meeting where it passed unanimously March 15, 2010

Ashford Agriculture Commission - Members

Art Talmadge - Chairman

Mike Sibiga - Vice Chairman

Nick Vertefeuille - Secretary & FFA Rep.

John Alapi

Carl Pfalzgraph

Butch Simpson

Sherry Simpson

Loretta Wrobel

Dan Zaicek

Ashford Agriculture Commission - Focus

- Education & Outreach
- Economic Opportunity
- Support Young & New Farmers
- FFA – one seat reserved for current FFA student

Ashford Agriculture Commission - Accomplishments

- Assisted the Ashford PZC with the preparation of “farm friendly” zoning regulations with assistance from Joan Nichols (CT Farm Bureau) and John Filchak (NECCOG)
- Regular participation in local AGvocate informational sessions
- Brought to town meeting an ordinance allowing property tax exemption for farm buildings for up to \$100,000.00 of assessed value (passed unanimously!)
- Upcoming educational and informational meetings:
 - Bryan Hurlburt, Executive Director CT USDA Farm Service Agency
 - CT Farmland Trust
 - Raising Pastured Poultry
 - Composting

The value of a farm lies in its ability to function sustainably as a farm. Its value should not lie solely in the land it sits on.

Thank You!

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