NOFA Notes

Quarterly newsletter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

Fall 2025



Member Meetings | Starting an Organic Farm | Farmworker Solidarity | Getting Local, Organic Food in Universities and Schools

Cover photo: The farm stand at Stone's Throw Farmstead in Shrewsbury, VT. Read more about Stone's Throw Farmstead on page 4.

NOFA-VT

Nourishing people, land, and justice through organic agriculture.

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NOFA Notes is a quarterly publication produced for NOFA-VT's members. To share feedback, thoughts, and ideas for future NOFA Notes articles, contact NOFA-VT's Marketing and Communications Director Lindsey Brand at lindsey@nofavt.org.

To find a full directory of NOFA-VT's staff and contact information, visit NOFAVT.ORG/STAFF.

VIEWPOINTS



Dearest community,

Years ago, I worked at the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA). I remember sitting in a workshop being taught by Richard Wiswall, longtime NOFA-VT leader and farmer at Cate Farm. Richard was teaching a crew of newer farmers his method of enterprise budgeting and how to make a plan and stick with the goal, no matter what winds come your way. I remember him saying, "Imagine you know your plan is to hike Mt Everest, and someone swings by and offers you tickets to the Super Bowl. It may seem hard to turn down, but if you want to make it to the top of the mountain, you need to keep hiking."

I've also been reading a memoir by the longtime civil rights leader John Lewis. At the start of his book, he shares a story about his family's struggle to secure land and a home in Alabama. After finally obtaining a small plot with a tiny cabin, he and his cousins were visiting with his aunt when a fierce windstorm struck. The storm was so strong that it began lifting a corner of the house off the ground. There were about fifteen children in his aunt's care, and she quickly led them to move together to the side of the house that was lifting. Though each child was small, together their weight held the house down. All evening as the storm raged, they moved as one around the house, keeping it rooted.

I've been thinking about where we are headed as a NOFA-VT community as we navigate our proverbial storms—the current drought, other extreme weather, increasing food insecurity, political turmoil, and economic stress. These times can feel overwhelming, but the path forward isn't actually complicated. We know the direction; we just need to move together.

Using Richard Wiswall's reminder, we need to stay focused on the future we're growing: a future in which all are fed, the land is cared for holistically, and farming is a viable livelihood. A future in which those who produce our food are valued, whether they are farm owners or workers, and our communities are strong and thriving, neighbors help each other out, and biodiversity thrives. A future in which our water and air are clean, and everyone's basic needs are met.

We need you—all of you—to get there. And we know you're already showing up, even through a very hot, dry, and smoky summer —thank you. We're excited to launch monthly member meetings (more info on the opposite page) and hope to see you soon.

Warmly,



Grace Oedel
Executive Director, NOFA-VT

Announcing:
Monthly Member Meetings!



"Let's create what's possible, together."

That's a call we've been hearing from NOFA-VT members—and it's why we're launching a new series of monthly NOFA-VT Meetings. These online gatherings are open to all members and to anyone curious about joining and working together toward our collective vision where Vermont is home to thriving farms and agriculturally-rooted communities that support the long-term wellbeing of the earth and all its people.

Our first meeting will be Tuesday, September 23, 6–7:15 pm, focused on the drought: what we're seeing and experiencing, where to find immediate support, and how we can organize around systemic solutions like the Farm Security Fund. From there, we'll meet every third Tuesday of the month at 6 pm.

These meetings are being shaped by NOFA-VT's Policy Steering Committee—a group of farmers and members who draw from our history of grassroots organizing to address today's challenges. They've proposed that fall meetings explore federal policy shifts, particularly those coming from the budget reconciliation bill. October will likely focus on the impacts to farmers' health care access and costs; November will look at changes to SNAP and the USDA. Each gathering will include something beautiful, space for connection, and ways to take collective action.

NOFA-VT's membership has a long history of coming together in the face of challenges and creating solutions that have a national impact. Fifty years ago, when federal policy demanded farms "get big or get out," Vermont farmers came together to chart a different path—laying the foundation for the thriving organic movement we know today. That same spirit of possibility is alive in our membership now.

As Kara Fitzbeauchamp of Evening Song Farm, a Policy Steering Committee member, puts it: "Farmers are used to squinting at something that seems impossible, and finding what is possible, making it work. We need each other in that, now more than ever. NOFA-VT has a proven track record of being part of real solutions."

We have a lot at stake right now: the climate crisis, land consolidation, and social and political divides that weaken our community connections. But NOFA-VT members are committed to creating opportunities within the chaos.

We're hopeful and curious about what we'll learn from and alongside each other, and what we can make possible, together. If you're interested in engaging more with NOFA-VT—and especially our work to organize and build people power—come join in! ◊

Upcoming Member Meetings:

Tues., September 23
6-7:15 pm
Virtual

Tues., October 21
6-7:15 pm
Virtual

Tues., November 18
6-7:15 pm
Virtual

And continuing onward on the third Tuesday of each month!

Visit **NOFAVT.ORG/MONTHLYMEMBERMEETINGS** to see agendas and register.



