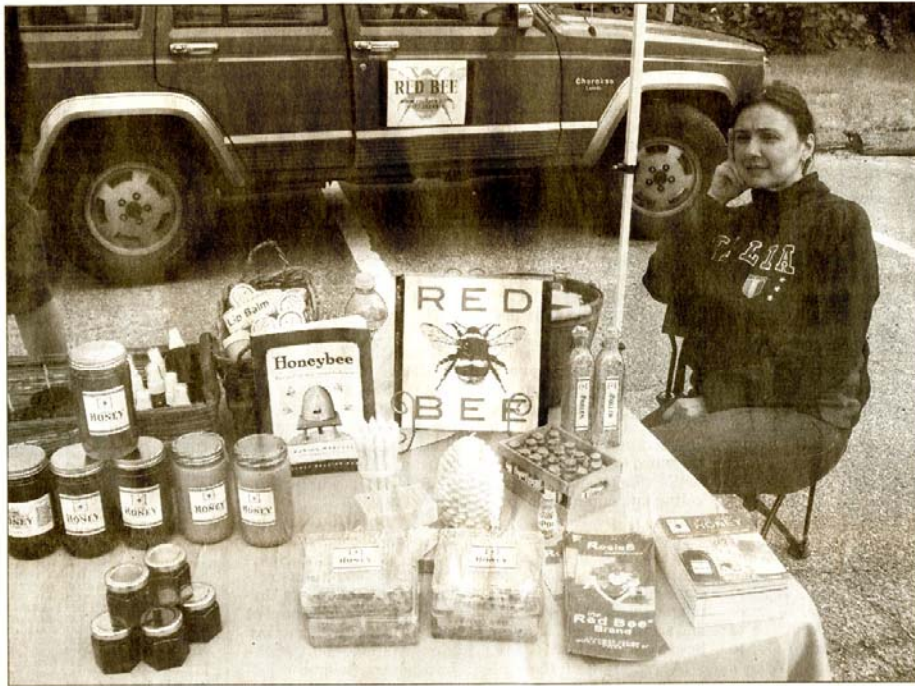


MARKET CONCERNS



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marina Marchese, owner of Red Bee Apiaries of Weston, mans her booth last year at the New Canaan Farmers' Market, where she began selling honey in 2000. The Friends of the New Canaan Library and First County Bank will celebrate the state's agricultural industry with a screening of 'The Farmer's Voice,' a documentary on the importance of the family farm by Shelton resident Beverly Corvino, at 6 p.m. on May 13 at the library, 151 Main St., New Canaan.

Film celebrates family farms

By Michael C. Juliano
STAFF WRITER

Calling all farmers.

The family farm is becoming only a memory in much of Connecticut, and the Friends of the New Canaan Library and First County Bank will celebrate the state's original entrepreneurs with a screening of "The Farmer's Voice," a documentary on the importance of the family farm by Shelton resident Beverly Corvino, on May 13 at the library, 151 Main St.

The event, which will start at 6 p.m. in the library's Adrian Lamb Room to kick off the opening of farmers' markets throughout the state, is free and includes food samples from area farms.

"I don't think we understand how much of a business farming is in Connecticut," said Alice Knapp, the New Canaan Library director, adding that agriculture is a \$2 billion industry in Connecticut that accounts for 50,000 jobs. "It's a big part of our economy

and we need to be aware of something that special."

The library held a similar event in 2008 to raise awareness for Connecticut's agricultural industry, Knapp said.

"Large-scale chemical agriculture is poisoning our soils and our water, and weakening our communities," said Corvino, a former schoolteacher, who has seen farms disappearing from Fairfield County. "We as a nation are close to losing farming as a way of life."

Vendors attending the event include Stamford-based Beldotti Bakeries, Plasko's Farm in Trumbull, Jones Tree Farm and Pumpkin Seed Hill Farm, both of Shelton, and Michele's Pies of Norwalk.

New Canaan will join about a dozen other Fairfield County towns holding farmers' markets this spring and summer by opening its weekly gathering May 15. The New Canaan Farmers' Market will be held from 10 a.m.

to 2 p.m. on Saturday in the parking lot of the old Center School at South Avenue and Maple and Main streets.

Consumers should buy from their local farmers' markets so they can savor foods that are fresh and nutritious, said Marina Marchese, owner of Red Bee Apiaries of Weston, who began selling honey at the New Canaan market in 2000.

"People need to start paying attention to what they're eating, reading labels and buying fresh fruits and vegetables," she said. "People are so caught up with spending time at their desks and computers and not understanding that what you eat affects your health."

Since starting her business at the New Canaan Farmers Market, Red Bee Apiaries has grown to selling a variety of bee-related products wholesale to restaurants, gourmet shops and specialty stores, said Marchese, who also has sold 10,000 copies of her

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Documentary highlights agriculture

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book, "The Accidental Beekeeper."

"It's become a full-time business in the last three or four years due to the green movement," she said.

Stamford-based First County Bank is sponsoring the event in recognition of all small businesses throughout Connecticut, said Richard Taber, chairman of the board and chief executive officer.

"As a community bank, we know the importance of supporting local businesses, whether they be farmers, car dealerships or bakeries," he said.