

Connecticut Weekly AGRICULTURAL REPORT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor
Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner
Steve Jensen, Editor



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THREE CENTURIES OF RAISING, CELEBRATING AMERICAN MILKING DEVONS CONTINUES ON WESTBROOK FARM *By Steve Jensen, Office of Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky*

(WESTBROOK, CT) - The way John Hall sees it, his connection to the rare American Milking Devon cows his family has raised here for three centuries is about as close as can be without actually having bovine DNA in his blood.

That link is not only through his family's history with the heritage breed, which dates back to some of his Pilgrim ancestors bringing the cattle from England to Plimoth Plantation in 1623 as a desperately-needed source of food and muscle power.

Nor is it just through his position as president of the American Association of Milking Devons, who has his sights set on reenacting the original landing of the cattle when the 400th anniversary of the event takes place in eight years.

Hall says the best example of his relationship with the dark-red Devon is the role the versatile cow played in his own birth.

Sometime in the early 1940s John's father, John Hall, Jr., had traveled to a farm in Mansfield to pick up a Devon bull he needed to bring back to Westbrook for breeding.

It was during that trip that his father's attention was drawn by a young woman working on the farm, Jane Green, whose family also raised Devons.

"He saw this girl with 26 patches on her overalls and said that was the girl for him," John recalled with a chuckle.

The two eventually married and had two children, John and his sister.

"So this is what I was born into," John said late last week. "I'm literally a product of the Devon breed."

By the 1970s, the Hall and Green families owned more than half of the 200 or so Devons left in the country.

John Hall and the American Association of Milking Devons have worked to promote interest in the breed, which now number about 1,200 across the nation.

Hall's farm on East Pond Road is home to 57 of them, 11 of which were born in recent weeks.

He and his wife Bonnie mainly raise them for meat, which they sell at farmers' markets and through a new off-season Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program started last month at their farm.

"They'll only give a gallon a day, so you can see why no one milks them commercially," John said. "But they make great oxen and their meat is fantastic."

The cattle eat only grass and hay raised on the farm's 200 acres and another 200 leased in neighboring towns. That produces a cut of meat that typically has much less fat than say Angus beef.

"It may not be quite as tender because it is so lean, but being grass-fed produces an intense flavor," John said.

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LANCASTER, PA., LIVESTOCK SUMMARY

Avg. Dressing

	LOW	HIGH
SLAUGHTER COWS:		
breakers 75-80% lean	66.00	80.00
boners 80-85% lean	65.00	75.50
lean 88-90% lean	63.00	73.00
SLAUGHTER STEERS		
HiCh/Prm 3-4	120.00	124.00
Ch2-3 1400-1600 lbs	117.00	121.50
Sel 1-3 1300-1600 lbs	111.50	118.00
SLAUGHTER HOLSTEINS		
HiCh/Prm 3-4		
1400-1700 lbs	109.00	116.00
1650-1750 lbs	104.00	108.00
Ch 2-3 1200-1650 lbs	103.00	110.00
1650-1850 lbs	93.00	100.00
Sel 1-2 1200-1650 lbs	95.00	105.50
1650-1800 lbs	93.00	100.00
1800-1950 lbs	85.00	92.00
SLAUGHTER HEIFERS		
Hi Ch/Prime 2-3		
1150-1250 lbs	120.00	120.50
Ch 2-3 1100-1250 lbs	112.00	119.00
Sel 1050-1250 lbs	110.00	113.00

PA LIVESTOCK SUMMARY

CALVES Graded bull		
No 1 98-128 lbs	260.00	272.00
No 1 90-96 lbs	230.00	245.00
No 2 112-128 lbs	215.00	215.00
No 2 88-110 lbs	230.00	255.00
No 2 80-86 lbs	200.00	200.00
No 3 72-130 lbs	150.00	175.00
Utility 60-110 lbs	140.00	155.00
SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Woolled & Shorn		
Markets: Choice and Prime 2-3		
40-50 lbs	325.00	350.00
70-80 lbs	230.00	285.00
90-110 lbs	195.00	225.00
110-130 lbs	158.00	205.00
130-150 lbs	152.00	177.00
150-200 lbs	155.00	170.00
SLAUGHTER EWES: Good 2-3		
80-120 lbs	90.00	125.00
120-160 lbs	80.00	110.00
160-200 lbs	90.00	106.00
200-300 lbs	75.00	95.00
BUCKS		
160-200 lbs	94.00	111.00
200-300 lbs	85.00	115.00
SLAUGHTER KIDS: Select 1, by head, est.		
40-50 lbs	130.00	150.00
50-60 lbs	140.00	175.00
60-70 lbs	170.00	195.00
SLAUGHTER NANNIES/DOES: Sel 1, by head, est.		
80-130 lbs	190.00	235.00
130-180 lbs	215.00	240.00
SLAUGHTER BUCKS/BILLIES: Select 1		
100-150 lbs	375.00	445.00
150-250 lbs	450.00	545.00
250-300 lbs	570.00	595.00

NEW HOLLAND, PA., HOG AUCTION

All prices per cwt.

