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U.S./New York: Mid-Hudson Valley Dairy Farmers Bring in Farm-saving Bucks with Premium Brand

It's tough being a dairy farmer in the mid-Hudson River Valley in these times. Land prices and taxes are bulging as New York City's suburban footprint grows larger, bringing with it pressure to sell out to development; feed and energy costs are rising even as wholesale milk prices hit significant lows. So some mid-Hudson dairy farmers have followed the lead of others in the Northeast by forming Hudson Valley Fresh. Under this brand the milk



(bovine growth hormone-free, and with a low "somatic cell count," indicative of good herd health) is distributed ultra-locally, usually selling within 35 miles of the cow's home. It fetches about \$3 a half gallon from customers who appreciate the extremely fresh quality. Although steep compared to just under \$2 for "conventional" half gallons, it's popular enough to be selling at a rate of about 1,350 gallons a week. And the farmers get a guaranteed \$20 per hundred pounds of milk, more than \$7 above current regulatory prices -- helping keep themselves in business and the land in active agricultural use.

Link: [am New York](#), Associated Press, Michael Hill, Nov. 12, 2006

Posted by Emily Gertz on November 13, 2006 8:40 PM | [Link](#)