

EAST CANAAN



THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT ACT SUCCESS STORIES

No.
452



Freund's Farm has been supplying fresh milk to Connecticut residents since 1949 and the dairy cows continue to be the backbone that allowed this creative yankee family to develop two other **diversified businesses**.

At what began as a corn stand in the 1950's, the Freund's Farm Market has evolved into the place to go in Litchfield County for seasonal farm goods and year-round baked goods. Every year the market entertains and educates hundreds of students from across the region about the source and production of their food.

One particularly inventive and popular product from Freund's Farm are "Cowpots™" which have been featured on the Discovery Channel's popular series "Dirty Jobs", CNN and a variety of national and local television shows. These seed starter pots make excellent use of the dairy farms' rich cow manure. Funds provided through the Community Investment Act and Department of Environmental Protection helped capitalize the **expansion of the CowPot business** that effectively transfers an excess nutrient load from farm fields to nutrient deficit areas in sub-

urban gardens. Sales from the value added Cowpots™ account for over 25% of the farm's cash flow and continue to grow exponentially.

The **Community Investment Act** provides a vital safety net for the state's 156 dairy farms through the Agriculture Sustainability Account. Administered by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, the program strengthens the general health of the agriculture industry in Connecticut by sustaining a major user of agriculture inputs and services, while also stabilizing a critical mass of farmland with potential to be preserved. Safety net payments are only made when the federally set price of milk paid to farmers falls below 82% of the cost of production.



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The Community Investment Act, enacted in 2005, stimulates private investment to protect our natural, agricultural, and historic resources, and to assist affordable housing. CIA funds come from a surcharge on real estate document recording fees. They are then invested in agriculture viability, dairy farm support, historic preservation, open space, farmland, affordable housing, Local Capital Improvement Projects and Town Clerk records management.

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