



FAIRVUE FARMS LLC

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PAUL & DIANE MILLER
DAVID MILLER

Chairman Daily, Chairman Staples and Members of the Finance Committee:
HB6350

Paul Miller, Dairy Farmer, Fairvue Farms, Woodstock

I am speaking today opposed to the removal of farmers from fuel tax exemption and or sales tax. We understand the state is going thru tough times. Farmers understand what tough times are. We live in an industry that faces financial shortfalls much of the time. We do not set the price we get for our milk, it is told to us what we will get. Our expenses are higher than most because most of our feed for our cows was made with high fuel cost in the summer of 2008. We are not competitive with most of the country in what our costs are to produce milk. While the dairy farmers of Connecticut are small by national standards, we are a green food supply for the people of the state. What you pay for milk in the store is not what we get for producing that milk. Our price on the farm level is around 25 cents per quart. I had a glass of milk in a restaurant recently and paid \$2.00 for 12 ounces. Think!!! Are the farmers getting rich?

Don't lose an industry so important to Connecticut. In a recent study done by DECD, dairy farmers in Connecticut mean \$1 billion dollars to the state. These are green jobs if ever there were green collar jobs. The governor talked about our children and grandchildren. Do we want local food for them or do we want to import milk from China!!! Most of our equipment is old because we can't afford new. Now we are wondering if we can even afford to fix the old equipment.

Last year I used 35,000 gallons of diesel fuel to plant, care for and harvest my crops. These tax exemptions are important to our survival. Are Connecticut farmers worth keeping? We think so for many reasons. If you think people are upset now, wait until they have no food. Food and Farmers are taken for granted. Will they always be there?