

# Caring About the Environment



**Part 1:** Dairy farmers help the environment by conserving natural resources, which is good for everyone — including local wildlife. This is called *sustainability*. It includes reducing waste and recycling where possible. Read about sustainability on a dairy farm. Then write about a similar way you can help the Earth at home.

At Fair Hill Farms in Chestertown, Md., dairy farmers reuse the sand bedding that their cows lie on to recycle and conserve natural resources.



Sustainability on the Farm	Sustainability at Home
 <p><b>Conserve Energy</b> Many dairy farmers conserve energy by using energy-efficient lighting. They also reduce fuel use by using cold well water instead of refrigerators to cool milk and by making fewer trips on their tractors.</p>	<p><b>Conserve Energy</b></p>
 <p><b>Conserve Water</b> Dairy farmers conserve water by recycling it. Water used to cool milk becomes water for the cows to drink.</p>	<p><b>Conserve Water</b></p>
 <p><b>Reduce, Reuse, Recycle</b> Some dairy farmers reduce waste by using washable cloths instead of paper towels to clean cows. Farmers also reuse waste paper as soft cow bedding. And they recycle food waste like orange peels and cotton seeds by adding them to the feed for their cows.</p>	<p><b>Reduce, Reuse, Recycle</b></p>
 <p><b>Help Wildlife</b> Dairy farms often have streams and forests serving as habitats for wildlife that farmers help preserve.</p>	<p><b>Help Wildlife</b></p>
 <p><b>Protect Waterways</b> Farmers cover the ground with plants. The plant roots help keep soil from washing away during storms and harming fish and other stream wildlife.</p>	<p><b>Protect Waterways</b></p>



**Part 2:** Show off what you've learned! Work with a friend to create a comic strip in which you teach kids and families about the ways to care for the Earth — similar to what dairy farmers do. Use the other side of this sheet or separate paper. Fold the sheet into four or six squares to get started.



Dairy farmers like the Almeter family of Breezyhill Dairy in Strykersville, N.Y., grow corn to feed their cows, much like you can grow a garden to feed your family.

**Family Gardeners!** Take a page from a dairy farmer's book and help the environment at home. Grow plants native to your area, make your own compost, protect storm drains and waterways by keeping trash, leaves, grass clippings, and oil out of them, mulch plant beds, use composted cow manure as fertilizer, and plant cover crops to protect the soil.



Local milk is available 365 days a year.



AMERICAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION  
NORTH EAST



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