Stone's Throw Farmstead: Nourishing the Land and Community

By Zea Luce, NOFA-VT Organic Practices Specialist

"It's really fun to get to engage with interested and passionate farmers at an earlier stage in their farming career," says Ryan Fitzbeauchamp of Evening Song Farm. Fitzbeauchamp is serving as a yearlong mentor to Jess Purks and Connor Self through NOFA-VT's Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP). Together, they've explored everything from soil fertility and crop planning to team dynamics and marketing—practical building blocks for running a successful, diversified organic farm. Starting a farm business from scratch is no small endeavor. There are skills to develop, infrastructure to fund and build, markets to grow, systems to establish, and priorities to balance. Luckily, Vermont is a fertile place for farm dreams to take root.

Connor and Jess own and operate Stone's Throw Farmstead in Shrewsbury, where they grow vegetables and flowers, and raise a small flock of sheep. They sell through their farm stand, the Rutland and Ludlow farmers markets, the ACORN food hub, and a few local stores. Now in their third season, the couple moved to Vermont from Maryland after a decade of farming across the country and abroad. They chose Vermont for its vibrant food culture and supportive community, and have been intentional about building a farm family that includes neighbors, fellow farmers, hikers, sheep, alpacas, soil microbes, and more.

On an early summer day, I visited Jess and Connor on their farm to talk about their farming philosophy, their peer-to-peer learning experiences, and the lessons they're carrying forward.

Q: Tell us a bit about your farm and philosophy.

A: Our farm is small on purpose—a stone's throw! We aim to grow food in ways that are

good for the planet, our community, and the future of the land. We center the earth first, and in practice, that means a lot of things, like increasing biodiversity with intentional wild spaces, interplantings, rotating crops, and hedgerows. It also means using mulches, compost, living roots, low tillage, cover crops, and our sheep to restore soil health and fertility to the land, which was previously an old hay farm.

We minimize our fossil fuel use by being human-powered and are working toward relying on renewable energy for our farm by 2027. We are invested in the whole ecology of our farm, which includes insects and bees. Flowers are a big piece of this for us—beautiful, vital for pollinators, and even part of our organic certification, which helps us stand out. Each season, we have evolved, fine-tuned our crops and markets, and taken on new projects as we grow.

Q: You have embraced the resources that NOFA-VT offers to help new farms succeed. Tell us what that has looked like from your perspective.

A: NOFA-VT's programs have been a lifeline in these early years, providing opportunities for skill-building, mentorships, and funding. We have found these easy to access…a Google Form, and I'm there!

We received the June 2025 Vermont Family Farmer of the Month award, which gave us $12,000 to remodel our barn into a farm stand with expanded cold storage (our third time applying—we're glad we kept at it!). We're also grateful to have received Resilience and Adaptation Grants for flood mitigation and water-related projects on our farm, including a fertigation system and UV filter.

In addition to these grants, we participated in NOFA-VT's Journey Farmer program, which included mentorship. Our participation was tremendously helpful, and we took full advantage of the online and in-person skill-building sessions and farm visits. We've also been certified organic through VOF since 2023 and are now enrolled in TOPP organic mentorship to continue our learning and growth. When we're ready, the Farm Viability program will be next!

Q: Have you had any "aha" moments while participating in any of these programs—something that really shifted your thinking or farm trajectory?

A: We've been really grateful to be connected with Ryan and Kara at Evening Song Farm. They've helped us navigate crucial decision-making and center our core values. Additionally, we found the Journey Farmer program valuable as a space to talk shop with other farmers, covering day-to-day realities and details. The cohort model was great because the participating farmers were all at a similar level of experience, and it felt like group therapy! Seeing other farms during the field trips helped temper some of our desire for too much diversity in what we produce.

A sort of "aha" moment for us was that our farm doesn't need to be everything for everyone. Farmers who model success are the ones who find their niche and play to their strengths, while honoring the beliefs and values that brought them to farming in the first place. The ability to build relationships and gain advice from peer growers rekindled our own spirit and is keeping us on track. For example, we now grow to the climate here, which can be a little cooler, and we focus on sugar snap peas, herbs, and amazing greens. Customers love how clean, tasty, and long-lasting our greens are!

Q: How is your mentorship with Evening Song Farm structured? How have you connected with your mentors, and what do you focus on during your time together?

A: We find Ryan and Kara inspiring, as they lead first and foremost with their environmental values, which closely align with our own. They are generous with their time and knowledge, and have been in the community for ten years, so they have much to share. Our relationship with Ryan began during the Journey Farmer program and has continued for another year, thanks to the TOPP mentorship. We set goals at the beginning and are steadily working on them together. Our participation is free, and Ryan is compensated for his time. We have a regular monthly in-person meeting and most often plan an agenda, though sometimes we intentionally keep it casual to see what comes up organically. It's always productive, and the in-person aspect allows us to see their methods first-hand, compare crops, and experience the flow of their systems. We always glean something valuable from our time together. Our farm is in a phase of expansion, both for production and our team, and Ryan's guidance has been vital. We enjoyed a winter deep dive on labor, team dynamics, and strategies to build capacity as we grow our business. We definitely recommend peer-to-peer mentorship.

Q: What other factors have contributed to your success?

