CT Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc.

Climate Smart Agriculture Compost Tea Equipment Mobile Unit Application

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The Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc. (CT RC&D) is pleased to offer Climate Smart Agriculture Equipment Sharing Hubs funded in part by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Climate Smart Agriculture & Forestry Grant established by the Community Investment Act (C.G.S. Sec. 22-26k). A portion of the grant funds have been used to implement and support 4 Equipment Sharing Hubs with the following regional/demographic focus areas: the CT River Valley, Northeastern CT, Northwestern CT, and Farmer Veterans. This project will provide access to climate smart equipment for three years (2024-2027) while fostering collaborative education in geographically diverse areas.

CT RC&D's Equipment Sharing Hubs will enable climate smart agriculture practices on farms across Connecticut. The climate smart practices (identified by USDA NRCS) will encourage and/or enable soil health practices including, but not limited to, planting of cover crops, conservation crop rotation, conservation tillage (no-till/low till), mulching, composting, nutrient management, improved grazing and pasture, and land management in agricultural operations. Implementation of this project will enable more agricultural producers the opportunity to cooperatively use equipment, develop a network for information sharing, and implement climate smart practices on their farms, thereby increasing soil health without individually buying each of the equipment aides on their own.

CT RC&D as part of the Equipment Sharing Hubs is offering a Compost Tea Equipment Mobile Unit to CT Farmers for the growing season of 2026. This travelling unit will allow farmers the ability to utilize compost tea equipment on their farm to brew and apply tea. Applications for use of the mobile unit in the 2026 growing season will be due by March 31, 2026, at: https://ctrcd.org/climate-smart-agriculture-grant/equipment-hubs/ Farms will be notified of acceptance in April, agreements to be completed in May with calendar for use availability starting June 1, 2026.

Farms will not receive any direct payments through participation in this Climate Smart Equipment Sharing Hub program/ Compost Tea Equipment Mobile Unit. The benefit of this project is access to equipment for improving soil health on the farm. Each participating farm will be required to provide in-kind time to transport, brew, apply, clean and return the mobile unit to the host farm location. The purpose of use is for the application of compost tea only on the applicant's farm locations for the duration of the 2026 growing season. More information about the Compost Team Mobile Unit test trials of 2025, the unit itself, and demo is viewable on YouTube here: Compost Tea Workshop

Applicant Information

Farm Name

First Name / Last Name *(the legal owner of the farm company)*

Email

Phone

Address (*the physical location of the farm)*

Mailing Address (*if mailing address is different from above physical address, please include address in entirety here:*

Contact Name *(if different than owner)*

Contact Title and Affiliation (*if different than owner)*

Type of Farm Operation *(Ex: Greenhouse, Nursery, Livestock, Dairy, Beef, Field Crops, Other)*

Vehicle that will transport the Compost Tea Equipment Mobile Unit

Name of driver(s) *(affiliation to the farm)*

Name (s) of those who will be brewing and using the Compost Tea Equipment *(affiliation to the farm)*

Years in Operation

Is the farm certified organic and/or practicing methods?

Are you a historically underserved producer? *(please select all that apply)*

- BIPOC producers
- Veteran
- New and beginning farmers (farming for 1-3 years)
- Anyone in a protected class
- Anyone who speaks English as a second language
- No, I do not identify as a historically underserved producer

Farm Certifications:

Total Farm Acres:

Acres in Production:

Do you currently compost on the farm?

- **Yes**
- **No**

- **Interested in composting on the farm**

If yes, what scale are you currently composting and what volume of compost do you produce annually?

How often do you plan to use the Compost Tea Equipment Mobile Unit and during what months and for how many days?

Please describe your other current soil health practices (check all that apply):

-No Till

-Low-Till

-Cover Cropping

-Crop Rotation

-Rotational Grazing

-Other

Are you currently enrolled in any USDA NRCS EQIP programs?

