



AUDIT SUMMARY

Governor's Council for Agricultural Development

Performance Audit

www.cga.ct.gov/apa

January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2020

BACKGROUND

The Governor's Council for Agricultural Development (GCAD) advises the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg) on the development, diversification and promotion of agricultural products, programs, and enterprises in the state and provides for the interchange of ideas from various commodity groups and organizations it represents.

In 2011, Public Act 11-189 made key changes to how GCAD operates, including reducing its membership and expanding its responsibilities. GCAD convened under its new configuration in January of 2012 and embarked on the development of its strategic plan, Grow Connecticut Farms. Through the course of three years, it developed 24 different recommendations.

ABOUT THE AUDIT

We have audited certain operations of GCAD. The scope of our audit included, but was not necessarily limited to January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2020. The objectives of our audit were to:

1. Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of GCAD;
2. Determine how and to what extent the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) has implemented the council's recommendations, including those related to the goal of reaching five percent of consumer dollars spent on Connecticut-grown fresh produce and farm products, by 2020; and
3. Evaluate GCAD's internal controls and compliance with related policies, procedures and certain legal requirements.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

[Link to full report](#)

3 Total Findings

Our audit identified internal control deficiencies; instances of apparent non-compliance with laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, policies, or procedures; and a need for improvement in management practices and procedures that we deemed to be reportable.

NOTEWORTHY FINDINGS



Findings



Recommendations

1

The Governor's Council for Agricultural Development (GCAD) had no mechanism to track and report on its progress toward achieving its goals.

1. GCAD should work with the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) to develop a system to monitor the council's progress toward achieving its goals. DoAg should collect information and utilize measures that quantifiably ascertain the council's progress toward achieving its goals.

2

GCAD did not consistently measure the percentage of consumer spending on Connecticut farm products because its analyst used different methodologies.

2. GCAD should work with DoAg to regularly report to the legislature and the public on its goals and accomplishments.

We have no recommendations in this area.*

3

GCAD did not update its strategic recommendations to promote and develop Connecticut agriculture.

GCAD should work with DoAg and its councils and boards to develop a holistic, strategic, written agricultural plan for Connecticut that considers all sectors of the state's diverse agricultural industry.

* Because GCAD's analyst utilized different methodologies to measure resident food spending, we cannot determine whether the council met its statutory goal. In addition, during the course of the audit, Public Act 22-54 removed the five percent goal from statute.