

## Is Raw Milk Healthy?

**Raw milk is the ultimate whole food.** It contains many nutrients essential to human health, and comes complete with companion enzymes and amino acids necessary for the human body to make use of those nutrients.

## Is Raw Milk Safe?

**Yes.** Massachusetts raw milk farmers have proven that they can produce and distribute raw milk safely. Any food product has the ability to harbor pathogens, but those pathogens are not part of the food itself – they are introduced via poor handling of the product. Raw milk is not inherently unsafe, any more so than pasteurized milk, spinach, peanut butter or poultry, all of which have been sources for recent food borne illness outbreaks.

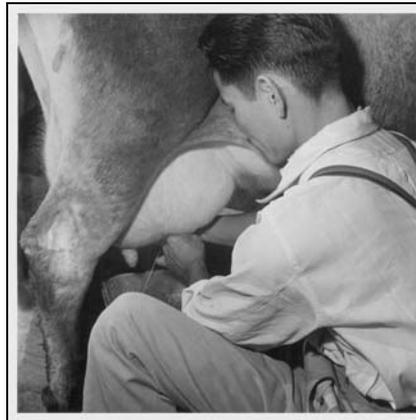
## How Do We Ensure That Raw Milk Is Safe?

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources has set standards that raw milk must meet, and inspects the farms and the milk every month. **Raw milk sold to consumers must meet the same cleanliness – measured by testing bacteria and coliform levels – as pasteurized milk sold in grocery stores.**

## How Do Farmers Keep Raw Milk Safe?

Raw milk farmers meet these stringent guidelines by keeping very clean facilities, by keeping their animals healthy, by employing sustainable and healthy management methods such as grazing, and by keeping the inventory of milk they have for sale fresh – often selling milk the same day that it came from the animal. And the food chain is short and simple – from the animal to the tank to the bottle to the cooler for customers to purchase. By eliminating many of the steps taken with most food products – mixing the milk with milk from other farms, trucking it from the farm to the plant and the plant to the store, running it through numerous machines – there are far fewer opportunities for pathogens to accidentally be introduced to raw milk.

Pasteurization became necessary decades ago, when some dairy farmers were employing management methods that allowed their milk to become unsafe. With the advent of refrigeration, management methods that emphasize herd health, stainless steel equipment, and other sanitation methods, pasteurization is not always necessary to ensure the safety of milk. Raw milk farmers are committed to making clean milk by paying attention to the entire production chain, beginning with how they build their herd all the way through how they bottle and store the milk for sale, rather than counting on a single process at the end to eliminate any problems created earlier.



## Do Farmers Benefit By Selling Raw Milk?

**Yes.** In 1950, Massachusetts had nearly 5,000 dairy farms. Today there are fewer than 160. The main cause for this tragedy is economic. Rising fuel and feed costs in the Northeast mean local dairies cannot compete with large, industrialized confinement dairies operating in the Midwest and Canada. Fresh raw milk, however, sells at the farm for \$6 to \$10 per gallon – five to eight times what bottlers pay.

When consumers buy milk directly from the farmer they are helping to preserve their community by paying a fair price. That way the farmer can cover costs and afford to support their family. Sales of raw milk are a proven tool for sustainability for farms – while the number of conventional dairies has

steadily declined, the number of raw milk dairies has more than doubled in the past ten years, and no farm licensed to sell raw milk has gone out of business. Raw milk sales accounted for more than \$1 million in income for Massachusetts farms in 2012, money that stays in the community and supports the local economy.

## How Does Raw Milk Help the Environment?

Farms selling raw milk and receiving a retail price are more sustainable, meaning long-term preservation of open space and the use of management practices that are beneficial to the environment.

Cows and goats are healthiest when they are able to be outdoors, grazing on pasture. In turn, they fertilize the soil and experience fewer animal health problems. When cows and goats graze on pasture, less energy is needed to mow, bale and move hay, reducing fossil fuel use and cutting the carbon impact of producing a valuable food.