Yes or No

If yes, please describe

Please describe your goals for adapting your current farming methods to a more climate smart approach:

_____

_____

_____

Please describe your goals for utilizing compost tea on your farm:

_____

_____

<u>What is being offered through the Compost Tea Equipment Mobile Unit</u>

10’ Enclosed Trailer for Mobile Unit

55-gallon Compost Tea Brewer

55-gallon diaphragm pump sprayer on trailer

4- gallon backpack sprayer

Microscope and materials to view compost/compost tea

Testing equipment

As a Compost Tea Mobile Unit participant, I agree to be responsible for the following (please initial):

	Participant Initials
I have watched the CT RC&D/CT NOFA Compost Tea Mobile Unit Instructional Video showing best practices for compost tea brewing and cleaning. I feel confident in my abilities to transport, operate, and utilize this equipment without direct oversight.	
I have carefully reviewed the complete operational manual for the CT RC&D Compost Tea Mobile Unit. (located here: https://ctrcd.org/climate-smart-agriculture-grant/equipment-hubs/)	
I have taken the comprehension quiz. (located here: https://ctrcd.org/climate-smart-agriculture-grant/equipment-hubs/)	
I agree to provide for my use in the compost brewer only Certified Organic/OMRI Approved compost/worm castings and amendments in the brewer. These costs will be incurred by me directly and not provided by CT RC&D. (Suggested options for sources to purchase will be provided at time of contract)	
I understand I am responsible for purchasing necessary compost tea amendments, including fish hydrolysate, kelp and humic acid, according to a prescribed recipe.	
I agree to use an online tracking calendar system to reserve the equipment.	
I agree to transport the compost tea mobile unit to and from the host farm location (by those named in this application only).	
I agree to provide proof of insurance coverage.	
I agree to store the compost tea mobile unit and all its equipment in a safe location at all times while located on my farm.	
I understand that I have the option to use either a backpack sprayer or a 55-gallon pump sprayer for compost tea applications. If opting to use the 55-gallon pump sprayer, I attest that I have a 45 hp tractor (at minimum) to pull the compost tea brewer along the beds to spray as needed.	
I understand that as part of my participation, the farm will not receive any direct payments through participation in this Climate Smart Equipment Sharing Hub program/ Compost Tea Equipment Mobile Unit. The benefit of this project is access to equipment for improving soil health on the farm. Each participating farm will be required to provide in-kind time to utilize the equipment and monitor the results of the compost tea used on their farm for the duration of the 2026 growing season.	
I agree to provide CT RC&D with photos and/or videos of the results observed. Optional to report results (yield data) to CT RC&D at the end of the 2026 growing season.	
I agree to complete a 1hr mandatory instructional webinar and Q&A that CT RC&D will host for selected farms who will participate in using the Compost Tea Equipment Mobile unit prior to use in the 2026 growing season.	
I agree to allow soil testing to occur on my farm prior to compost tea application (paid for by CT RC&D.)	
I agree to allow CT RC&D and CT Department of Agriculture staff to conduct site visits during the project period to see the implementation of the equipment in use and results.	
I agree to allow photos (either provided by my farm or taken by CT RC&D/CT DoAG) to be used in reporting, for educational purposes, and/or for promotional purposes.	

I understand that I may be asked to host an educational workshop for the benefit of other Connecticut producers, but that agreeing to host a workshop is not a requirement for program participation.	

Disclaimer and Signature

I certify that my answers are true and complete within this application form to the best of my knowledge. I acknowledge that CT RC&D is receiving grant funds from the CT Department of Agriculture to provide access to climate smart equipment to eligible applicants on a rotating basis during the project period of 2024-2027. I am signing up to participate only for the use of the Compost Tea Equipment Mobile Unit for the 2026 growing season. If I'd like to participate in one of the other Climate Smart Agriculture Equipment Hubs I must do so separately.

Name:

Affiliation:

Signature:

Date:

Following the March 31, 2026, application date any applications received after the deadline will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis if there is available capacity for additional participants. Once accepted, farms will be provided with an Equipment Hub User contract and will be responsible for providing proof of insurance coverage as outlined in the contract.

If you have any questions or need assistance with applying for this opportunity, please contact Sarah Layton at slayton@ctrcd.org or contact the CT RC&D office at 860-345-3977.