



KNOW YOUR FARMER KNOW YOUR FOOD

Locally grown food is one of the fastest growing segments of agriculture. Consumer demand in the U.S. is expected to rise from \$4 billion in 2002 to \$7 billion by 2012. But today, many mid-size family farms are disappearing. The USDA's new **Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food** Initiative focuses on cultivating new opportunities for these farms to help keep those families on the land and make sure the next generation of producers can find a career in agriculture. The Initiative is creating opportunities for producers, creating economic opportunities in rural communities, and strengthening the connection between farmers and consumers.



Laurel Brook Farm's composting facility.

Dairy Manure Composting – The Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area received several Clean Water Act Section 319h Nonpoint Source grants to work with partners including agricultural producers, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Cooperative Extension System, local communities, and others to implement a manure composting facility in North Canaan, Connecticut. The goal is to demonstrate how dairy manure composting can be accomplished in an ecologically-sensitive manner on dairy farms and will promote agricultural viability.

In mid-2009, a facility located on Laurel Brook Farm in East Canaan began its first year of operation – composting approximately 75 yards of manure each day. The project has been successful in producing high-quality compost, mulch, garden mix, and topsoil products that are now sold to local residential and commercial markets. This facility is not only a profit center for the farm, it has proven to be a solution to help export their surplus nutrients. In its first year, the operation removed approximately 144,500 lbs. of nitrogen, 45,990 lbs. of phosphorous, and 83,220 lbs. of potassium.



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