

Welcome to Middletown's environmental buying guide!

This guide is sponsored by the Middletown Conservation Commission, for consumers who would like their purchases to help protect our environment. The guide contains lists of locally, naturally and organically made products; information about local environmental organizations; and gift-giving information and links.

Why support local agriculture?

Farms protect land from development, and from the energy consumption, compacted lawns and lawn care chemicals, impervious roads, cars, and artificial lighting associated with development. Agriculture preserves land for food production now and in the future, and provides semi-wild patches for wildlife to live in and disperse through. Buying locally grown food products avoids the environmental costs from transportation of food. According to the Worldwatch Institute, our food travels as much as 1,500-2,000 miles on average from farm to table, consuming far more energy from fuel than food energy delivered, and contributing to air pollution. Farming is not without its own ills, and it's best to encourage sustainable agriculture that minimizes run-off, uses water wisely, coexists with nature, and avoids the use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.



Great things to buy - local agriculture...

- ❖ **Honey** – Check out Riverside Apieries (Marlborough - also beeswax candles; 860-295-8972), Old Maids Farm (Glastonbury 860-659-1886 or 860-918-5442), Honeybuns Apiary, East Granby (844-8853), Jones' Apiaries, Farmington, (677-9391), Riverside Apiaries, Marlborough (295-8972) and Case's Apiary, Simsbury (658-5173).





❖ **Organic fruits and veggies** - *High Hill Orchard* (Meriden) offers organic and sustainably grown fruits and vegetables, as well as other food products including a particularly delicious pear cider (203-294-0276). You can also buy a share (or split one with a friend) from a local CSA farm (Community Supported Agriculture) to receive regular allotments of a variety of produce throughout the season. In addition to High Hill, options include *Long Lane Farm* in Middletown (run by Wesleyan University students; www.wesleyan.edu/wsa/longlanefarm or longlanefarm@wesleyan.edu), and the *Upper Forty Farm* in Cromwell (contact Kathryn Caruso at 635-4013). She is the host every year for the Slow Food tomato extravaganza and also sells produce, as well as cider and eggs, at Urban Oaks include cider or eggs). For a list of farms in our area go to the *Northeast Organic Farming Association* website at www.ctnofa.org. *Deerfield Farm*, located on Parmalee Hill Rd. in Durham, offers unpasteurized whole milk (no steroids or antibiotics) from a herd of brown eyed Jersey cows; also offering milk based soaps; farm stand open Sat:9-1 (www.deerfield.org) . In addition, there are area farmer's markets that operate from July-September or October – Middletown's is on the South Green Tuesday and Friday, 8:00- 12:00. This is soon to be expanded. Guilford's is on Rte. 79, Sat. 9-1.



❖ **Wine** – Check out Connecticut's wine trail, with stops as close as Wallingford and Colchester (www.ctwine.com); some of the products, such as Ballet of Angels white from Sharpe Farm are considered quite good and available locally (CT Beverage Mart). Products vary and none advertise as organic (Priam's, however, says they don't use insecticides). Most

are open for visits and tastings and some sell other products, like cheese. Gouveia in Wallingford, for example, has tastings Friday and Saturday nights. You can bring your own food, buy a glass or bottle of wine, sit by the fire and look that the view, or listen to live music (see photo above).



❖ **Cheeses and Meats** - Find sustainably grown cheeses and lamb (as well as ricotta based spreads and a honey mint sauce) at Beaver Brook Farm (www.beaverbrookfarm.com) in Lyme – their meat is also available from TriTown grocery in Portland; the Cato Corner Farm in Colchester (www.catocornerfarm.com; 860-537-3884) sells upscale organic cheeses. You can get Angus beef grown without hormones or pesticides from Four Mile River Farm in Old Lyme (www.fourmileriverfarm.com; 860-434-2378).

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- ❖ **Organic Coffee** – Ashlawn Farm in Lyme produces various roasts from imported organic/fair trade coffee (they also host a farmer’s market during the growing season – www.farmcoffee.com).



