With over 5,000 acres of preserved farmland, the town of Lebanon, rich in agricultural heritage, has become one of the leaders in protecting Connecticut's working lands.

This year, Connecticut Farmland Trust protected three Lebanon farms: McCaw Farm, as well as two pieces of Williams Farm. Connecticut Farmland Trust has now protected over 2,500 acres of Connecticut farmland on 31 farms.

**Williams Farm**

Williams Farm was purchased by Robert Williams in 1957, who worked alongside his son, Donald. Together, the pair quickly grew to own one of the largest dairy farms in Connecticut. At its peak, the farm covered over 700 acres of land that the father and son team used to raise corn and hay for their dairy herd, as well as beef cows.

The milking herd was sold in 2008, and, with the passing of Robert and Donald, the fate of the farm became unclear. Extensive road frontage, flat land, and large open fields made the land ideal for development. Fortunately, the Department of Agriculture, Town of Lebanon, and CFT were able to reach an agreement with the landowners to protect 154 acres of the farm's best fields.

Cushman Farms has purchased 90 of the preserved acres of the Williams Farm. A member of The Farmer's Cow, Cushman Farms is one of several Connecticut dairies that has grown, despite fluctuating milk prices, and countless other challenges faced by dairy farms. The Cushman family is using the land to support their growing herd, which now includes nearly 1,000 milking cows.

The other preserved piece of Williams Farm is 64 acres, which is now run by Donald Williams’ daughter, Chelsea. Today, she is the proud owner of the original barn and land that went along with the farm when it was first purchased by her grandfather in 1957.

Chelsea, along with her husband, their two children, and two nephews raise beef cattle, chickens and pigs on their new farm. The young family hopes to develop a small, diversified farm, and market a few of their products to people in the Lebanon area. They lease some of the fields to a local dairy farmer, who keeps a small herd of Jersey cows in the barn, and produces feed off of the land.

The preservation of Williams Farm was possible due to an ongoing partnership between the CT Department of Agriculture, the Town of Lebanon, and Connecticut Farmland Trust. CFT received funding from The 1772 Foundation for preservation of the farm.
McCaw Farm

In the summer of 2000, a fire tragically destroyed the McCaw’s barn, ending the dairy operation that had been in the family since the farm was purchased in 1959.

While the McCaws considered their options, they continued to produce hay and raise a herd of beef cows on the land. Home builders and a golf course developer made lucrative offers to purchase the 157-acre farm, but Jim and Bob McCaw, who grew up on the farm, decided instead to permanently preserve their land and keep it in the family. The brothers have grandchildren who may be interested in returning to Lebanon to farm the land.

“The McCaw and Williams Farms are key to enriching and preserving the agriculture community in Lebanon. CFT is pleased to help the owners keep the land in their families and ensure that it is always available for farming.” — Elisabeth Moore
Director of Conservation

McCaw Farm is adjacent to the historic Lebanon Town Green, which is the only remaining town green in Connecticut that is still actively farmed. In addition to preserving productive agricultural land, the McCaws were able to protect a significant chapter of history. This same parcel of farmland was once owned by Jonathan Trumbull Jr., son of Connecticut’s Revolutionary War governor who served as General George Washington’s secretary, and eventually became governor himself.

Preservation of McCaw Farm was a collaboration between the CT Department of Agriculture and Connecticut Farmland Trust. CFT received a grant from the Hugh Leander Adams, Mary Trumbull Adams, and Hugh Trumbull Adams Town Memorial Fund to support preservation of the farm.

Jim McCaw stands with hay baled in the summer of 2014.

“I always thought it would be a shame to see rooftops out here in the fields.” — Jim McCaw

Come See Us
FARMLAND PRESERVATION CELEBRATION

Over 300 farms, and nearly 40,000 acres of Connecticut farmland have been protected.

September 20, 2014  11:00 AM - 5:00 PM
On the Historic Lebanon Green
Junction of Routes 87 & 207

Family-Friendly, Free, All Welcome!
Governor Dannel P. Malloy is scheduled to speak
Tour local protected farms
Live music & square dancing
Exhibits & displays
Connecticut Grown food
Touch a tractor
Hay maze
Pet a farm animal

CFT Farm Facts

- Total acres protected: 2,531
- Number of protected farms: 31
- Towns with protected farms: 20
- Counties with protected farms: 7
- Size of protected farms: 16-212 acres
- Average size of protected farms: 84 acres
- Number of farms with stands open to the public: 8
- Farm types: dairy, beef, vegetables, Christmas trees, nursery stock, hay and cropland
- Project partners: 1 federal & 2 state agencies, 2 towns, and 4 land trusts

CFT using federal, state and private funds is able to leverage $24 for every $1 contributed for acquisition of conservation easements. We cannot do this without your generous support.
Welcome Aziz Dehkan, CFT Director of Development

Born and raised in New York City, Aziz Dehkan earned a degree in Biological Sciences from Rutgers University in 1976. He then built a passive-solar house, and started Dehkan Farms, one of the first organic, biodynamic farms in New Jersey, where he raised vegetables, herbs, and nursery stock. After 12 years, he sold his farm and went into the environmental business. As a community activist, Aziz became a member of his local planning board, and served as a Board member of two nonprofit agencies. In 2001 he switched professional gears to become a professional fundraiser.

Aziz Dehkan, Director of Development

Aziz has many years of nonprofit experience with organizations whose missions are social and environmental justice, and his primary role at CFT will be in raising funds. With his farming background, Aziz brings great enthusiasm for protecting and preserving active farmland. He believes that as people become more aware of where their food is grown, it is vitally important that they also appreciate the myriad challenges facing independent farmers. Aziz looks forward to meeting CFT supporters and farmers throughout the state.

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A Special Thank You

For hosting picnics and farm tours over the summer
• Betsy & Jesse Fink of Millstone Farm
• Kimberly & Clint Thorn of Thorncrest Farm
• Deborah & David Moore, Leslie & Nicholas Moore, Nina Bennett, and Scott Garay of Whirlwind/Moore’s Hill Farm

And for providing beverages for the tours
• The Farmer’s Cow

We hope to see you next year!
Help Us Save Another Farm

Please join us in a matching grant challenge, where every new donation helps us secure a $35,000 gift.

☐ Basic ................. $30
☐ Supporter ........... $100
☐ Steward ............. $250
☐ Contributor .......... $500
☐ Guardian ............ $1,000
☐ Provider ............ $2,500
☐ Visionary .......... $5,000

Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________
Town/State/Zip ____________________________
Phone ____________________________
E-Mail ____________________________

Payment: ☐ Check Enclosed  ☐ Visa  ☐ Mastercard
Credit Card No. ____________________________ Exp. ____________
Signature ____________________________

Mail to: CT Farmland Trust, 77 Buckingham Street, Hartford, CT 06106

Connecticut Farmland Trust is a non-profit organization, and membership dues and donations are tax-deductible.

Save The Date

October 5
Dinner At Chamard Vineyards

November 8
Dinner At Old Lyme Country Club

Please watch your email and mailbox for more information.