



A Day in the Life

MANNING HILL FARM, WINCHESTER
 PHOTOS AND TEXT BY KIMBERLY PECK

Sam Canonica and Sarah Costa, owners of Manning Hill Farm in Winchester, have been supplying the region with high-quality milk, grass-fed beef, and pasture-raised pork, chicken and eggs for the past six years. On their 126-acre farm — which includes a farmhouse and barn built in the 1850s — they raise a dairy herd of unique Dutch belted cows, a heritage breed known for its ability to produce milk that is naturally sweet and easily digestible. Eleven cows on Manning Hill Farm are milked twice a day; the milk is gently pasteurized and bottled right at the farm in a stone garage that was converted into a state-inspected bottling facility. With no employees, Canonica and Costa do all the work themselves, collecting and bottling 200 gallons of milk (plain and chocolate) each week and delivering it to 22 local stores and restaurants. Milk and other farm products are also sold at the farm and at area farmers' markets. The couple note that since the milk is not "ultra-pasteurized" or homogenized, it is the perfect milk not only for drinking, but for making your own cheese, butter or yogurt. For more information about Manning Hill Farm and where you can purchase its milk and farm products, visit: manninghillfarm.com.



Left: Manning Hill Farm's stainless steel bottling machine fills milk into half-gallon reusable glass bottles.

Top to bottom: Manning Hill Farm milk fills a local niche for those who want non-homogenized milk, but don't want raw milk. The farm's milk is low-heat pasteurized (not ultra-pasteurized) in small batches. It is available in half-gallon and quart sizes.

Farmers Sam Canonica (r) and Sarah Costa process and bottle milk three times a week; they hand-deliver the milk weekly to 22 local stores and restaurants.

For chocolate lovers, the farm also offers chocolate milk (made with no high fructose corn syrup), in both quart and half-gallon sizes.



Top to bottom: Farmers Sam Canonica (r) and Sarah Costa in the pasture with their Dutch belted dairy cows, a rare heritage breed with less than 200 registered in the U.S. today.

The farm store is stocked with milk, eggs, beef and pork. There's a self service honor system to purchase milk; for farm products call ahead, or come by during farm store hours posted on the farm's website.



Farmer Sam Canonica gets his milking equipment ready in the farm's milk room.

Sam Canonica, with one of his Dutch belted dairy cows, one of 11 milking cows at the farm. The couple is committed to raising their animals humanely and sustainably. Cows are free to come and go as they please from a free stall barn to rotationally grazed pastures; they are fed a grass/pasture based diet with minimal grain and no corn.