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- ❖ **Herbs, teas and botanicals** – Great for visiting the gardens, Caprilands Herb Farm in Coventry (www.caprilands.com) offer a variety of local and imported products in their gift stores and online; Sundial Gardens has a beautiful formal garden and imported tea products in Higganum (www.sundialgardens.com).



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- ❖ **Organic foods** – like mushrooms, honey, veggies and poultry are offered by Urban Oaks Organic Farm at 225 Oak St. in New Britain, CT (860-223-6200; farm stand Fridays from 3:00 to 6:00 PM all year)

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- ❖ **Local foods** - Lyman’s Orchards in Middlefield (open most days, 860-349-1793), offers locally grown and crafted food items such as apples, pies and condiments.

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- ❖ **Breads** - Dreamer’s Bakery, 543 Main Street, Cromwell (phone 635-0107). Artisanal and partially organic breads available on Saturday and Sunday mornings as well as at various farmers’ markets.

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- ❖ **Maple syrup** – syrup is ready sometime in mid/late February. Check out Shawn Graves’ maple syrup stand on Chauncey Street in Middletown (860-347-4633), Bluefield Farms in Portland (860-342-0238) and Wayne’s Sugarhouse in N. Branford (203-488-3549).

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- ❖ **Yarn and wool products** – you can purchase CT grown and spun wool or wool products from Burgis Brook Alpacas in Guilford (www.burgisbrookalpacas.com) or buy a finished “Connecticut blanket” made from 100% CT wool(www.bittersweetcountrycollectibles.com/connecticutblanket.htm).

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- ❖ **Soaps, candles and more** – the Three Sisters in Essex produces a variety of honey and botanical based products; get more information and order online at www.threesistersfarms.com/.

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- ❖ **The Connecticut Creative Store** is a joint venture between The Connecticut Department of Agriculture, the Hartford Botanical Garden and the City of Hartford and sells locally grown food products as well as crafts and botanical gifts and the “CT Grown Basket”; it’s located at 25 Stonington St., Hartford – call (860) 297-0112 for hours.



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- ❖ **The Farm Bureau** – Buying an associate membership helps to support member farms in a number of ways, including advocating at the legislature and providing insurance (also available to associate members – go to www.csba.org for more info). No farming experience required.
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- ❖ **Farm map** - For more information on locally grown food products, or a map of CT’s farms, contact the State Department of Agriculture at www.state.ct.us/doag/ or call 860-713-2503.
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- ❖ **Farms near you** – to find agricultural products near you go to Local Harvest (www.localharvest.org) or Food Routes (www.foodroutes.org).
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- ❖ **Tree farms** - Local Christmas tree farms abound – some of them also offer a great place to take a walk or other products. To find one go to www.ctchristmastree.org. If you’re into birds try going late in the afternoon to watch as birds roost in the trees. Merriam tree farm on Middlefield Rd. boasts one of (if not the) largest roosts for robins in the state!
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- ❖ **Plants** – Buy locally grown plants at Stone Post Gardens (Randolph Rd. across from Highview Convalescent Center) and Brush Hill Farm (near Xavier).
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...and
other
products

- ❖ **Wood chips / Firewood** - Allan’s Tree Service is a local source of free woodchips (no chemical colorants!) and firewood (cost) by the cord or half cord. Contact them at 349-8029 or go to www.allanstreeservice.com.

- ❖ **Soap** – Susan Parks Soap (West Stafford) are made from goat’s milk and vegetable products - very affordable - available online at www.susanparks.com/

- ❖ **Trail guides** – Get Trail Guide for just \$5 office at City Hall or



the Middletown
from the Planning
access it from

www.middletownplanning.com (go to projects on left; then scroll down to bottom); the CT River Boating Guide for all kinds of craft, is available from the CT River Watershed Council at www.ctriver.org/guide.html or call (413)772-2020 ext. 207.