52-56	200-300 lbs	34.00	41.00
	300-400 lbs	28.00	35.00
48-52	200-300 lbs	29.00	36.00
Sows 1-3	400-500 lbs	19.00	21.00
	500-550 lbs	24.50	28.50
Boars		n/a	

WHOLESALE FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Boston Terminal and Wholesale Grower Prices

NEW ENGLAND GROWN

	LOW	HIGH
APPLES, CORTLAND, #1, 100	19.00	19.00
APPLES, CORT, 12-3LB, XFCY	20.00	20.00
APPLES, HNYCRSP, XFCY, 80, 88	68.00	68.00
APPLES, HONYCRSP, NG, BU	35.00	35.00
APPLES, EMPIRE, 120/140, #1, BU	18.00	18.00
APPLES, FUJI, NG, 88, BU	25.00	30.00
APPLES, GOLD DEL, NG, 88, BU	25.00	25.00
APPLES, MACS, FNCY, 120	18.00	18.00
APPLES, MAC, NG, BU	18.00	18.00
APPLES, MAC, 140, FCY, BU	18.00	18.00
APPLES, MACS, #1, 120	17.00	18.00
APPLES, MACS, #1, 140	17.00	18.00
APPLE, MACS, FCY, 12-3LB, 2-1/2"	15.00	16.00
APPLES, MACOUN, NG, BU	14.00	15.00
APPLES, RED DEL, NG, 125, BU	17.00	17.00
BEAN SPROUTS, 12-12 OZ	12.00	15.00
BRUSSELS SPROUTS, 25 LBS	38.00	38.00
CARROTS, 25 LBS	10.00	10.00
CRANBERRIES, 24-12 OZ	28.00	30.00
PARSNIPS, MED, 20 LBS	19.00	23.00
PARSNIPS, MED, 18-1 LB	18.00	22.00
POTATO, FINGERLING, 20 LB	20.00	20.00
POTATO, RNDRED, 50 LBS	9.00	15.00
POTATO, RNDWHT, 1, CHEF, 50#	10.00	10.00
POTATO, YLLW, #1, CHEF, 50LB	14.00	14.00
PUMPKINS, PIE, 1-1/9	11.00	15.00
PUMPKIN, PIE, 36" BIN	190.00	230.00
RUTABAGAS, 50 LBS	12.00	13.00
SQUASH, ACORN, 1-1/9	12.00	15.00
SQUASH, DELICATA, 1/2 BU	9.00	13.00
TOMS, GHSE, CHERRY, 8-10 OZ	14.00	17.00
TOMATO, GHSE, ONVINE, 5LB	8.00	14.50
TOMATO, GHSE, LOOSE, 25LB	14.00	20.00
TOMATO, HEIRLM, GHSE, 10LBS	24.00	28.00
TURNIPS, PURPLE TOPS, 25LBS	10.00	15.00
TURNIPS, WHITE CAPE, 1-1/9	17.00	18.00

SHIPPED IN

GARLIC, ELEPHANT, CA, 10 LBS	38.00	40.00
GINGER ROOT, 5 LBS	8.00	11.00
KALE, NJ, CRATES, 12 BNCH	13.00	13.00
KOHLRABI, NJ, CRT, 12-16BNCHS	16.00	18.00
MESCULIN MIX, CA, 3 LBS	6.00	6.50
MUSHROOM, ENOKI, PA, 12-3.5OZ	18.00	19.00
MUSHROOM, OYSTER, PA, 3 LBS	13.00	13.25
MUSHROOM, OYSTER, PA, 5 LBS	18.00	20.00
MUSHRM, PORTABELLA, PA 5LB	7.50	10.00
MUSHROOM, SHITAKE, PA, 3LB	14.00	15.00
MUSTARD GREENS, GA, 12	12.00	13.00
ONIONS, YELLOW, NY, 50 LBS	12.00	13.00
ONIONS, YELLOW, NY, 20-2LB	12.00	13.00
ONIONS, RED, NY, 25 LBS	15.00	17.00
POTATO, RUSSET, PEI, 50LBS, 60	14.00	15.00
SWISSCHARD, RAINBOW, CA, 12	24.00	24.00