A: In addition to NOFA-VT's support, we attribute our success to the incredibly supportive local community. It was clear to us through the vibrancy of Vermont's farmers markets, co-ops, food hubs, and farmer support organizations that the Vermont community was eager to celebrate and support local food and farming endeavors. We immediately felt welcomed and chose this property, in part, for its proximity to the Appalachian Trail, recognizing an opportunity to support a different community of



The Stone's Throw Farmstead sheep flock, grazing happily.

eaters—hungry through hikers, who have been a significant part of our farm stand's viability.

We were fortunate to gain our footing in our first year at what we consider one of the state's best farmers markets—the Vermont Farmers Market in Rutland—which helped us build a customer base eager for certified organic products while strengthening our connections with fellow producers in the community. We now find ourselves surrounded by other growers willing to share and support one another.

In our first three years, we were recipients of NOFA-VT's Resilience Grants, a Vermont Council on Rural Development Climate Catalysts award, and financial support through NRCS, enabling us to make timely investments in critical infrastructure projects. These included a dignified wash pack room, high tunnels, a rocket stove for our greenhouse (no propane here!), water pumps, and filters. We also both work part-time off-farm—Jess at the ACORN Food Hub and Connor at Pierce's Store—which keeps us financially balanced and connected to the community.

Q: Why have you chosen to pursue organic certification, and can you share your reflections on the process?

A: We've farmed organically for over ten years on other farms, so certification felt like a natural step. Farming this way is our worldview; we see it as a solution to some of our environmental concerns, and being certified is a key way we can demonstrate this commitment to our customers. The record keeping makes us better farmers, though, initially, we admittedly kept more information than VOF requires. With Ryan's help, we're streamlining our over-engineered records. While the certification fee can feel burdensome, we believe in the movement and want to lift up the organic label. We're also Real Organic Certified (an add-on label), which helps highlight the ways in which we go beyond USDA standards.

As Connor and Jess have discovered, NOFA-VT offers a wide variety of opportunities for Vermont growers and strives to make them accessible and relevant to the diverse array of folks stewarding the land. Whether you're working toward business, ecological, or quality-of-life goals, our offerings are free, low-cost, or come with funding to help you complete projects.



Jess and Connor with their flourishing pea crop.

- One-on-one assistance for business planning, organic practices, climate adaptation planning, marketing, and organic certification.
- Opportunities to work with an organic mentor for a year through the Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP)—sign up this fall!
- Funding through the Vermont Family Farmer of the Month program, with applications accepted on a quarterly basis—the next round is open in January. All farmers are encouraged to apply!
- Funding through our annual Resilience Grant applications, which open in December, and offer grant awards in the spring.
- Peer support and shared learning through the Journey Farmer program, for which applications open in late winter.

Reach out to the NOFA-VT office to engage with our team, or fill out our quick intake form and we'll connect you with the appropriate staff person. ◊

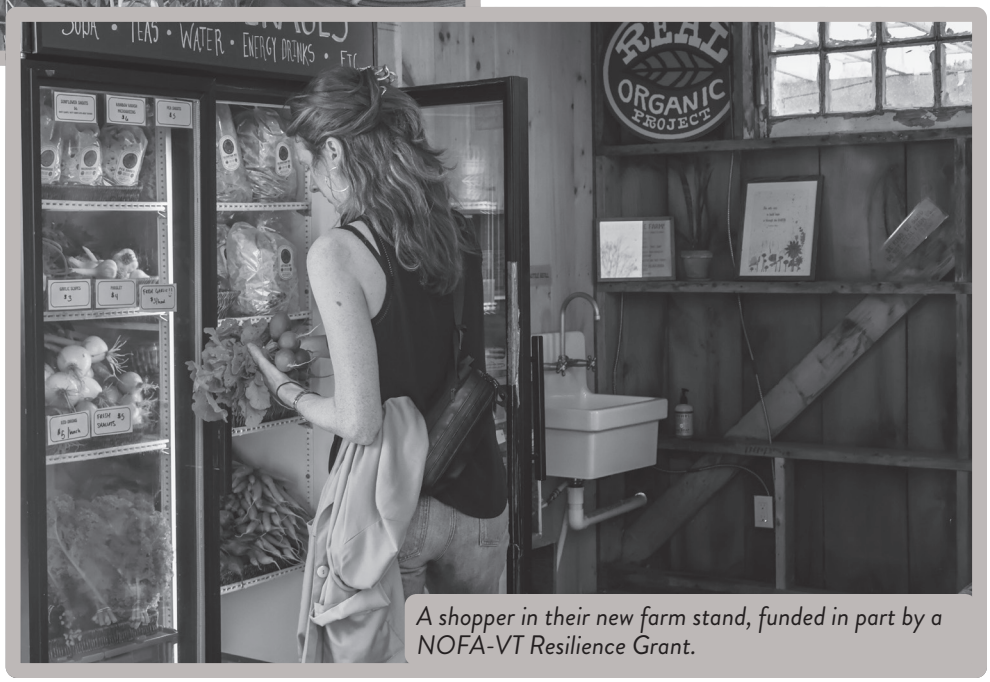
intake form

Funding for organic transition services provided by:

NORTHEAST/ MID-ATLANTIC TRANSITION TO ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program

USDA ORGANIC



A shopper in their new farm stand, funded in part by a NOFA-VT Resilience Grant.