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- ❖ **Books** – There is a great selection of nature and wildlife books for children and adults, as well as maps at the DEP Store located in the bottom floor of the State Department of Environmental Protection building on 79 Elm St. in Hartford (Walk-in Store Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., (860) 424-3555 or (860) 424-3692. Also, check out Jeff Hammerson’s Connecticut Wildlife book at Broad Street Books, and trail guides at the Connecticut Forest and Park Association (see below).
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- ❖ **Organic food, non-toxic cleaning supplies, and more** – It’s Only Natural, Main Street Market, Middletown.
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- ❖ **Local art** – check out local galleries such as Wesleyan Potters for locally made arts and crafts.

Local environmental groups to give to

Many organizations also offer a variety of gifts such as trail guides, or Adopt an Acre program (The Nature Conservancy). All the groups listed below are local or have local memberships or chapters.

Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District, deKoven House, 27 Washington St., Middletown, CT 06457, 860-346-3282

ctrivercoastal@ct.nacdnet.org, www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal

The Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District is a private non-profit organization working to promote the sound use and management of natural resources in 26 towns in the lower CT River watershed and adjacent coastal areas. Memberships may be given in the District's Connecticut River Watch Program, the only regional citizen monitoring program for the CT River and tributaries promoting community involvement in river assessment, protection and improvement. General donations are also accepted to support our technical and educational natural resource conservation services and programs.

The Middlesex Land Trust, Inc.

deKoven House, 27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457, 860-343-7537

info@middlesexlandtrust.org, www.middlesexlandtrust.org

The Middlesex Land Trust is a private non-profit organization working to conserve open space in northern Middlesex County (Durham, Middlefield, Middletown, Cromwell, Portland and East Hampton). Memberships may be given to support land conservation efforts, and donations are also accepted specifically for land acquisition and land stewardship. Phone for information.



The Jonah Center for Earth and Art, 190 Court Street, Middletown CT 06457.

www.thejonahcenter.org, John Hall, Executive Director (860) 346-6657 x13.

Mission: To transform the city's North End Peninsula (site of landfill) into a center for recreation, environmental education, renewable energy technology, and environmental art. The website contains links to information on environmental programs such as organic lawn care, and photos of wildlife taken by local

residents.

Connecticut River Watershed Council, De Koven House Community Center

27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457, 860/704-0057, www.ctriver.org/

“The Connecticut River Watershed Council works to protect the watershed from source to sea. From alpine forests to tidal estuaries, rural farmlands to urban riverfronts, spotted salamanders to bald eagles, and mussels to salmon, the Connecticut River watershed unites a diversity of habitats, communities and resources.” The Council collaborates, educates, organizes, restores, and intervenes to preserve the health of our watershed.

The Connecticut Forest and Park Association 16 Meriden Rd., Rockfall, CT 06481-2961, (860) 346-2372, <http://www.ctwoodlands.org/>

“Connecticut's oldest and most respected private nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing our natural environment.” Workshops, trail guides and other books, trail maintenance, advocacy for conservation and trails.

Mattabeseck Audubon Society, deKoven House, 27 Washington

Street, Middletown, 860-635-2786, www.audubon-mas.org

“The Mattabeseck Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society, is committed to environmental leadership and education for the benefit of the community and the earth’s biodiversity.”

The Rockfall Foundation deKoven House, 27 Washington Street, Middletown The Rockfall Foundation, named for the rock falls at the present Wadsworth Falls State Park, was founded in

1935 by Colonel Clarence S. Wadsworth in order "to establish, maintain and care for parks and



forests or wild land for the use and enjoyment of the public...” The Rockfall Foundation support community services and natural resource conservation, preservation and development.

The Nature Conservancy, CT Chapter, 55 High Street, Middletown, 344-0716

<http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/connecticut/>

“The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.”

The Middletown Garden Club holds an annual plant sale in May on the lawn of Holy Trinity Church on Main St. Expert gardeners will help you select the right perennial for your particular conditions. Proceeds are used for beautifying Middletown and as well as for other environmental projects. For further information call President Ona McLaughlin, 349 8415.

