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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**CONNECTICUT DAIRY INDUSTRY CELEBRATES PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION CREATING SAFETY
NET FOR DAIRY FARMERS**

Hartford, Connecticut, June 3, 2009 – Connecticut dairy farmers are celebrating the passage of legislation that creates and funds a program to help preserve the state’s dairy industry in light of record low wholesale milk prices. The bill, which unanimously passed the Senate, was approved this evening by a 139-16 vote in the house. The measure now moves onto Governor Rell for her signature.

“We are absolutely thrilled that the state has decided to take action to save the dairy industry in Connecticut,” says Steven Reviczky, Executive Director of the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association. “This is a defining moment for our state’s agriculture sector. Legislators and Governor Rell have put action to words and taken a strong stand that they value local dairy farms and a local milk supply and that they want to preserve jobs and open space in the near future.”

A recent study by the University of Connecticut stated that the dairy industry in Connecticut contributes nearly \$1.1 billion to the state’s economy and employs over 4,000 people.

The bill increases the filing fee for the recording of local land records from \$30 to \$40, with a portion of the increase going to fund a safety net program that will help state dairy farmers who are in financial distress. Under current government mandated wholesale milk prices, Connecticut dairy farmers are losing nearly \$1 for every gallon of milk that they sell. Because of

this financial hardship, Connecticut has lost 15 dairy farms in the last year as farmers struggle to pay bills while losing money on their milk sales.

“This is great news for our family and other farmers around the state that are having difficulty making ends meet due to record low milk prices,” says Melissa Greenbacker of Greenbacker Farm in Durham. Melissa’s cow Daisy was the face of the dairy community’s lobbying efforts on the bill. “While I’m sure that this legislation won’t cover everyone’s losses, it will certainly help stop the hemorrhaging. And I’m sure that Daisy will be happy when I tell her.”

Once signed by Governor Rell, the legislation will sunset on July 1, 2011. But supporters say that hopefully by then a more permanent solution to the milk pricing problem will be found.

“This is a great day not only for dairy farmers, but for those who value local sources of food, open space, and jobs in Connecticut,” says Don Tuller, President of the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association. “The final vote tally on this legislation states loud and clear that the citizens of Connecticut want to have a healthy dairy industry and preserve local farms for generations to come.”

For more information about the Connecticut dairy industry, visit www.CTMilk.org.

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