In 1941, David and Helen Osofsky started Ronnybrook Dairy on a 208-acre property in Pine Plains, naming it for their eldest son Ronny. Ronny and his siblings, Sid, Rick and Fredda (Freddi), grew up on the property, known as the “Home Farm,” and loved the farm life. The siblings eventually took over their parents’ business and now Ronnybrook Dairy is one of the premiere dairy farm operations in the state, with an established brand of milk products that are sold throughout the Hudson Valley, New York City, and the tri-state NY/NJ/CT region. In June, the Osofsky family sold their development rights on the Home Farm increasing the protected land in this area to over 7,785 acres.

One of five farms that make up Ronnybrook Dairy, the Home Farm is an integral part of the multi-county operation and provides critical support through the pasturing of cows and heifers and the growing of corn, hay, and soy. The farm’s products are a fixture at Hudson Valley retail markets, and at New York City Greenmarkets and retail venues such as Chelsea Market. The dairy is also a significant component of the regional economic engine and employs more than 50 full time permanent staff. Eight members of the staff are from the Osofsky family. The dairy also supports other farmers in the area by purchasing their milk and renting their farmland for pasturing and hay.

Selling the development rights on the Home Farm not only permanently protects the land for agriculture, but also allows the Osofsky family to reinvest in their farm operation and secure its future. The dairy has become a multi-generational family business and the siblings are in the process of transitioning the farm to younger family members. With a smile on his face, Rick Osofsky said, “Universally, my kids and my siblings’ kids have all come back to the farm, some with advanced degrees, but they can still farm and it’s really nice to have them continue the tradition.”

With the preservation of the Home Farm, the Osofsky family has taken steps to extend to their children and grandchildren a chance to experience what siblings, Ronny, Sid, Rick and Freddi did being raised on the farm. Rick notes, “I remember growing up in a farming community and I feel that we have helped preserve that experience for those family members who didn’t have that opportunity. Now they can really benefit from seeing how the larger farming community once looked.”
Great Song Farm: Preserving a True Community Farm

For over 18 years, Larry and Betti Steel have had many cherished experiences with friends, neighbors and family members hiking, sleigh riding, holding large family events, swimming and picnicking” on their land in Milan. But from the time they purchased their 88-acre property, Larry and Betti always envisioned the farm in active production and using sustainable growing methods. Introduced to farmer Anthony Mecca through the Dutchess Land Conservancy/Columbia Land Conservancy Farmer-Landowner Match Program in 2010, they were able to realize this dream and Great Song Farm broke ground on their property in 2011.

While the land is owned by the Steels, through a unique long-term partnership, the farm is leased to Anthony and his partner Sarah Hearn, who have created a thriving CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) business serving over 100 families a wide variety of produce year-round. The CSA program grows a direct connection between consumers and their food. As they get to experience firsthand the land and people growing their food, and even pick some crops like cherry tomatoes, beans, peas and flowers, people recognize the value of farms, farmland, and good food. The match has been a great success and has been going strong now for six seasons. In September, Larry and Betti ensured that their land will always remain open and available for farming by selling their development rights and protecting the land with a conservation easement.

The farm store provides items from other area farms for CSA members to purchase, including honey, eggs, breads, yogurts, cheeses, and more. Educational programs are offered teaching sustainable, low impact living in connection with the land. Workshops and study groups cover activities and topics such as canning, permaculture, bee keeping, stewardship and spirituality. Monthly farm tours are attended by 20 to 50 people, and the annual Community Day regularly draws over 100 people.

Happy with their decision to permanently protect their land, Larry and Betti say, “We are filled with pride and joy when our CSA members and their children come to the farm and pick up their vegetables, walk the land, and visit the cow herd and laying hens. We’re not sure if there is any higher calling than growing healthy food and introducing people to sustainable farming methods. Our intention is to remain supportive and active in the operation of Great Song Farm as long as we live on this planet. It is the best thing we have ever done.”
In Memory of Martin Revson

Recently, we lost a longtime supporter and friend of the DLC, Martin Revson. Thank you to Genie Revson for supporting the DLC by designating us as the recipient for donations in Martin’s memory. If you’d like to make a donation, please call Tara or Karen at 845.677.3002.

In June, the Caora Farm Sheep Dog Trials in Millerton provided fierce competition, amazing weather, and a picture-perfect setting at which to view these exciting trials! There was a great turnout as spectators young and not-so-young enjoyed a gorgeous weekend at the farm – soon to be protected through the DLC’s purchase of development rights program. Our thanks to Mich Ferraro and Kathie Weathers for hosting this family-friendly event at their beautiful farm!

