



NOTICE



New Program Provides Technical Training and Cash Benefits to Connecticut Lobstermen

The Connecticut Sea Grant Extension Program and the Connecticut Commercial Lobsterman's Association recently filed a petition under the USDA Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program on behalf of the State's lobster industry. Evidence was provided to support the claim that prices and production of American lobster in Connecticut were negatively affected by foreign imports in 2009. On September 24, 2010, that petition was certified, paving the way for the State's lobstermen to receive benefits through the TAA program.

What is TAA?

The TAA program provides free technical training and cash benefits for eligible farmers and fishermen whose businesses have been adversely impacted by foreign imports. The program is designed to help individuals increase profitability, improve production efficiency, consider marketing opportunities and evaluate alternative enterprises.

What does TAA mean for you?

Eligible individuals may apply for free technical training and cash benefits of up to \$12,000. Technical training will be offered through a series of informational workshops and free business planning assistance will be provided by professional business consultants.

Who is eligible?

Individuals who can provide documentation that they commercially harvested and sold lobsters in Connecticut in 2009 and *at least one* other year between 2006 and 2008. In addition, producers must certify that their average gross non-fishing income for 2009 did not exceed \$500,000, and that their average adjusted gross fishing income in 2009 did not exceed \$750,000.

How do I receive TAA benefits?

There are four phases for the TAA program:

Phase 1: Attend an orientation workshop that provides an overview of TAA.

Phase 2: Attend a minimum of twelve hours of technical training. Training workshops will generally be 2-3 hours each with a variety of business planning topics to choose from.

Phase 3: Write a brief description of what was learned from the training and how it will be used in the operation business plan. Upon completion participants are qualified to receive up to \$4,000*.

Phase 4: Develop a detailed business plan. A professional business planning consultant will be provided to help develop the business plan. Participation in Phase 4 requires successful completion of the first three phases; however, participation in Phase 4 is not required. Upon completion of Phase 4 participants are qualified to receive up to an additional \$8,000*.

*Payment may be prorated depending on the number of applicants. Applicants will be notified of payment level prior to the initiation of each program phase.

How do I apply?

Individuals must complete an application form and submit it **by December 23, 2010**.

Completing an application does not obligate you to participate in the program. However, if you do not submit your application by the deadline you will not be able to participate. We are offering the following informational meetings at which you may apply for the TAA program:

Tuesday, October 19 - 7:00 p.m.

Darien Seafood
1941 Post Rd, Darien

Tuesday, November 9 - 7:00 p.m.

Branford Elks Lodge
158 S Montowese St, Branford

If you are unable to attend a meeting, you may complete an application and submit it to your local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. However, we *highly encourage* you to seek assistance from Connecticut Sea Grant or FSA in order to properly complete the application.

The application is available online at: <http://www.taaforfarmers.org>, under "Information for Producers of Approved Commodities" click on "lobster" and then download form 229-1. You may also contact the Sea Grant or FSA office to obtain an application.

TAA Contacts for Connecticut:

For information, to obtain an application or assistance with completing one, contact:

Tessa Getchis

State TAA Contact, Connecticut Sea Grant
(860) 405-9104
tessa.getchis@uconn.edu

Marilu Soileau

TAA Representative, CT Farm Service Agency
(401) 828-3120 ext. 1214
marilu.soileau@ct.usda.gov

Farm Service Agency Office

Locations:

Fairfield / Litchfield County:

1185 New Litchfield Street
Torrington, CT 06790-6098
(860) 626-8852

New Haven / Middlesex County:

900 Northrop Road
Wallingford, CT 06492-1997
(203) 269-6665

Hartford County:

100 Northfield Drive, FL 4
Windsor, CT 06095-4730
(860) 688-7725

New London County:

238 West Town Street
Norwich, CT 06360-2111
(860) 859-5218

Windham County:

139 Wolf Den Road
Brooklyn, CT 06234-1729
(860) 774-0224 x 1

Tolland County:

344 Merrow Road
Tolland, CT 06084-3917
(860) 871-4090