Good for the Gut

Bringing Local Organic Black Beans to Vermont Institutions

By Lauren Griswold, NOFA-VT member and former Wholesale Markets Program Director

In 2022, NOFA-VT was awarded a Henry P. Kendall Foundation New England Food Prize for a collaborative project with the University of Vermont, Sodexo Vermont First, University of Vermont Medical Center, and Vermont Bean Crafters. The project was designed to leverage institutional purchasing relationships to facilitate Vermont's dry bean supply chain, and perhaps most importantly, re-establish the viability of Vermont dry bean production in the process.

Project team member Joe Bossen, founder and owner of Vermont Bean Crafters and farmer at Cloud Water Farm, has spent decades working to localize the production and market for staples like legumes and grains here in the Northeast. Over a century of corporate consolidation and farm policies favorable to large-scale agribusiness in the Mid- and Mountain-West have largely dismantled the supply chain infrastructure that once supported these crops in Vermont, making them expensive to grow and often overlooked as commercial ventures. Yet, localizing these crops remains essential for our vibrant agricultural economy, food security, and resilient working landscape.

With his deep expertise in northeastern dry bean production and markets, Bossen recognized that post-harvest processing equipment was a critical fulcrum for making Vermont bean production viable. Thanks to the New England Food Vision Prize investment, Vermont Bean Crafters purchased over $140,000 of key equipment, including an optical sorter, a mobile batch dryer, pest-proof containers for inventory management, and a no-till planter, radically improving the financial viability of dry bean production in the state.

Farmers have responded with enthusiasm. Over the course of our two-year project, both vegetable and dairy farmers diversified their production to include dry beans. To support first-time growers, Vision Prize funding secured two of the state's most highly regarded agronomists, who provided one-on-one technical assistance to participating pilot growers. Interest is expected to continue growing, especially with a supportive outlet like Vermont Bean Crafters, which delivers Vermont-grown beans to large institutional and retail markets across the state and region. Project partners at Sodexo's Vermont First program and the University of Vermont's Dining Services have been instrumental, annually committing to consistently feature Vermont Bean Crafters products and creating a secure market for this emerging supply of Vermont organic beans. The project focused on introducing a pre-cooked and frozen Vermont organic black bean burger, made possible by the equipment purchases outlined above. Without that equipment, there would have been insufficient Vermont organic dry bean supply for a product line at this scale. Prior to this investment, Vermont Bean Crafters' pre-cooked and frozen product line relied primarily on New York-grown beans. With local supply now in place along with regular partner meetings, coordination, and promotion, UVM's purchasing of the Vermont-specific product rose nearly 300% from 2022 to 2023, followed by an additional 24% growth in sales in 2024. Across all buyers, Vermont Bean Crafters saw a 200% growth in sales from 2022 to 2023 for this product. These figures demonstrate strong market demand for a local, organic, plant-based protein that meets the time-saving needs of a labor-hungry food service industry.

As one UVM Dining chef noted, "The Vermont Bean Crafters pre-cooked black beans are a chef's best friend. They are local, organic, and so easy to use. Just let them thaw and incorporate them into any dish. No need to fight with and drain #10 cans!"

Building on this success, NOFA-VT worked with Vermont Bean Crafters to expand into other institutional sectors too, starting with K-12 schools. To address the challenge of ensuring a price point that would work for all parties, we worked with Harley Sterling, the School Nutrition Director of Windham Northeast Supervisory Union—and leader of the state's School Food Authority with the highest percentage of local food purchasing—to analyze the numbers. He showed that positioning the local bean burger as an affordable center-of-plate protein, rather than an expensive side, would be the most effective strategy. We learned from Sterling that Vermont school nutrition directors typically budget $0.50–$0.75 per protein serving, and the Vermont Bean Crafters burger, at $0.55 per serving and already cooked, fits perfectly within that range. Using this strategy, we promoted the burger as a budget-friendly protein that supports plant-based and culturally relevant menu planning.

After decades of work localizing our state's and region's staples, Joe Bossen's longtime vision is coming to fruition: local, organic beans are in demand at a scale previously thought inconceivable. Over this award's two-year performance period, dry bean production has become a viable option for a growing number of Vermont farms, the market is expanding, and last but certainly not least, local food access is expanding for eaters at some of the state's largest public institutions. We are deeply grateful to the Henry P. Kendall Foundation for recognizing the potential of this work and all the farmers and partners making it possible. ◊



Solidarity With Migrant Farmworkers

By Mollie Griffin, NOFA-VT member and farmer at Glinnis Hill Farm in Northfield, and Jessica Hays-Lucas, NOFA-VT Policy Organizer

While attending a May Day Migrant Justice picket and march at Hannaford Supermarket in Williston, NOFA-VT staffers recognized farmer Mollie Griffin of Glinnis Hill Farm carrying a "Farmers for Farmworkers" sign. Curious to learn more about what brought her to the action, we asked Mollie to share her reflections and later sat down with her on a sunny afternoon in August to discuss more. What follows is what Mollie shared in writing, followed by excerpts from our conversation.