In September, visitors to the Orvis Game Fair at Sandanona in Millbrook and to the Environmental Fair at Vassar College Farm stopped by the DLC’s booths to learn more about land conservation and how it helps local citizens. Later in the month, those attending the Conservation Program at the Ducks Unlimited Event at Tamarack Preserve studied historical aerial maps of the area and learned about wetland habitat management and land use patterns.

We kicked off October with a mushroom hike at the Dover Stone Church Preserve led by engaging and renowned mycologist Sue Van Hook. Participants were able to search for mycelium and then gathered to hear Sue discuss their finds. On October 19th, our workshop, “Field Connections: Selling Food Goods Locally” brought farmers and food buyers together to build relationships for the 2017 growing season. The event was part of our annual Down to Earth workshop series in connection with our Farmer-Landowner Match Program in collaboration with Columbia Land Conservancy.

Local Golfers Support the DLC

Each year the Dutchess County Amateur Golf Tournament Committee selects a local charity to support on behalf of the golfers who participate in the event. This year, the DLC was chosen to receive a very generous donation and Art Collings, the DLC’s Vice President for Land Conservation, was on hand to receive the check during the tournament’s closing ceremonies. Our sincerest thanks to the Committee and to the golfers of Dutchess County for supporting our mission!

Local land trusts also gathered in November at the DLC office where we hosted Mohonk Preserve’s Stewardship Workshop on legal issues in land conservation. After the workshop, participants hiked at the Dover Stone Church Preserve where they learned about the protection of this historic property by the Town of Dover and the DLC with help from local citizens.

Education and Outreach

In Memory of Martin Revson

Recently, we lost a longtime supporter and friend of the DLC, Martin Revson. Thank you to Genie Revson for supporting the DLC by designating us as the recipient for donations in Martin’s memory. If you’d like to make a donation, please call Tara or Karen at 845.677.3002.

Education that helps us help you!

We’re constantly working to keep up with the latest information on land conservation. We also collaborate frequently with other land trusts and conservation organizations to better assist you in your conservation goals and educational needs.

A warm welcome to the DLC’s two newest Board members

Hannah Buchan and Tim Bontecou have both previously served on the DLC’s board and we are thrilled to have them return. Welcome back Hannah and Tim!
Our 25th Annual Fall Country Luncheon and Silent Auction

Despite the cold and threat of rain, over 350 supporters and friends gathered on the Sunday of Columbus Day Weekend to celebrate farmland protection at Wethersfield Farm in Stanford. Luncheon co-chairs Zibby and Jim Tozer and Nancy and Fritz Henze delivered a spectacular event matched only by the gorgeous event matched only by the gorgeous views of the landscape outside the tent.

While guests enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared by The Farmer’s Wife, they were welcomed to the event by the DLC’s Board Chairman Rebecca Seaman and President Becky Thornton. They stressed the importance of farmland protection as a way of keeping land in active agriculture to ensure our future food source, and discussed the recent preservation of a portion of Ronnybrook Dairy, owned by the Osofsky Family. Rick Osofsky spoke on behalf of the family, sharing his dad’s history with the DLC’s beginnings, and noting that protecting the land through a purchase of their development rights was a great way for them to permanently protect their land for agriculture. It also provided important funds to reinvest in their farm operation and to transition the farm to the next generation.

Our heartfelt thanks to the many people who made the luncheon a great success: to our Co-Chairs Zibby and Jim Tozer and Nancy and Fritz Henze – we can’t thank you enough for your hard work to ensure that we had an amazing and successful event. To Kevin Malloy and all at Wethersfield Farm, we thank you for your help, patience, and invaluable advice – not to mention the hayrides enjoyed by our younger patrons! Thanks to Tim Bontecou and Nate Weeks for securing and installing the 15-foot birch trees to decorate the tent – we (literally) couldn’t do it without you! Thanks also to Judy Murphy and Old Farm Nursery for the beautifully decorated entrance to our tent – it was gorgeous! Thanks to our sponsors, Bank of Millbrook and Paula Redmond Real Estate. To our Underwriters, Patrons and Silent Auction Donors and Winners, we thank you so much for your generosity – it enables us to continue to protect more of the beautiful landscape we call home.
Simple Ways to Give – Now and in the Future

A bequest is one of the simplest and most effective ways to support the Dutchess Land Conservancy. These thoughtful gifts ensure that we can continue our work to protect and steward the land you care about for future generations. You can provide a future gift to the DLC by including a bequest provision in your will or revocable trust.

