

A Guide Map to Agriculture in The Last Green Valley

Last Green Valley Green & Growing Venture

The Last Green Valley is a National Heritage Corridor, a treasure tucked a world away from the stress and bustle of the 21st century. It is the last large tract of predominately undeveloped land in the coastal sprawl between Boston and Washington, D.C. Enjoy our timeless farms, verdant pastures, and beautiful drives.



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NOT JUST A PRETTY PLACE

till seventy percent forest and farmlands, the green of The Last Green Valley is not just about beauty. Those acres are the basis for a significant economy in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Agriculture in all its forms is alive and well in northeastern Connecticut and south central Massachusetts. Managed forestland produces lumber and other wood products, while protecting fragile wildlife corridors. The traditional Holstein cow can be seen grazing leisurely in emerald pastures, not just whizzing by on the highway in its two-dimensional form on a Ben and Jerry's truck. More exotic life forms like bison, emus and alpacas surprise those wandering the scenic byways of the Valley. Nurseries and greenhouses propagate the favorites and the unusual; one such site has been in business for over 100 years. Apiaries, herb farms, and many more vibrant farm endeavors can be located in Green & Growing, An Agricultural Guide to The Last Green Valley.

Preserving The Last Green Valley and its agriculture allows our traditional land-based economy to thrive. It maintains our sense of rootedness, the beauty of our homes, and the health of our communities. "You have to look at the mixture that nature and history have given you, and not set a level of purity and ignore anything that falls short. How we treat our working land, the land that has produced for us, is a better measure of our society and of our future than how we treat the few pristine places we have left" (*The New Yorker*, "Thorne Moors," February 4, 1991).

SELECTED EXPERIENCES

A Bats of Bedlam Maple Syrup, 101 Bedlam Rd., Chaplin, CT. Maple syrup, phone ahead for hours. (860) 455-9200, bob_dubos@charter.net.

B Bush Meadow Farms, 738 Buckley Highway, Union, CT. Grade A bottled goat milk; soft, feta and aged hard cheeses; farm store has eggs, a bakery and custom-smoked meats; showcases locally produced products. (860)-684-3089, bushmeadow@yahoo.com.

C Buttonwood Farm Ice Cream, 473 Shetucket Tpk., Rtes. 165 & 201, Griswold, Ct., Home-made ice cream, yogurt, sorbet, and no-sugar products; annual sunflower sale. (860) 376-4081, buttonwood farmicecream@yahoo.com, www.buttonwoodfarmicecream.com.

D Caprilands Herb Farm, 534 Silver St., Coventry, CT. Working farm with chickens and Scottish Blackface sheep, more than 30 different theme gardens, historic buildings, special programs, shop. Open to public daily. Group tours by appointment. (860) 742-7244, ewcook@caprilands.com, www.caprilands.com.

Charlton Orchards Farm & Winery, 44 Old Worcester Rd., Charlton, MA. Vegetables, honey, wine, PYO fruit and berries. (509) 248-7820, (800) 649-1476, patty@charltonorchard.com, www.charltonorchard.com.

Cook's Farm Orchard, 106 Haynes Hill Rd., Brimfield, MA. Orchard, blueberries, cider, PYO apples. Open seasonally; call for hours and picking conditions, (413) 245-3241, cooksorchard@verizon.net.

G Creamery Brook Bison Farm, 19 Purvis Rd., off Rte. 205, Brooklyn, CT, has more than 100 bison and offers wagon rides to visit the herd, and tours of the farm. Includes a shop with all things bison. Private and school tours by reservation year-round. Open to the public Sat., July-Sept., from 1:30 p.m. For more information, call (860) 779-0837, email dtanner2@mindspring.com or visit the website www.creamerybrookbison.com.

H Ekonk Hill Turkey Farm, 227 Ekonk Hill Rd., Sterling, CT. Free-range turkeys, eggs, honey, homestead cheese, pies, apples, turkey pies. (860) 564-0279, Richard.Hermonot@firstpioneer.com.

Safe Haven Farm & B&B, 39 Drain St., off Rte.6, Hampton, CT. Alpacas for sale/boarding, yarn, coats, sweaters; farmstead B&B. (860) 455-1101, (860) 325-PACA (7222). www.safehavenaplaca.com or www.staywithsafehaven.com. Heritage Trail Vineyards, 291 N. Burnham Highway (Rte. 169), Lisbon, CT. The farm winery offers tastings and sales of farm-produced wines. Open Fri.-Sun., 11-5, May-Dec. For more information, call (860) 376-0659, email vineyard@snet.net, or website www.heritagetrail.com.

