



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



Shirley Ferris
Commissioner

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Senator Olumpia J. Snowe
250 Russell Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Snowe:

The people of Connecticut have been consistently supportive of the Northeast Dairy Compact.

Connecticut is a state of 3,000,000 persons and about 3,000,000 acres. It is a state with a great deal of diversity, with an economy that has evolved from one that was agriculture based to an industrial society and today is on the way to becoming a high tech Mecca. *Yet dairy farms remain an integral part of the state's quality of life.*

Why do Connecticut citizens support the Compact?

Because 70% of the working landscape in the state is utilized by dairy farmers

Because of the state's 225 dairy farms, 60% open their farms to the public to tour the farm, visit a pumpkin patch, milk a cow, pet a calf, enjoy a hayride, go through a corn maze, or just take a quiet walk in a meadow to observe wildlife

Because dairy farms have become important to school systems that use in class and on farm visits to bring real-life, hands-on experience to the science and math curriculum

Because of the \$60 million farmers received from the Compact three percent went to support WIC programs and one percent to reimburse school lunch programs

Because during the five years since the Compact has been in place, the attrition of dairy farms dropped (64 in the five years prior, 47 in the five years after)

Because in the Dairy Compact area, consumers have enjoyed some of the lowest retail milk prices in the country

I support the Northeast Dairy Compact because a stable milk price is as beneficial to our state's consumers as it is to our processors, retailers and farmers.

Thank for your support of this important, groundbreaking legislation!

Sincerely yours,


Shirley Ferris