

GRANBY

THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT ACT SUCCESS STORIES

No.
214



CLARK FARMS Granby, CT

Agriculture & Dairy



Photo © Peter Dinella, Courtesy Granby Land Trust

Allen and Becky Clark started a small farm business growing flowers, pumpkins and corn stalks in the early 1990's. Four years ago, they began raising goats for milk and cheese and eventually started making soap as well. The Clarks had long wanted to expand their farm but couldn't afford the high cost of land. Thanks in part to a protected farm, they realized this dream.

The 70-acre **Bushy Hill Orchard** was protected in 2010 through the work of many partners and residents committed to the future of the popular farm.



The State, through the CT Farmland Preservation Program, contributed \$294,369 in CIA funds, a portion of which will be reimbursed by the fed-

eral Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program. As a joint state-town project, the town of Granby contributed \$160,000. The Granby Land Trust and concerned citizens raised \$80,000 of the town's contribution necessary to permanently protect the farm.

With the development rights paid for, the orchard could later be sold for its agricultural

land value rather than its full market value, making the orchard affordable for the Clarks.

With the acquisition of Bushy Hill Orchard, the Clarks added apples, peaches, pears, raspberries and blueberries to their crops. They offer pick-your-own opportunities and now have a kitchen to create baked goods, cider and other value-added products to sell at the farm store and at local farmers markets. The Clarks will continue the farm's tradition of offering agricultural education tours and lectures to schools and other groups in the area.

The **CT Dept. of Agriculture's Farmland Preservation Program** is the state's primary mechanism for preserving farmland. This voluntary program purchases the right to develop the land and farmers accept a deed restriction on their property permanently limiting non-agricultural uses. Through this arrangement, the land is preserved for agricultural uses, farmers can continue to cultivate their land, and Connecticut's citizens derive the aesthetic and tangible benefits of a working landscape.

The Community Investment Act (CIA) has been one source of funding for this program.



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The Community Investment Act, enacted in 2005, stimulates private investment to protect our natural, agricultural, and historic resources, and to assist affordable housing. CIA funds come from a surcharge on real estate document recording fees. They are then invested in agriculture viability, dairy farm support, historic preservation, open space, farmland, affordable housing, Local Capital Improvement Projects and Town Clerk records management.