

# Weekly Market Bulletin

State of New Hampshire  
**Chris Sununu**  
*Governor*

Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food  
**Shaun N. Jasper**  
*Commissioner*

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## From Your Commissioner

### Thompson School

Many people are concerned about the future of the Thompson School (T-School) at UNH, as they should be. The fact is that next year the School will offer fewer degree programs than it has in the past, but it will not be closing, only an act of the legislature can do that. That being said, the hard reality is that the school, as it currently exists, is not economically viable, it's expenses are too high and the numbers of students in it are too low.

The number of students has been falling since 2004 and that would be true even if the Applied Business Management program had not ended. Currently, there are less than half the number of students in the T-School then there were in 2004. For this school year, the loss is projected to be nearly 1 million dollars. In the College of Life Science and Agriculture (COLSA) there are 21.2 students per faculty members, in T-School that number is eight. As most of the faculty teach specialized areas, it is not as simple as reducing the number of faculty to save programs. The reality is many of the course areas have too few students to simply reduce staff, and save a program. For instance, there are only four students who are taking classes in Surveying and Mapping. There are only seven students in Culinary Arts and Nutrition, and only one freshman. With the Horticulture Technology Program, there are two areas of course study; Landscape Construction Management and Plant Production. Those areas have nine and eight students respectively.

Those numbers are sobering to say the least. We can debate how we got to this point and what could have been done differently, but even if we could agree on the facts, this will not close the deficit or increase the number of students. The best we can do is to try to work and make the remaining areas of study in Animal Science, Veterinary Technology and Forest Technology robust and viable.

My opinion as to what has happened at T-School has to do with the career paths that students want, the decreasing number of graduating high school seniors and the cost of attending UNH. While the costs at UNH are actually not out of line with many other four year programs, there are much less expensive options for two year programs in other states. The bottom line is that we simply don't have enough students to make the programs viable. Even with the reduction in programs and faculty, the

T-School will still not be at the breakeven point, but it will become a more inter-grated part of COLSA, which will provide further cost savings and allow more courses and credits to be transferred to a four year degree program. I remain hopeful for the long term future of the Thompson School.

**Shawn N. Jasper – Commissioner**