For more information about bequests and other creative ways of charitable giving, visit our website at dutchessland.org or call our development team at 845-677-3002.

Thanks to our Community Sponsors

Bank of Millbrook
Paula Redmond Real Estate
Houlihan Lawrence Millbrook Brokerage
Farm Credit East
Peter Pennoyer Architects
Corbally, Gartland & Rappleyea, LLP
Trumbull Architects
Reaching a Milestone: over 40,000 acres now protected!

By working together, we’ve done it!

We’ve now protected over 40,000 acres of Dutchess County’s watersheds, vital farmland, wildlife habitat, diverse ecosystems, and unparalleled scenic views for future generations.

Thanks to all of our supporters, landowners, farmers, local communities, government agencies, and land trust partners – this milestone belongs to all of us!

Anonymous
Irène & Jack Banning
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Benardete
Mr. & Mrs. Duke Buchanan III
Mr. & Mrs. Russell L. Carson
Mr. & Mrs. David C. Clapp
Mr. & Mrs. Wolcott B. Dunham, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Flexner
Barbara & Andrew Gundlach
Mr. & Mrs. David R. Hathaway
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas W. Keesee
Mr. & Mrs.带走 Nutten
Elissa Kramer & Jay Newman
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Kraus
Christina Lang, Head
Claire & Chris Mann
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Mayhew
Mr. & Mrs. Guy Merison
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas L. Newberry
Arnold S. & Madalene Penner
Mrs. George W. Perkins, Jr.
Ms. & Eric Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. Eric Rosenfield
Mr. Jay M. Schwamm
Ms. Jennifer P. Speers
Mr. & Mrs. John Sprague
Sarah & David Stack
Mr. & Mrs. William W. Stahl, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Oakleigh Thorne
Mr. Oakleigh B. Thorne
Mrs. Felicita S. Thorne
David & Tetyana Tisch
Barbara & Donald Tober
Mr. Robert S. Trump
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Urwin
Mr. & Mrs. Alan B. Vickery
Mr. & Mrs. Robin A. Vince
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Weindling
Dorothy S. Whitmarsh &
William I. Benedict, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Frederick W. Whitridge, Jr.
Julia & Nigel Widdowson

FOUNDATIONS AND GRANTS
The Alexander Bodini Foundation
The Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation
Millbrook Tribute Garden
RLJ Foundation
The Walbridge Fund

THANKS TO OUR TRUSTEES OF THE LAND
With annual donations of $10,000 or more, Trustees of the Land demonstrate their deep level of commitment to land conservation.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Rebecca M. Seaman
Chairman
Oakleigh Thorne
Vice Chairman
Olivia van Melle Kamp
Secretary
Ralph Weindling
Treasurer
John P. Banning, Jr.
Steven Benardete
Timothy M. Bonteceu
Hannah F. Buchanan
Bitty Chase
Constance I. Duhamel
Wolcott B. Dunham, Jr.
Ellis Dyer
Leslie Farhangi
Thomas Flexner
Nancy N. Hathaway
Thomas W. Keesee
Fernanda M. Kellogg
Bradford Kendall
Christopher L. Mann
Timothy Mayhew
Chuck Mead
Thomas L. Newberry
Eric D. Rosenfeld
David R. Stack
David F. Teter
Fred Whitridge, Jr.
Ross Williams

STAFF
Rebecca E. C. Thornton
President
Art Collings
Vice President for Land Conservation
Tara Kelly
Director of Development
Karin Roux
Senior Land Projects Manager
Julie Hart
Senior Manager of Stewardship & Education
Erin Hoagland
Land Projects Manager
Kristen Bernard
Office & Communications Manager
Elena Dyer
Financial Manager
Karen Karis
Program Associate
Kristen Anderson
Stewardship Associate
Karissa Stokdal
Stewardship & Land Planning Associate

ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Kathleen V. Augustine
Gayle Bonteceu
Theodora S. Budnik
Russell L. Carson
David C. Clapp
Farnham F. Collins
Evertett R. Cook, II
Wendy C. Curtis
Willem deVogel
Frank Martucci
Simon C. Roosevelt
Gilbert P. Schafer, III
Dorothy S. Whitmarsh
Peter Tcherepnine
Oakleigh B. Thorne
Donald G. Tober