K Hyland Orchard, 199 Arnold Rd., Fiskdale, MA, has a petting zoo, maple products, events, PYO orchards (peaches, apples, nectarines and pears) Aug.early Oct., vegetables in season. Open year round Tues.-Sun., noon-7:00. Call (774) 200-1696, email cdamon@charter.net, www.hylandorchard.com.

Logee's Greenhouses, Ltd., 141 North St., Danielson, CT., Logee-Martin family nursery since 1892 with over 1,000 varieties of tropical container plants for home and garden, including a century-old lemon tree. (860) 774-8038, 1 (888) 330-8038, loge-info@logees.com, www.logees.com.

Mik-Ran's Sugarhouse & Specialty Shop, 86 Stetson Rd., Brooklyn , CT. Maple syrup, maple sugar products and gifts, free weekend demos in February and March. (860) 774-7926, randie@localnet.com.

N Olsen's Tree Farm, 319 Ekonk Hill Rd., Voluntown, CT. One-price trees, wreaths, CT-made specialties, free hot chocolate; open Fri.-Sun., 9-4:30. (860) 376-2370, olsen9021@sbcglobal.net.

Quackin' Grass Nursery, 16 Laurel Hill Rd., Brooklyn, CT. Rare and unusual plants the world over. (860) 779-1732.

P Quintessential Gardens at Fort Hill Farms, 260 Quaddick Rd., Thompson, CT. 66 perennial gardens, educational corn maze, lavender labyrinth, PYO strawberries, blueberries. (860) 923-3439.

Q Sharpe Hill Winery, 108 Wade Rd., Pomfret, CT. Award-winning winery, tours, restaurant; open weekends. (860) 974-3549, www.sharpehill.com.

R Taylor Brooke Winery, 848 Route 171, Woodstock, CT. High quality wines produced from grapes grown on site and at local farms; tasting room open weekends May-Dec.; complimentary tastings and self-guided vineyard tours. Locally produced gourmet foods, pottery, art and more. (860) 974-1263, lindaauger@taylorbrookewinery.com, www.taylorbrookewinery.com.

S University of Connecticut Diary Bar and Animal Barns, off Rte. 195, Storrs, CT. Barns for horses, cattle, sheep; dairy bar sells famous UConn ice cream, eggs, milk and other products. Daily from 10-4. (860) 486-2634, www.canr.uconn.edu. Wayne's Organic Garden, 1080 Plainfield Pike, Oneco, CT. Certified organic vegetables and vegetable plants, fingerling potatoes, heirloom tomatoes. (860) 564-7987.

We-Li-Kit Farm, 728 Hampton Rd., Abington, CT. Dairy farm, ice cream stand, greenhouse, maple products, hay rides and sleigh rides. (860) 974-0506 farm, (860) 974-1095 ice cream stand.

West Green Farm, 199 Town Rd., Lebanon, CT. Fruits, vegetables, eggs, hand-dyed yarn and local fiber. Open daily June-Dec. (860) 642-6745.

FARMER'S MARKETS

- Coventry, CT North River Rd. at Rte. 44, next to CT Glass Museum; mid-afternoon on Sundays, early June through October
- 2 Danielson, CT Killingly Memorial Library, 25 Westcott Rd.; late Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings June through November
- Griswold-Jewett City, CT Town Hall, 28 Main St.; late Monday afternoons mid-June through early November
- 4 Norwich, CT Brown Park, Chelsea Harbor; midday Wednesdays July through late October
- 5 Plainfield, CT Recreation Office, Senior Center, 482 Norwich Rd. (Rte. 12), late Tuesday afternoons mid-June through November
- **6** Putnam, CT Jade Garden Restaurant, 319 Kennedy Dr., late Monday afternoons mid-June through November
- Scotland, CT On the Green, jct. of Rtes. 14 & 97; late Wednesday afternoons mid-June through late October
- 8 Storrs, CT St. Mark's Episcopal Chapel, 42 N. Eagleville Rd.; late afternoon Saturdays mid-May through mid-November
- Sturbridge, MA Yankee Spirits parking lot, Rte. 20, Thursday mid-afternoons, June-October
- Willimantic, CT Corner of Jackson & Union Sts.; Tuesday afternoons mid-June through late October

FARM MUSEUMS

Blue Slope Country Museum, Inc. features a contemporary working dairy farm and a museum of 18th to 20th-century rural life. Living history events are planned each October that are especially fun for children and adults. Convenient to Rtes. 395, 87 and 2, at 138 Blue Hill Rd., Franklin, CT. Open year-round by appointment and during special events. For information and directions, visit www.blueslope.com, call (860) 642-6413, fax (860) 642-4424, or e-mail museum@blueslope.com.