NEW ENGLAND AND PA FLOWERS & HERBS

CILANTRO, PER BUNCH	.50	.75
LILIES, ASIATIC, NE, 10 STEMS	25.00	25.00
POINSETTIA, NE, 6" POT	3.69	9.99
SUNFLOWER, LGE, NE, 5 FLWRS	5.50	6.50

MIDDLESEX LIVESTOCK AUCTION

Middlefield, CT, December 14, 2015

	LOW	HIGH
Bob Calves:		
45-60 lbs.	25.00	45.00
61-75 lbs.	100.00	125.00
76-90 lbs.	177.50	180.00
91-105 lbs.	182.50	185.00
106 lbs. & up	190.00	195.00
Farm Calves	197.50	200.00
Starter Calves	52.00	60.00
Veal Calves	60.00	175.00
Open Heifers	55.00	160.00
Beef Heifers	100.00	125.00
Feeder Steers	150.00	175.00
Beef Steers	82.00	105.00
Stock Bulls	130.00	165.00
Beef Bulls	50.00	91.00
Replacement Cows	n/a	n/a
Replacement Heifers	n/a	n/a
Boars	n/a	n/a
Sows	n/a	n/a
Butcher Hogs	n/a	n/a
Feeder Pigs	40.00	47.50
Sheep	115.00	200.00
Lambs	70.00	200.00
Goats each	85.00	310.00
Kid Goats	n/a	n/a
Canners	up to	66.50
Cutters	67.00	71.00
Utility Grade Cows	72.00	77.00
Rabbits each	5.00	16.00
Chickens each	4.00	35.00
Ducks each	6.00	20.00

**Auction will be held as usual on
December 21 and December 28, 2015**

NORTHEAST EGGS/USDA

Per doz. Grade A and Grade A white in cartons to retailers (volume buyers)

XTRA LARGE	1.32	1.46
LARGE	1.26	1.40
MEDIUM	.98	1.11

NEW ENGLAND SHELL EGGS

Per doz. Grade A brown in carton delivered store door. (Range)

XTRA LARGE	1.89	2.10
LARGE	1.82	2.00
MEDIUM	1.32	1.43
SMALL	1.03	1.13

HAY - LANCASTER, PA

Small squares, each

GRASS HAYS		
Premium	320.00	355.00
Good	260.00	310.00
ALFALFA/GRASS		
Supreme	350.00	385.00
Premium	270.00	330.00
STRAW	270.00	290.00

USDA - NORTHEAST RETAIL PORK

Whole, B/In	1.88	1.99
Loin Roast, Bnls	1.47	3.99
Rib End Roast, B/In	1.49	2.49
Sirloin Roast, Bnls	1.18	2.99
Cc Pork Chops, B/In	1.69	4.99
Smoked Chops	5.99	8.33
Picnic, Fresh, B/In	.99	1.59
Ham, Spiral Cut	1.28	5.99

FOR SALE

1-R. Blumenthal & Donahue is now Connecticut's first independent NATIONWIDE Agri-Business Insurance Agency. Christmas tree growers, beekeepers, sheep breeders, organic farmers and all others, call us for all your insurance needs. 800-554-8049 or www.bludon.com

2-R. Farm, homeowner and commercial insurance—we do it all. Call Blumenthal & Donahue 800-554-8049 or www.bludon.com

3-R. Gallagher electric fencing for farms, horses, deer control, gardens, & beehives. Sonpal's Power Fence 860-491-2290.

4-R. Packaging for egg sales. New egg cartons, flats, egg cases, 30 doz and 15 doz. Polinsky Farm 860-376-2227.

5-R. Nationwide Agribusiness Insurance Program, endorsed by the CT Farm Bureau, save up to 23% on your farm insurance and get better protection. References available from satisfied farmers. Call Marci today at 203-444-6553.

8-R. CT non-GMO grain and corn. Hay and straw. Pleasant View Farms. Louis. 860-803-0675.

125-R. 20 ton tag along Custom trailer. Purchased new in 2000. Original owner/operator. Excellent condition. \$8,900.00. Lebanon. 860-642-4292.

128-R. For Sale: Branford 2+ acres land, barns and 3 bedroom farmhouse. Previously farmed by 3 generations of the same family. Had operated a fruit/vegetable stand. Nut trees on property include black walnut, filbert (hazelnuts), heart nuts. Large barn with hayloft & stand above with room for heavy equipment/truck and chicken barn/stall below. Smaller barn/shed for pullets. Previous animals include chickens, turkeys, horse, goat. Zoned for small animals or 2 large. Situated on a tidal marsh with natural beauty. Close to town and commuter rail, photos available upon request. Contact: Stephanie F. Dorman at 203-488-1641, Ext. 205.

