

How can anyone question the significance of the funds for our Connecticut Dairy Farms in the Community Investment Act? To us here at Weigold Farms LLC in Torrington, CT, this decision is a no-brainer. We are already taking a traumatic hit. Taking the Dairy Sustainability Account away would be devastating to say the least. Not only would the hard-working farmers suffer, but the rest of the community would as well.

Farmers are some of the most hard working people in the world. We have to provide food for our entire nation. We are constantly trying to figure out ways to feed this growing population. We do this for very little pay. How are we supposed to provide food security for our communities if the cost of running our business is more than our pay? Because the price of milk is influenced by the surplus of production in other parts of the country, the farms in Connecticut suffer greatly. And even though the costs of running a farm in Connecticut are much greater than these other states, still no one seems to understand our situation. Now, someone wants to take away one of the only things keeping us afloat.

It is no secret that this winter has brought record breaking temperatures and snow. Everyone seems to agree that it took a toll on all of us. This relentless weather has affected us dairy farmers in more ways than one. The frigid cold has proved to be too stressful for our animals, machinery and ourselves. For example, the bitter cold froze our feed for the cows this season. This had a tragic effect on some of our animals resulted in several deaths and a decline in our milk production. We were unable to fix all of the health issues even after multiple vet visits and emergency surgeries. We have lost thousands of dollars trying to prevent the cold from wiping out our herd and trying to fix frozen equipment to keep our operation going. Presently, instead of milking 100 cows, we are left with 65 after having to sell many in order to pay for expenses. On top of the losses caused by mother nature, the milk prices have plummeted leaving our business with a staggering 50% pay cut. Let us ask you a few more questions. Can you envision your boss unexpectedly telling you that you are going to make half as much money from now on? How would you tell your wife/husband/kids the news? How will you put food on the table for your family now? How are you going to pay your bills? This all happening in a months time. Can you imagine that? Well we don't have too... because it is our reality. As a result, my parents haven't paid themselves for months in order to pay our help, and my brother and I because we have young children to support. So how is our business going to survive if you take away our "farmer welfare" too?

One day I watched my father open a piece of mail. It was good news. It was a source of financial support we count on greatly. It was our confirmation that our 6th generation, family-owned dairy farm could stay in business another month. It was reassurance that the dairy industry in CT is recognized and appreciated for the hard work we provide. It was a payment from the Dairy Sustainability Account. Please don't take this well-deserved assistance away from us.

Thank you for your time,
Weigold Farms LLC
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