

CASE STUDY: AGRICULTURE

Freund's Farm, East Canaan, CT

Lead Agency: Matt Freund, Freund's Farm

Funding: [NE Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education](#), [USDA Small Business Innovation and Research Phase 1 and 2](#), [USDA Rural Development](#), CT Dept of Ag: Ag Viability, [NRCS EQIP](#), CT DEEP

Website: [Freund's Farm Market & Bakery](#)

Project Overview:

Matthew Freund is part of the family farming team at Freund's Farm in East Canaan, Connecticut. They have noticed changes to the growing season with later frost days and increasing storm severity. Small dairy farms are increasingly at risk in New England due to market changes. As Freund noted, there are about 100 dairy farms left in Connecticut, down from over 6,000 dairy farms in the state 70 years ago. Freund's Farm relies on multiple streams of income beyond selling their milk to their dairy cooperative, [Cabot Cooperative](#), including selling [CowPots](#) built from cow manure and operating Freund's Farm Market, a retail market offering local products, plants, produce and catering services.

To mitigate the impacts of national policy and climate change, the farm has implemented numerous strategies to increase efficiency, manage waste, and increase resiliency. Here are a number of the strategies implemented at Freund's Farm:

- Choosing plant varieties that are drought tolerant;
- Studying potential movement of silos, barns, and feed away from the flood plain;
- Installing 1,200 solar panels for on-farm activities;
- Using soil management techniques to reduce erosion and build soil health;
- Reusing manure to remove excess nutrients by re-producing into a value-added product;
- Implementing a Nutrient Management Plan that accounts for significant precipitation events.

How Project Contributes to Rural Resiliency:

Agriculture and family farms are an integral part to many rural communities but face significant challenges.

Farms that integrate climate change mitigation, adaptation techniques, and holistic landscape planning increase local economic, food, and cultural resiliency.



New Dairy Barn at Freund's Farm built in 2016. Credit: Cabot Creamery

Suggestions for towns and/or COGs to assist in this type of project:

Local commissions should support farming with supportive regulations, farm-friendly policies, and local business coordination. Town officials and state legislators can work to influence policy at a larger scale and serve as grant administrators to help farms implement resiliency strategies or infrastructure.

Contact for Questions:

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