I wholeheartedly believe that small farms are critical in so many ways, for the health of people, land, communities, and local economies. But working on—and later owning—a small farm has made me realize just how small our operations are. While our fifty CSA shares and farmers market sales are important, they are a drop in the bucket when it comes to feeding our country. Even with thriving small farms, our food system remains reliant on large-scale farms and the migrant farmworkers who keep them running.

Owning my farm has also given me perspective on labor. I work hard, but I know I have it easier than the workforce that powers most farms across the country. I have come to appreciate that I can't even imagine how hard it must be to work 12+ hour shifts, 7 days a week, for someone who may not even treat you with dignity.

So last winter, when I felt overwhelmed by the news, I decided that the antidote to "flooding the zone" is to choose a few causes I believe in and commit to fighting for them. For me, that meant standing in solidarity with migrant farmworkers and working for food access. I began getting involved where I could with Migrant Justice, and feel really inspired by the tangible work they are doing. My husband and I take turns picking up extra work on the farm so the other can attend a rally. Even on the days when I stay behind so that he can go, I feel like I'm showing up in a small way to support the causes I care about.

The day this picture was taken, I had gone to Williston to support the Migrant Justice picket line for Milk with Dignity, not knowing that it was part of a bigger protest. I was pleasantly surprised to find such a big crowd and inspired by the energy and assortment of causes each person was there to represent. As we continue moving through the season, I feel energized by opportunities to take part in the movement for farmworker rights, whether by participating in the smallest of ways or shuffling our harvest schedule to accommodate our attendance at a rally.



Mollie Glinnis at the May Day picket and march organized by Migrant Justice.

Jessica: Have you done more with Migrant Justice since the May Day picket and march?

Yes, we've been attending immigration hearings at ICE offices. It feels powerful to show up in support of someone who needs it. One of the things we value is being able to decide together what matters to us—and, because we work for ourselves and don't employ anyone else, we can shift our schedules to be in St. Albans at 10 a.m. in the middle of the week. We know not everyone has that flexibility, which is why we make it a priority.

Jessica: Can you say more about why it's important for you to prioritize farmworker justice?

For me, it really comes down to empathy. As a farmer, I understand how much labor goes into this work, and it makes it easier to

relate to farmworkers. I can't imagine doing that same labor under the difficult conditions many migrant workers face. I'm always struck with admiration when I see videos of workers on large-scale farms—their skill and endurance are incredible.

Jessica: You also prioritize food access and have a sliding scale CSA. Can you tell us about that?

We offer a sliding scale CSA because we didn't want to create a business that only wealthier people could access. Right now, some of our CSA members are at risk of losing SNAP, and one has already lost benefits this year because she doesn't have a green card. It was intense to realize how much more limited her options are for feeding her family, but we know they'll still have our vegetables. We've also started experimenting with growing more calorie-dense foods, like beans and grains, to better support food access. I'm glad we can offer what we do, though I recognize that our veggies and beans are still a long way from replacing SNAP.

Jess: Do you ever run into other farmers or customers at the Migrant Justice events you're able to participate in?

Yes, we often see our customers at Migrant Justice events, which is always wonderful. Sometimes people will stop by our booth at the market and say, 'Hey, didn't I see you at the Migrant Justice rally?' It's great to make those connections in different spaces.

We appreciate NOFA-VT Members Mollie and Gus of Glinnis Hill Farm for all the goodness they bring to farming and their community, and for showing up as farmers for farmworkers. Migrant Justice is continuing to organize support for farmworkers and Vermont's immigrant communities. If you'd like to learn more or get involved with Migrant Justice, visit ***MIGRANTJUSTICE.NET*** *to sign up for their email list and learn more about upcoming events, trainings, and ways you can help. ◊*

NOFA-VT | Advocacy

NOFA-VT Members: You Are Inspirational!

As a membership-based organization, we know that we all go farther when we go together, which is why we tackle national policy issues with other farming organizations across the country as part of the National Family Farmer Coalition (NFFC). Every year at NFFC's summer board meeting, they vote to honor member organizations in different categories. This summer, NOFA was awarded the top prize: the golden trowel for being the "most inspirational!"

As members of NOFA-VT, by extension, you have been awarded the golden trowel as well. So to all of us: huzzah! And together, onward! ◊



Megan Eisenvos from Dakota Rural Action presents the Golden Trowel award to Sarah Gilliatt from NOFA-NH, Maddie Kempner from NOFA-VT, and Wes Gillingham from NOFA-NY.

Building a Better Supply Chain for Schools

By Kayla Strom, NOFA-VT Farm to Institution Program Director

Vermont has long been a national leader in farm to school. For more than two decades, our state has connected farms, classrooms, and cafeterias to strengthen schools, communities, and food systems. At the heart of this work is a simple vision: every child deserves fresh, healthy, locally-grown meals at school each day. And when the ingredients in those meals come from nearby farms and food businesses, the benefits ripple outward, supporting farmers, food workers, and entire communities.