B Brayton Grist Mill and Marcy Blacksmith

Collection, represents more than a century of blacksmithing by the Marcy family, features an 1890's mill housing the original equipment. Billy Brayton operated this mill, shelling corn and grinding grain, from 1890 until his death in 1928. The exhibit at the site. Maintained by the Pomfret Historical Society. Located at the entrance of Mashamoquet Brook State Park on Rte. 44 in Pomfret, CT. It is open by appointment only, May through December. Call (860) 928-0304.

The Gurleyville Gristmill, the only stone mill of its kind in Connecticut and one of very few in New England, offers a unique look at rural 19th-century gristmill technology. Its two sets of grinding stones, conveying devices, silk bolter for flour sifting, shafts, and huge gears are intact. A water wheel in the basement was once turned by water diverted from the Fenton River. The property is owned by The Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust, dedicated to preserving historic and natural resources in a ten-town area, maintains the property with private donations and provides guides for visitors. Open Sunday afternoons from mid-May through late October. Groups may be hosted any day by appointment. There is no admission fee, but donations are welcome. Located on Stonemill Rd. in Mansfield, CT, approximately 2 1/2 miles from the University of Connecticut in Storrs. For information and directions, call (860) 429-9023 or visit www.joshuaslandtrust.org.

The present Hale Homestead was completed in October, 1776, roughly one month after Nathan Hale's execution, although the family had lived on the site since 1740. The Hale farm included not only fields, but meadows, pastures, gardens, orchards, barns, sheds, a well, and a cider mill. By the close of the 18th century, the Homestead encompassed 450 acres with several houses, barns, cider and lumber mills. Today the site is no longer a farm, but herb and heirloom vegetable gardens have been planted. An annual corn maze, open to the public in early fall, is sometimes "haunted." The Antiquarian & Landmarks Society opens Hale Homestead from mid-May to mid- October. It is located at 2229 South St., Coventry, CT. For more information go to http://ursamajor.hartnet.org/als/ nathanhale or call (860) 742-6917 or (860) 247-8996.

Lebanon Historical Society Museum & Visitor Center boasts a state-of-the-art museum and visitor center located on the historic Lebanon Green. The museum complex includes the award-winning interactive exhibition, "Turning the Soil: the Land and People of Lebanon," changing exhibitions, a library and research center, and visitor services. Public programs are also offered on a regular basis. Brochures on area attractions are available in the 24-hour outdoor kiosk. The center is the key exhibit site for The Last Green Valley Green & Growing Venture. Located on Rte. 87 (856 Trumbull Hwy.) on the Green in Lebanon, CT. For details on exhibits, hours, etc., visit www.lebanoncthistsoc.org or call (860) 642-6579.

Old Sturbridge Village, a non-profit, educational history museum of 19th-century New England, is open year-round. Through its programs and resource centers, it invites visitors to explore New England's agricultural and horticultural past. Its centerpiece is a re-created rural New England village of the 1830s set on more than 200 acres. "Kidstory," a brightly colored learning space filled with interactive learning opportunities for all ages, invites children to discover what farm work would have been expected of their 19th-century counterparts. Woodland, Pasture and River Walks have recently been

added, along with special seasonal events. Group tours are welcome. Old Sturbridge Village is located an hour west of Boston, just off Rte. 20 in Sturbridge, MA. For information on programs, admission costs, gift items and more, visit www.osv.org or call 1 (800) SEE-1830.

Waldo Homestead, built in 1714 and home to the Waldo family from 1715 to 1975, is a typical New England saltbox house with an extensive collection of 18th-century farm implements. The museum hosts an annual Farm Day in May and Highland Festival in October. Waldo Homestead is located at 96 Waldo Rd. in Scotland, CT. For information and appointments, call (860) 456-0708 or e-mail hhbowers@earthlink.net. Information on Scotland's Highland Festival at www.scotlandgames.org.

Woodstock Agricultural Museum, located on the southwest corner of the fairgrounds in Woodstock, CT, preserves artifacts relating to the history of local agriculture. The barn housing the display dates from mid-1800s and has been reconstructed on its present site with an effort to preserve as many of its original features as possible. The interesting history of the barn is displayed in one of the entries. The Woodstock Agricultural Museum is open throughout the annual Woodstock Fair and for group tours by appointment. For details, call George Looby at (860) 928-9175 or e-mail gplooby@snet.net.



Be sure to pick up a copy of the *Green & Growing Guide* for a complete listing of 134 agricultural businesses welcoming the public.



QUINEBAUG-SHETUCKET HERITAGE CORRIDOR, INC. Preserving The Last Green Valley

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