

February 7, 2009

To the Members of the Environmental Committee,

My name is Anne Kelly and I am a mother of 4 from Goshen. I became aware of the benefits of raw foods in general, and raw milk in particular after reading the book *Nourishing Traditions*. The book explained why my kids reacted badly to nursing when I had conventional milk in my diet, and brought to light the dangers of substituting soy milk. We were living in Massachusetts at the time, and the closest source of raw milk was 45 minutes away, and only available two days a week during certain hours if you brought your own bottles. Imagine my delight upon moving to Goshen, truly the land of milk and honey. Here raw milk is 10 minutes down the road, and available for sale at many local markets and health food stores. Now it is the only milk my family likes to drink, and we enjoy it in many forms: yogurt, kefir, butter, cheese. This milk has all the goodness that nature intends us mammals to have. We can digest it and it has more nutrients available to grow healthy kids.

Serving my family raw milk has never been an issue. My husband Mike is a physician who extolls the benefits of raw milk. He believes that the dangers of drinking it are greatly overstated, and points out that as recently as last winter there were cases of illness and deaths in Massachusetts associated with the consumption of pasteurized milk. Our local farmers are meticulous in their practices, and have baffled curious experimenters who fail to produce bacteria after days of leaving the milk out to "clabber." We take milk in coolers for a week of camping, and it stays fresh! It is an amazing product, to which pasteurized milk cannot hold a candle.

It is a sad commentary for Connecticut that this legislation is being proposed by the Department of Agriculture. Shame on the Aggies for not supporting small local farmers. These farms operate on very tight margins, and are already struggling to stay afloat. Many will be hurt, and the expensive testing required by the bills will put many out of business. We will also lose the seasonal produce and other local meat products that these farmers offer to supplement milk sales. Because of all of these factors, the bills will ultimately serve to limit the freedom of choice for consumers here who are looking for local and healthful alternatives to the "food" available in conventional supermarkets.

Connecticut needs to rethink all of this regulation and let consumers decide. We as a state need to support local and diverse small farms, and become self-reliant food producers. If we only end up with a few mono-culture factory farms in the state, our great farming tradition will become a thing of the past. This legislation puts us right on that slippery slope. Please do not support these bills, thereby supporting our local agricultural tradition.

Thank you,

Anne Kelly
Goshen, CT