Friends of Long Hill Estate is an organization of volunteers that puts on fund-raising events at Wadsworth Mansion. The proceeds are used to not only restore its valuable antiques, but to improve and maintain the Estate's trail system, plant hundreds of daffodils, have a nature oriented day for the public, and put on four free concerts in July. On Sunday, August 26, 9-4, the expansive lawn is the scene of the Open Air Market and Festival featuring Connecticut-grown foods and Connecticut-made products. For more information about the Friends or the Festival, call 347-1064.

Tips on gift giving without the gluttony

- ❖ **Give necessities.** Buy your family the new Energy Star dryer you've needed; give organic or locally grown food, or energy saving compact florescent light bulbs.
- ❖ **Give your time.** A card with a promise to help clean the basement or babysit the kids could be someone's favorite gift.
- ❖ **Give services.** A gift certificate for a massage, an afternoon of a cleaning service, a garden planted by a landscaper.
- ❖ **Give gifts that keep on giving.** Donate in the person's name to a non-profit like a local environmental group, Hospice or social justice organization.
- ❖ **Give homemade.** Kids underestimate the appreciation of a homemade gift. Many are easy to make: a laminated bookmark with photographs, candles, cookies, decorated notecards.
- ❖ **Give your skill.** Good photographer? Give a family photo shoot. Organizer? Offer to help with a cluttered study or bedroom. Cook? Your favorite recipes.
- ❖ **Give them skills.** Buy art or drawing classes, music lessons, obedience training (for the dog...).
- ❖ **Give an experience.** Take the kids wall climbing or bowling, treat a friend to lunch, watch the kids so your spouse can have the afternoon alone.

- ❖ **Give an heirloom.** Emphasize the importance of family connections by giving a favorite piece of jewelry, a knick-knack or furniture.
- ❖ **Give used.** A treasure from an antique shop, a refinished piece of thrift shop furniture, a rare find from a used book store.
- ❖ **Give back.** Kids may better appreciate what they have, if they understand that so many people have less. Donate to toy drives, send money to a disaster relief organization, bring food to the soup kitchen, have them sort through their things and give excess to a thrift store, engage them in community service.
- ❖ **Give a little at a time.** Kids are often overwhelmed by the gift pile. Try giving one for the each of the twelve days of Christmas, open some on Christmas Eve, or go on the aspirin schedule – 1 every four hours.
- ❖ **Give thanks!** Creating moments to appreciate your good fortune and reflect on your values can be a welcome respite in this busy time.

Links for buying and holiday ideas

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- ❖ New American Dream (www.newdream.org)
- ❖ Simple Living (<http://www.simpleliving.org/>)
- ❖ Environmental Protection Agency (<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/specials/funfacts/winter.htm>),
- ❖ Bridgewater State College (http://webhost.bridgew.edu/jhayesboh/resource/env_ican.htm)
- ❖ Electronics buying guide from Greenpeace (<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaigns/toxics/electronics/how-the-companies-line-up>)
- ❖ Find interesting gift ideas including items with recycled content at <http://www.blogger.com/top-10-green-gift-guide> and ideas for “green” living at www.naturalhomemagazine.com
- ❖ Information about causes, costs and cures of consumption from PBS (<http://www.pbs.org/kets/affluenza/>).
- ❖ Support social and economic justice that can be the foundation of environmental conservation – buy goods with the Fair Trade label; check out catalogues and links from the Fair Trade Federation (www.fairtradefederation.org and www.globalexchange.org); support sustainable development (such as in Nicaragua, www.nicanet.org); fight modern slavery at www.notforsale.org; make direct “micro loans” to deserving entrepreneurs around the world (www.kiva.org).
- ❖ Environmental Defense <http://action.environmentaldefense.org/ct/XdzystY1dz7u/>

Among other things, buy “carbon offsets”, to reduce greenhouse gasses that are causing global climate change. You’ll support enterprises that have committed to reduce CO2 emissions.

Last updated December 2007. To suggest additions or corrections please contact Kate Miller at kmiller02@wesleyan.edu.