The secret to Vermont's farm to school success has always been collaboration. No single farmer, school, or organization can transform a food system on their own, but together, we've built one of the strongest networks in the country. That same spirit of partnership is now fueling a bold new project: Bridging the Gap— Supply Chain Transformation for Vermont School Meals.

This project, led by NOFA-VT with partners from across the Vermont Farm to School & Early Childhood Network, aims to remove barriers that prevent schools from buying more local food. It focuses on three key areas: supply, distribution, and demand.

On the supply side, the project is working to ensure schools have local options for the foods they rely on most. Breads, rolls, and minimally processed vegetables are staples on school menus, but they haven't always been available locally in ways that fit school kitchens' needs. Vermont bakeries are stepping up to create Child Nutrition Program-creditable breads and rolls using Vermont grains. Meanwhile, programs like the Center for an Agricultural Economy's Just Cut, Salvation Farms' Processing Program, and the Vermont Farmers Food Center's Produce Packing Center are scaling up to provide ready-to-use Vermont-grown vegetables. For time-stretched school nutrition staff, this means more local food on plates without adding extra hours in the kitchen.

On the distribution side, the project strengthens Vermont's network of food hubs: Food Connects, the Center for an Agricultural Economy, Green Mountain Farm Direct, ACORN, and the Vermont Farmers Food Center. These hubs already play a vital role in getting local food to schools, but demand has outpaced their capacity. With more support for K-12 sales, customer service, and inter-hub coordination, the hubs can support schools to have a smoother path to buying local, and farmers will gain more reliable markets.





Thristan Coke bakes bread with local, organic grains at the Westminster Center School. Photos by Kimberly Kaufman.

On the demand side, the project invests directly in school nutrition programs. NOFA-VT and Shelburne Farms will work together through our statewide Vermont FEED partnership to offer technical assistance, peer-to-peer learning, and communications support to help food service directors champion local purchasing and share successful strategies with their peers.

Together, these three pieces—supply, distribution, and demand—are designed to work like gears in a wheel, supporting the need to get more local food into school meals across Vermont. The impact reaches far beyond lunch trays: farmers gain reliable new markets, food hubs expand their reach and efficiency, students enjoy fresher, tastier food while learning where it comes from, and whole communities become more resilient and connected.

This is farm to school in action: problem-solving together, building on each other's strengths, and creating something bigger than any of us could do alone. Every farmer who sells to a school, every baker who tests a new product, every food service director who champions local menus, and every partner organization that shows up to collaborate is part of this story.

And it's a story that keeps growing, one meal, one relationship, and one idea at a time. ◊

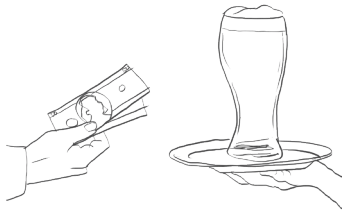
Share the Harvest

supporting NOFA-VT's Farm Share program

Share the Harvest this October with your fellow Vermonters! This month-long, community-driven fundraiser offers an opportunity to support NOFA-VT's Farm Share program—simply by eating, drinking, and shopping at local participating restaurants, breweries, and businesses!

For 31 years, our community has come together to make sliding-scale CSA shares more accessible to low-income community members while ensuring farmers receive full payment for their crops. By dining and shopping at participating restaurants, co-ops, breweries, and stores, you support local farms, increase food security for low-income Vermonters, and support restaurants and other food-based businesses in your community—many of whom have been hit hard by extreme weather and economic challenges in the past few years. A win-win-win all October long!

Visit **NOFAVT.ORG/SHARETHEHARVEST** to find participating businesses near you (and even a few you can order from online!).



1. During the month of October, eat out or shop at generous participating businesses.



2. Participating businesses donate $ to NOFA-VT's Farm Share Program.



3. Farmers offer CSA shares at a subsidized cost to low-income Vermonters who then receive delicious, healthy food all season long!

Donate Directly to Farm Share

If you want to ensure that low-income Vermonters are able to access healthy, local food, but can't participate in Share the Harvest this year, there are still ways to show your support! We accept donations to support our Farm Share Program year-round. The program has grown from serving a dozen individual families and three farms in 1995 to serving more than 1,300 Vermonters through 58 farms in the past year. Food insecurity throughout the state remains high, and while we have been operating our food access programs for decades, demand for these programs has quadrupled since 2020.

NOFA-VT believes that all Vermonters should be able to eat local, organic food, regardless of their income level, while also ensuring farmers receive a fair wage for their hard work. Donate online at **NOFAVT.ORG/DONATE**, or mail checks made out to NOFA-VT to PO Box 697, Richmond, VT 05477. Please put "Farm Share" in the memo line. ◊

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US SHARE THE HARVEST!

Vermont Family Farmer of the Month

By Kevin Haggerty, NOFA-VT Climate Resilience Specialist

The Vermont Family Farmer of the Month Award continues to recognize outstanding farms across the state for their commitment to sustainable agriculture and innovative projects. Administered by NOFA-VT in collaboration with VHCB Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program, Shelburne Farms, and the Vermont Grass Farmers Association, this award highlights Vermont farms that contribute to a resilient agricultural landscape and demonstrate environmental stewardship. We are honored to introduce the latest awards:



June Farm, Burlington - May, 2025

Braden Lalancette and Brooke Giard were first drawn to agriculture by the vibrant, welcoming communities they found while working summer farm jobs. Inspired by those experiences, they founded June Farm in 2020 with a vision of creating their own farm community—one where people feel seen, heard, valued, and, at the end of the day, like family. Now in their sixth season, Brooke and Braden produce cut flowers on six acres of tillable land and in multiple greenhouses.

