

STATEWIDE

DAIRY FARMERS

THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT ACT

AGRICULTURE & DAIRY

Quarterly Funding

SUCCESS STORIES

"At the time the Dairy Support Program was initiated in 2009, we seriously wondered if we would be able to continue farming. The program has filled, and continues to fill, an inequity in our business. It benefits not just dairy farmers, but all sectors of the dairy business."

- Clark Woodmansee III, Woodmansee Farms, Preston



"The Dairy Support program has been vital to us as we keep our 12-generation family farm economically viable. With this support we received during difficult economic times, we have maintained working farmland and wildlife habitat. We are proud to be able to provide fresh, locally produced milk in Connecticut!" - Melissa Greenbacker, Greenbacker Farm, Durham

Connecticut's rich agricultural heritage has always included dairy farms. Dairy farmers work approximately 72,000 acres of Connecticut's green rolling land, about 42% of our total cropland. Dairy farming is the state's second most valuable agricultural sector. Connecticut's dairy industry has about a \$1 billion statewide impact on sales and employs more than 4,000, according to a 2009 study coordinated by UConn. Although Connecticut consumes more milk than it produces, farmers are squeezed between the high input costs to produce milk and the national milk pricing system that dictates what they're paid for their product.

In 2009, Public Act 09-229 established an agricultural sustainability account for farms producing milk in Connecticut. Utilizing a formula that includes the minimum sustainable monthly cost of production and the Federal pay price, a quarterly grant payment is paid to dairy farms, funded by the Community Investment Act (CIA), that supplements the income to Connecticut farmers when national milk prices are low. Payments have been distributed to 117 dairy farms since the program was implemented.

The agricultural support grant for dairy gives farms the ability to withstand the drastic price swings of national milk pricing. This safety net helps dairy farms thrive as an important economic sector and continue as stewards working the rich farmland in our state.

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The 2005 Community Investment Act implements the goals of the State of Connecticut to protect and preserve the beauty and unique character of the state for future generations through a designated funding stream. Funds from the Community Investment Act are used to save farms, preserve historic places and open space, and create affordable housing. The Community Investment Act has helped to sustain the character and strengthen the economy of nearly every town and city in Connecticut.