131-R. For sale: Vaughan vertical wet-well recirculating Chopper Pump; type used for manure pit. Best offer. Call Steve S. 860-286-9999 X 134.

133-R. 72X30x12 (high) foot hi-tunnel for sale. Lots of extra parts. 203-387-3055.

135-R. For Sale: Goats, Kiko bucks. Purebred. 8 months old. No papers. 860-537-1974.

WANTED

132-R. Wanted: Quick detach forks and complete backhoe assembly for a JD 790 tractor. 860-663-1769, 5pm-9pm.

135. Maple Lane Farms is a hydroponic grower of produce for the retail and food service markets. Due to increased demand from our customers, we are seeking greenhouse owners to grow our products on a contract basis. If interested, call 860-227-8786.

MISCELLANEOUS

6-R. Farm/Land specializing in land, farms, and all types of Real Estate. Established Broker with a lifetime of agricultural experience and 40 years of finance. Representing both Buyers and Sellers. Call Clint Charter of Wallace-Tustin Realty (860) 644-5667.



The Dept. of Agriculture is promoting the purchase of Connecticut Grown Christmas trees, wreaths, and garland this holiday season.

The promotion includes audio and visual ads on Pandora Radio, iHeartRadio and Bomba FM, in addition to an enhanced page on the agency's website: www.CTGrown.gov/trees and promotion via the agency's social media platforms, including Facebook: www.Facebook.com/ConnecticutGrown and Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/GrowCTAg/ct-grown-christmas-trees/

THREE CENTURIES OF RAISING, CELEBRATING AMERICAN MILKING DEVONS CONTINUES ON WESTBROOK FARM

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The Devons' milk, also relatively low in fat, is fed to pigs they raise for meat. The farm sells ground beef, hot dogs, pork loin and chops, ham, sausage and their most popular offering – bacon.

That's the first thing that sells out," Bonnie said. "People just love it."

The Halls slaughtered about a dozen cows and 30 pigs last year, and produced about 100 gallons of maple syrup tapped from the gigantic old trees that give the farm its name.

They sell at three area farmers' markets in the warmer months, and in early November launched their off-season CSA, which offers products from 13 vendors including meats, fish, milk, cheeses, breads, maple syrup, ice cream and eggs.

Unlike most CSA's, there is no minimum purchase. Customers pre-order what they want from a menu on the farm's website and Facebook page and pick up the items on Friday.

"This is tailored to each customer," Bonnie said. "If you don't like it, you're not buying it."

The Halls also do some retail sales at the farm on Saturdays. They use no pesticides or herbicides on the farm, and are dedicated to educating customers about the benefits of locally-grown food raised with sustainable practices.

"We like to have people think about their food and where it comes from and to maybe plan what they're going to eat for the next month," Bonnie said. "That's difficult to do today."

John said he is amazed at how much customers' have become both informed and inquisitive about what they are buying.

"These days, everybody interviews you," he said. "Do you use GMOs? What do you feed your animals? I always say that nothing has changed here in a hundred years except now we have tractors."

Driving down an ancient gravel access road that leads to the main pasture area, Hall points out an old cranberry bog that was harvested commercially for decades in the 1800s, and a number of houses that were either built by or lived in by members of the Hall family over the generations.

One of them is an old one-room schoolhouse that his grandfather bought and moved a short distance to its current location with a team of Devons.

Reaching the pasture where about half his herd was grazing in the morning fog, Hall walked among the cattle and described his ideas for the Pilgrim's cattle-landing reenactment planned for 2023 at Plimouth Plantation, where a few Devons are permanently housed for display.

"It's still eight years away," Hall said. "But this is going to be a celebration of 400 years of raising cattle in the free world, so it's never too early to start planning."



Clockwise from above: American Milking Devons grazing at Maple Breeze Farm in Westbrook; the farm's original barn; a package of ground beef held by John Hall; a sign advertising the farm's off-season CSA that began last month.

Page 1: John Hall with some of his herd.



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CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
www.CTgrown.gov 860-713-2500

Commissioner steven.reviczky@ct.gov	Steven K. Reviczky 860-713-2501
Agricultural Development linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov	Linda Piotrowicz 860-713-2503
Regional Market linda.piotrowicz@ct.gov	Linda Piotrowicz 860-566-3699
Farmland Preservation cam.weimar@ct.gov	Cameron Weimar, Ph.D 860-713-2511
Regulation & Inspection bruce.sherman@ct.gov	Dr. Bruce Sherman 860-713-2504
State Veterinarian mary.lis@ct.gov	Dr. Mary J. Lis 860-713-2505
Aquaculture david.carey@ct.gov	David Carey 203-874-2855
Agricultural Report Editor steve.jensen@ct.gov	Steve Jensen 860-713-2519