Massachusetts has many small, grass-based dairies that are able to foster long-term sustainable farming practices, protecting the environment and the preservation of the rural and agricultural character of Massachusetts.

## What Can I Do With Raw Milk?

Besides drinking it, the possibilities are nearly limitless – raw milk is extremely versatile. The milk and cream can be separated and the cream can be used to make butter, buttermilk, cream, ice cream and sour cream. The milk can be consumed directly or used to make kefir, yogurt and cheeses.

The freshness and purity of farm fresh milk leads to very little waste. Milk purchased fresh from the farm will keep for up to two weeks when refrigerated. If it sours, the milk – unlike pasteurized milk, which goes bad – is still healthy and can be used for baking, biscuits, pancakes, etc.

## How Is Raw Milk Regulated?

The Federal government allows states to set their own laws and regulations around raw milk. Some states allow raw milk to be sold in grocery stores and at farmers markets, some allow farmers to deliver raw milk, and some don't allow raw milk to be sold to consumers under any circumstances.

Massachusetts law allows raw milk to be sold to consumers, but only at the farms where it is produced. The farms must be licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources and inspected monthly. If a farm fails to meet the standards set by the state, its license to sell raw milk is revoked until it remedies the problem.

## How Do I Find Raw Milk In Massachusetts?

More than 25 Massachusetts dairies are licensed to sell raw milk from their farm stores. These farms pass rigorous state inspections every month and are held to the highest standards of cleanliness and safety.

Visiting one of these farms is the best way to learn more about this vital and healthy product. Farmers are often willing to offer tours of their facilities, allowing you to see the animals and ask any questions you may have.

The list on this brochure is current as of June 2014. For more details about each farm, and updates as new farms are licensed, see [www.marawmilk.org](http://www.marawmilk.org). This site also has lots of additional information about raw milk, as well as links to other related resources.

## Where to find Raw Milk

Andover • **Herb Hill Micro-Dairy (g)** • 978-475-7931  
Ashley Falls • **Twin Rivers Farm** • 413-229-7932  
Barre • **Carter & Stevens Farm** • 978-355-4940  
Barre • **Smokeyfield Farm** • 978-790-8087  
Chilmark • **Mermaid Farm & Dairy** • 508-939-1040  
Chilmark • **The Grey Barn** • 508-645-4854  
Cummington • **Taproot Commons Farm** • 413-634-5452  
Cummington • **Rock Paper Scissors Dairy (g)** • 413-634-5099  
Dartmouth • **Paskamansett Farms** • 508-990-7859  
Dudley • **Walnut Lane Farm** • 508-949-2043  
Foxboro • **Oake Knoll Ayrshires** • 774-219-6257  
Framingham • **Eastleigh Farm** • 508-877-1753  
Gill • **Upinngil** • 413-863-2297  
Great Barrington • **Blue Hill Farm** • 413-429-6598  
Hadley • **Cook Farm** • 413-584-2224  
Hardwick • **Misty Brook Farm** • 413-477-8234  
Hardwick • **Robinson Farm (o)** • 413-477-6988  
Hawley • **Sidehill Farm** • 413-625-0011  
Mt. Hermon • **N<sup>o</sup>field Mt. Hermon School** • 413-498-3467  
Montgomery • **Stony Creek Farm (g)** • 413-862-4039  
New Braintree • **Summit Farm (g)** • 508-867-7303  
Shelburne • **Davenport Maple Farm** • 413-625-2866  
Warren • **Rocky Acres Farms** • 413-436-5806  
Warwick • **Chase Hill Farm (o)** • 978-544-6327  
West Newbury • **Artichoke Dairy** • 978-499-8600  
Williamstown • **Cricket Creek Farm** • 413-458-5888  
*(g) = goat milk only*  
*(o) = certified organic*

For more information about  
These farms and raw milk visit:  
[www.marawmilk.org](http://www.marawmilk.org)



NOFA/Mass, 411 Sheldon Rd., Barre, MA 01005

Answers to Questions About...

# Raw Milk in Massachusetts



NOFA/Mass Raw Milk Network