After enduring two consecutive years of July floods, Brooke and Braden made the hard decision to move much of their field production to leased land outside of the Intervale's floodplain. To support this transition, June Farm was awarded $12,000 to make a down payment on a tractor to use at the new farm site. This investment will allow June Farm to expand production to serve their established markets without reinventing their systems, regain stability after multiple challenging seasons, and allow them to refocus on cultivating a beautiful community one flower at a time.



Stone's Throw Farmstead, Shrewsbury - June, 2025

Seeking an alternative food system that could address the social and ecological challenges of conventional agriculture, Jessica Purks and Connor Self spent a decade working and learning on organic farms. Their journey ultimately brought them to Vermont, where in the summer of 2022, they founded Stone's Throw Farmstead. Now, Jessica and Connor produce certified organic vegetables and cut flowers on six acres, raise a small flock of sheep for meat and fiber, and utilize the manure for vital farm fertility. Committed to strengthening their community in southwestern Vermont, they sell their produce to neighbors through their farm stand, flower CSA, the Rutland farmers market, and the Vermont Farmers Food Center's Farmacy program.

Stone's Throw Farmstead was awarded $12,000 to remodel a portion of their barn into a larger, solar-powered farm stand with expanded cold storage. Relocating their farm stand will improve roadside visibility, expand display space, and create a more accessible, enjoyable experience for customers. It will also allow Jessica and Connor to extend on-farm sales into the winter. With this new space, Jessica and Conner are excited to welcome more visitors, deepen community connections, and inspire the next generation of environmentally minded farmers.



Dawn Land Farm, Barre - July, 2025

Dawn Land Farm was founded in 2023 by Tanama Varas and Amber Canty, whose farming careers have been driven by a commitment to growing healthy, culturally appropriate food for marginalized communities. Their vision is to create a food system rooted in justice, ecological harmony, and hope for future generations. Now entering their third growing season, Amber and Tanama produce a wide variety of vegetables, cut flowers, and small fruits, which they market through a sliding-scale CSA in Barre and wholesale accounts at local wellness stores and senior centers.

Dawn Land Farm was awarded $12,000 to purchase a stone burier to be used as their primary form of tillage. This investment will reduce repetitive tractor work to a single efficient pass, create ideal seedbeds, and strengthen the farm's long-term ecological and financial viability. By minimizing soil disturbance, preserving microbial communities, reducing erosion, and better incorporating cover crops and organic matter, the stone burier will help Amber and Tanama build healthier soils and greater resilience for the seasons ahead. ◊

Applications are available to any small or medium-sized farm in Vermont. The next round of applications will open in December. To learn more, visit VERMONTFAMILYFARMERAWARD.ORG.

Create a Lasting Legacy

"I have been a member of NOFA-VT for so many years that I can't remember when I joined. Over the decades of attending NOFA-VT workshops and conferences, I have been gifted with incredible amounts of knowledge that I use every day in my gardening business. As a way of returning the favor I have included NOFA-VT in my will."

- Luise Graf, longtime NOFA-VT member and owner of Mother Nature Garden Service in Bradford, VT



For over 50 years, NOFA-VT has nurtured a more just, equitable, resilient food system. Just as our farmers plant riparian buffers today to protect the land from future climate disasters, your planned gift can help safeguard the future of Vermont's farms and communities. By including NOFA-VT in your will, trust, or other financial plans, you become a steward of resilient farms, thriving communities, and a food system that feeds us all—today and tomorrow.

To learn more about making a planned gift to NOFA-VT, reach out to Erin Buckwalter at erin@nofavt.org or (802) 419-0043.

Thank You for Supporting Organic Agriculture and a Strong Food System!

A warm welcome to the following new NOFA-VT members who joined this summer:

