

2025 Northeast Agricultural Networks Summit

The University of Maine and University of Connecticut will collaboratively host a one-day mini-conference summit on **December 8th** for professionals in Cooperative Extension and other agricultural support organizations** focused on the role entrepreneurial networks play in supporting farmers and other agribusinesses and the means of fostering network development in the region.

*** Agricultural support organizations include those entities which have as a primary mission the advancement of agriculture, agribusiness, and farmers, including but not limited to state and local government agencies, producer organizations, business and economic development organizations, cooperatives, agritourism trails, and farmer networks and collectives.*

We invite proposals from across the region to facilitate a roundtable or educational workshop or present their work (research or case study) on topics related to farm and agribusiness entrepreneurial networks and network building. **This event aims to bring together academic faculty, Extension professionals and support organizations from across the Northeast** to discuss how we can best support farmers to build and utilize entrepreneurial networks.

The objectives of this summit are to:

- Convene experts and practitioners from across the region – particularly New England – to share insights, experiences, and tools
- Facilitate discussions on how to engage farmers in network building and utilization
- Create material on best practices that can be incorporated into Extension and other educational events

Proposal Guidelines:

Proposals should include:

- **Title** of the session
- **Abstract/Description (150-200 words):** What topic will be discussed and how does it contribute to conversations surrounding agricultural entrepreneurial networks.
- **Presenters/Facilitators:** Name, email and organization
- **Session type:**
 - Presentation of research or case study (15 minutes)
 - Roundtable discussion (30 minutes)
 - Interactive learning workshop (75 minutes)

Submission Details: Submitted via email, send a Word or a PDF document as attachment

Deadline: November 1

Submission email: farm.network@uconn.edu

Notification of Acceptance: November 10

Format:

Sessions should be structured to create collaborative conversations that bring together faculty, Extension professionals, and community partners on topics related to farmer networks, network building, farmer participation in networks, and benefits and challenges of these networks. Sessions may include facilitated roundtables, presentations, educational workshops, or panels. For each, the primary focus is on facilitating discussions that encourage active participation, knowledge exchange, and potential for new collaborations and outcomes.

Our anticipated agenda on Monday, December 8th is:

- 9:30 AM Breakfast & Registration
- 10:00 AM Welcome
- 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM Sessions
- 12:30 PM Lunch with keynote
- 1:45 PM – 4:00 PM Sessions
- 4:00 PM Adjourn

Event Location:

The Maine Center, 300 Fore Street, Portland, Maine 04101.

Situated in the historic old port area, this venue is home to the University of Maine Law School and the UMaine Graduate and Professional Center. It is in the heart of Portland's prime district, home to the historic Custom House building (next door), shops, restaurants, and the working waterfront. Parking is available in a garage across Fore Street and on municipal roads for a fee. Portland is served by its International Jetport, Amtrak rail service, and ferry terminals.

Participation Costs:

The regular fee for the conference is \$75.

However, we have available funds to support travel and a reduced scholarship rate (\$20) registration fee – especially for presenters and facilitators. Travel support will include one night of hotel stay at the organizer-selected hotel and reasonable transportation costs. Support for scholarship and travel expenses not to exceed \$400 per participant.

Lodging is planned for the Hilton Garden Inn, Hilton Hampton Inn, or similar, to be within walking distance of the summit venue (The Maine Center, 300 Fore Street, Portland, ME).

Submit your proposal to farm.network@uconn.edu and then register for the Summit online via <https://bit.ly/registerNEANS> or scanning the QR code below.



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