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CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
EXECUTIVE ORDER 7H - ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES

(HARTFORD, CT) - On March 20, 2020, The Governor issued [Executive Order 7H](#), directing all businesses and nonprofit entities in the State of Connecticut to utilize, to the maximum extent possible, any telecommuting or work from home procedures that they can safely employ. That order also directed that, no later than March 23, 2020 at 8 p.m., each non-essential business or nonprofit entity (and therefore not including or applicable to any state or local government agencies, quasi-public agencies, political subdivisions or other entities that do not constitute businesses or nonprofits) shall reduce the in-person workforce at each business location by 100% from pre-state of emergency declaration employment levels. Executive Order 7H authorized the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development ("DECD") to provide legally binding guidance about which businesses are essential.

Pursuant to that directive, Connecticut Department of Agriculture Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt is sharing the [business exemption guidance](#) issued by DECD, clarifying which food and agriculture businesses and related services are deemed essential.

"Maintaining operations of food and agriculture are essential to keeping our residents fed and healthy during this time," Commissioner Hurlburt said. "We recognize that this is an unprecedented time and appreciate the efforts of our small businesses and their employees. Our staff is working diligently to ensure public and animal health needs are met. We continue to strongly recommend that businesses, consumers and the public adhere to social distancing measures and best health practices to mitigate the spread of COVID-19."

Per the executive order and guidance document, businesses and organizations that provide food for disadvantaged populations, veterinary services, food processing, agriculture, livestock, feed mills, and warehousing should all continue to operate, but with every precaution to maintain social distancing. Below is a complete list of Department of Agriculture's regulated communities deemed essential businesses.

For purposes of Executive Order 7H, "essential business," means:

Essential workers in the [16 Critical Infrastructure Sectors](#), as defined by the federal Department of Homeland Security unless otherwise addressed in a prior or future executive order pertaining to the existing declared public health and civil preparedness emergency.

Essential Food and agriculture businesses, including:

- farms and farmer's markets
- food banks
- food manufacturing, processing, storage, and distribution facilities
- nurseries, garden centers, and agriculture supply stores
- restaurants/bars (provided compliance with all applicable executive orders is maintained)
- all manufacturing and corresponding supply chains, including agriculture
- animal shelters or animal care or management, including boarding, grooming, pet walking and pet sitting

Essential businesses for continuity of commerce:

- commercial trucking
- utilities including power generation, fuel supply, and transmission
- grocery stores including all food and beverage retailers
- hardware, paint, and building material stores, including home appliance sales/repair
- liquor/package stores and manufacturer permittees
- pet and pet supply stores
- warehouse/distribution, shipping, and fulfillment

Businesses essential to agriculture business:

- research and laboratory services, including testing and treatment of COVID-19
- veterinary and animal health services
- accounting and payroll services
- critical operations support for financial institutions
- financial advisors
- financial institutions, including banks, credit unions, and check cashing services
- all skilled trades such as electricians, HVAC, and plumbers
- general construction, both commercial and residential
- pest control services

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About the CT DoAg The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg) is foster a healthy economic, environmental and social climate for agriculture by developing, promoting and regulating agricultural businesses; protecting agricultural and aquacultural resources; enforcing laws pertaining to domestic animals; and promoting an understanding among the state's citizens of the diversity of Connecticut agriculture, its cultural heritage and its contribution to the state's economy. For more information, visit www.CTGrown.gov.
