



## Acts Affecting Animals & Agriculture

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June 28, 2022 | 2022-R-0119

## Notice to Readers

This report provides summaries of new laws (public acts and special acts) significantly affecting animals and agriculture enacted during the 2022 legislative session. OLR's other Acts Affecting reports, including Acts Affecting Environment, are, or will soon be, available on OLR's website:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/actsaffecting.asp>.

Each summary indicates the public act (PA) or special act (SA) number. Not all provisions of the acts are included. The report does not include vetoed acts unless the veto was overridden.

Complete summaries of public acts are, or will soon be, available on OLR's website:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/olrsums.asp>.

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the Connecticut State Library, House Clerk's Office, or General Assembly's website: <http://www.cga.ct.gov>.

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## **Agriculture**

### ***Agricultural Development and Innovation Council***

A new law renames the Governor’s Council for Agricultural Development as the Governor’s Council for Agricultural Development and Innovation and makes several other changes affecting the council. Among other things, it broadens the list of topics for which the council must make recommendations to the Department of Agriculture (DoAg), changes the council's membership, and places it within DoAg for administrative purposes only. It also requires the council to make recommendations about ways to increase agriculture in the state by developing innovative market opportunities ([PA 22-54](#), § 2, effective October 1, 2022).

### ***Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Practices***

The 2022 budget implementer expands the state’s farmland restoration program’s purposes to include climate-smart agriculture and forestry practices. (DoAg administers this matching grant program.) Among other things, the legislation expands the types of costs for which farmers may seek reimbursement, allows DoAg to pay farmers up to 50% of certain grant funds in advance, and requires DoAg to prioritize certain capital improvements when making grants. It also allows DoAg to pay or reimburse municipalities, nonprofit organizations, soil and water conservation districts, and the UConn Extension Service for services designed to increase the number of farmers using climate-smart practices (e.g., activities that store carbon, improve soil health, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions) ([PA 22-118](#), §§ 145-146, effective October 1, 2022).

### ***Hemp Working Group***

This year, the legislature established a working group to study hemp, hemp products, and hemp producers. The study must look at, among other things, (1) regulating hemp and (2) the possibility of including hemp in the state’s recreational cannabis program by allowing (a) hemp producers to convert their licenses and (b) licensed cannabis dispensaries to sell hemp products. The working group must submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the General Law Committee by January 1, 2023 ([PA 22-103](#), § 10, effective upon passage).

### ***Seeds and Seed Labelers***

New legislation prohibits anyone from selling or transporting for sale, any agricultural, vegetable, lawn, or turf seed unless it is labeled in accordance with state law by a seed labeler. It subjects violators to a \$100 fine for the first offense and a \$200 fine for subsequent offenses. It also requires seed labelers to register annually with DoAg and pay a \$100 fee with each registration ([PA 22-54](#), § 3, effective July 1, 2022).

## **Animals**

### ***Dog Licenses for Service Animals and Therapy Animals***

A new law broadens the circumstances under which town clerks must provide a free license and tag for dogs belonging to or kept by a person with a disability. It requires town clerks to provide a person with a disability a license and tag, at no cost, for his or her dog that is a trained service animal, in training to become a service animal, or a therapy animal enrolled in the Department of Children and Families Animal Assistance Intervention Program ([PA 22-54](#), § 5, effective June 1, 2023).

### ***Dog Licensing Working Group***

The legislature required the DoAg commissioner to convene a working group with the Connecticut Town Clerks Association to develop a plan for a statewide online dog licensing portal. The working group must submit the plan and related legislative proposals to the Environment Committee by January 1, 2023 ([PA 22-54](#), § 6, effective upon passage).

### ***Dog Tethering and Sheltering***

The legislature passed a new law generally requiring dogs that are outside for longer than 15 minutes to be provided adequate shelter during a weather advisory or warning or when outdoor environmental conditions put a dog's health or safety at risk. The act also prohibits tethering dogs to stationary objects or mobile devices without providing potable water at least twice in a 24-hour period. Violations of these requirements are subject to the existing fines for violating the state's tethering law (between \$100 and \$500, depending on the offense) ([PA 22-59](#), effective October 1, 2022).

### ***Reindeer Importation***

New legislation allows people to import reindeer into the state for up to seven days at a time anytime of the year, instead of just between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, as long as the importation complies with state law (e.g., reindeer identification, veterinary reports, health documentation for the originating herd) ([PA 22-54](#), § 4, effective October 1, 2022).

## **Aquaculture**

### ***Aquaculture Coordinating Committee and Advisory Council***

The legislature repealed both the Interagency Aquaculture Coordinating Committee and the Aquaculture Advisory Council. In practice, the committee has not been active for several years and the council never convened ([PA 22-54](#), § 7, effective upon passage).

## ***Aquaculture Longlines***

A new law expands the definition of aquaculture to include longlines (long, heavy fishing lines, often with hooks), allowing aquaculture operations to use longlines when rearing, cultivating, or harvesting aquatic plants or animals ([PA 22-54](#), § 1, effective October 1, 2022).

## **Miscellaneous**

### ***Office of Aquatic Invasive Species***

This year's budget implementer creates the Office of Aquatic Invasive Species within the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. The new law enumerates the office's responsibilities, which include coordinating research efforts for aquatic invasive species control and eradication and being a liaison with state agencies, including DoAg ([PA 22-118](#), § 68, effective July 1, 2022).

### ***PA 490 Program***

The state's PA 490 program allows farm, forest, open space, and maritime heritage land to be assessed for property tax purposes based on current use value rather than fair market value ([CGS § 12-63](#)). During the 2021 session, the legislature extended the program to licensed shellstock shippers by including waterfront property they own in the definition of "maritime heritage land."

In the 2022 session, the legislature limited the program's applicability to these shippers by requiring that they also either grow or harvest shellstock (i.e., in-shell molluscan shellfish) ([PA 22-143](#), § 18, effective upon passage).

The legislature also eliminated a requirement that the Office of Policy and Management secretary, in consultation with the DoAg commissioner, develop a schedule of unit prices for property classified as open space under the PA 490 Program ([PA 22-74](#), § 21, effective July 1, 2022).

### ***Pesticides – Chlorpyrifos***

New legislation bans using or applying chlorpyrifos on golf courses or for cosmetic or nonagricultural uses. It allows the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection commissioner to assess a civil penalty of up to \$2,500 for violations.

Chlorpyrifos is a pesticide used mainly to control foliage and soil-born insect pests. A federal rule already prohibits its use (1) on land and greenhouse food crops and (2) for certain commercial livestock purposes ([PA 22-142](#), effective January 1, 2023).

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