



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Agricultural Management Assistance Program Connecticut 2005

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Fort Hill Farm's hoop houses extend the growing season.



Fort Hill Farm's baited electric deer fence reduces wildlife problems. The new well provides water for irrigation.



Fort Hill Farm's grassland and cover crops protect soil health.



Fort Hill Farm's Diversified Organic Crops.

Organic Farms Flourishes with Help from AMA Program

Fort Hill Farm is a small, 20-acre farm located in New Milford, Connecticut. The certified-organic farm produces herbs, flowers, fruit, and vegetables – including arugula, mizuna, red kale, lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, sugar snap peas, winter squash, sweet potatoes, leeks, garlic tomatoes, and eggplant.

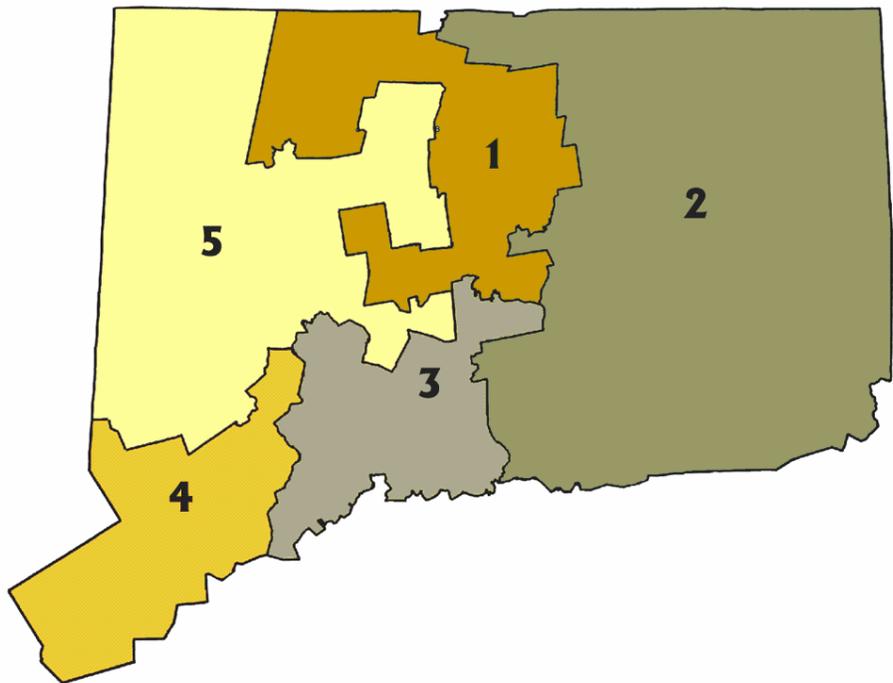
Owner Paul Buccigliaglia – a beginner-farmer who has been operating for three years – uses a broad range of biological farming approaches, including on-farm composting and extensive use of cover crops to control weeds and improve soil organic matter. Through the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program, he has installed an irrigation well, deer fence, and implemented an Integrated Pest Management Plan to protect water quality. These conservation practices have helped reduce the farm's risk of crop loss due to lack of water, wildlife damage, and insect and disease problems.

Fort Hill Farm's markets include two farmers markets, several natural food stores, and a 200-share CSA. (Community Supported Agriculture is an arrangement where *shareholders* purchase a share of produce from the farm. In return, from June-October they receive a weekly box of seasonal, farm fresh, organic produce along with farm and nutrition information and recipes.)

The land, located along the main stem of the Housatonic River, is rented from the Nature Conservancy under a long term lease. Buccigliaglia helps preserve the water quality of the river, while making fresh food available to local residents.

Fort Hill Farm is located in the Connecticut Highlands Region. The U.S. Highlands Conservation Act of 2004 has designated this region an area to preserve open space for its benefits to water quality protection and passive recreation. Fort Hill Farm's conservation practices will help protect agriculture as part of the eco-region.

Dollars and Contracts



Congressional District	Fiscal Year 2005		Cumulative Total (1997-2005)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	\$ 53,850.00	1	\$ 82,752.00	5
District 2	\$ 92,540.00	6	\$278,357.00	24
District 3	\$ 14,625.00	1	\$ 77,029.00	6
District 4	-	-	\$ 60,292.00	3
District 5	\$ 64,763.00	3	\$343,648.00	21
State Totals	\$225,778.00	11	\$842,077.00	59

Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) provides cost share assistance to agricultural producers to voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation into their farming operations. Producers may construct or improve water management structures or irrigation structures; plant trees for windbreaks or to improve water quality; and mitigate risk through production diversification or resource conservation practices, including soil erosion control, integrated pest management, or transition to organic farming. Additional information on AMA can be accessed online at www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ama/ama.html.