Abbey Schoenfeld, East Dummerston, VT
Abby Richardson, Westminster, VT
Abdelmenem Musa Adam, Rutland, VT
Adam Mitchell, Worcester, VT
Adrien Bagatelle, Dummerston, VT
Aislinn Martinez, Burllington, VT
Alex Thomas, Burlington, VT
Alexandra Hansen, East Montpelier, VT
Alexandra O'Brien, Essex Junction, VT
Alexandra Olmstead, Bridgewater Corners, VT
Ali & Djila Ahmad, Rutland, VT
Alyssa Glemb, Essex Junction, VT
Alyssa Sabetto, Putney, VT
Amanda McGann, Huntington, VT
Amber Bushey, Colchester, VT
Amber Webster, Dummerston, VT
Amina Sahi, Essex Jct, VT
Amy Enochs, White River Junction, VT
Amy Holibaugh, Waterbury, VT
Amy Hunter, Warren, VT
Amy Kosakowski, Fairlee, VT
Amy Main, Perkinsville, VT
Amy Malinowski, Burlington, VT
Amy Vickers, Windsor, VT
Anastsia Melnichenko, Groton, VT
Andrea Brassard, Montpelier, VT
Andrea Capron & John Foster, Westminster West, VT
Andrea Lemnah, Starksboro, VT
Angela Pollock, Hinesburg, VT
Ann Turkle, Waterbury, VT
Anna Belongia, South Burlington, VT
AnneTerese O'Gwin, Montpelier, VT
Annie Hanaway, Norwich, VT
Anthony Girard, Wilmington, VT
Ashley Roark, Burlington, VT
Ashley Torres, Bolton, VT
Atalie Wells, Underhill, VT
Audrey Garfield, Brattleboro, VT
Ava Howard, Brattleboro, VT
Avery Lavoie, Huntington, VT
Aziza Fadoul Tom, Rutland, VT
Azza Ali, Rutland, VT
Back Country Coffee Vermont, Montgomery Ctr, VT
Bailey Sheets, Hyde Park, VT
Barbara Krawczyk, Brattleboro, VT
Beatrice Bernard, Rutland, VT
Bending Birch Homestead
Benjamin Stolper, Thetford Center, VT
Beth Baras, Norwich, VT
Betsy Unger, Montpelier, VT
Blair Butterfield, White River Junction, VT
Bobbi Jaquish, Milton, VT
Bonnie & David Szarkowski, Richmond, VT
Brandy Boden, Stowe, VT
Brandy Connolly, Windsor, VT
Briannah Bellot, Burlington, VT
Brianne Primmer, Newbury, VT
Bridget Klikunas, Hyde Park, VT
Bridget Schirripa, Panton, VT
Brooklynne Sundseth, Burlington, VT
Caitlin Adair, Putney, VT

Cara A Rauh, Putney, VT
Carla Regnault & Maria Del MarAcosta, Rutland, VT
Caroline DeJong, Jericho, VT
Carrie Clifford, Essex Junction, VT
Carroll Metayer, Hyde Park, VT
Casie Cohn, Braintree, VT
Cassandra Donegan, Bristol, VT
Catherine Hans, Hinesburg, VT
Catherine Lumenello, Townshend, VT
Cecilia Field, Island Pond, VT
Chelsea Evans, Montpelier, VT
Cheryl Sittle, North Hero, VT
Cheyenne Bogardus, Renesmee Lampel, Amoriah Mendoza, & Logen Mendoza, Waterville, VT
Chloe Hotaling, Charlotte, VT
Chris Richardson, White River Junction, VT
Christa Bevan, Essex Junction, VT
Christian arnell, Bakersfield, VT
Christina Hollenbeck, Putney, VT
Christine Holderness, Brattleboro, VT
Christine Mix, Weston, VT
Christine Wilder, Shelburne, VT
Christopher Dupee, Barre, VT
Cindy Coble, Brattleboro, VT
Cindy LaSella, Bennington, VT
Cindy Nicodemus, White River Junction, VT
Clara Carroll, Lincoln, VT
Clarissa Romano, Rutland, VT
Claudia Woodward, Enosburg Falls, VT
Colleen Atkinson, Jeffersonville, VT
Colleen Campbell, Cambridge, VT
Compagna's Dairy, Whiting, VT
Courtney Rae Forti, Jeffersonville, VT
Cristina Shayonye, Brattleboro, VT
Cynthia Hughes, Westminster West, VT
Dalimar Rojas de Obispo, Rutland, VT
Danielle Lafont, West Glover, VT
Danielle Noll
Dave Newton, Covington, KY
David & Linda Blocker, Stoughton, MA
David Longsmith, Brattleboro, VT
Dawn Richardson, Brattleboro, VT
Deborah Farnham, Bristol, VT
Deborah Matthews, Rochester, VT
Debra & Gary Welker, Franklin, VT
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Dennis Richardson, Perkinsville, VT
Desiree Plumley, Brattleboro, VT
Devon Abbey, Hartland, VT
Dianne Clouet
Don Peabody, Chittenden, VT
Donna Main, Bennington, VT
Drew Stuckey, Rutland, VT
Earthback Coffee Roasters, South Burlington, VT
Edward Murphy II, Montpelier, VT
EJ Jones, Brattleboro, VT
Eleanor Cautela-Clouet, Brattleboro, VT
Eli Coughlin-Galbraith, Brattleboro, VT
Elisabeth Hollinger, Saint Albans City, VT
Elisabeth Ortiz, Stowe, VT
Elise Nickerson, St Johnsbury, VT
Eliza Chittenden, Stowe, VT
Eliza Desautels, Addison, VT
Elizabeth Beardslee, Brattleboro, VT
Ellen Stone, Danville, VT
Emilia Estrada, Montpelier, VT
Emily Murphy, Brattleboro, VT
Emily Tatro, Brattleboro, VT
Emily Tompkins, Jericho, VT
Emma Percy, Norwich, VT
Erica Albright, Arlington, VT
Erica Breen, Brattleboro, VT
Erica Facteau, St Albans, VT
Ericka Weik, Hinesburg, VT
Erin Teodosio, North Ferrisburgh, VT
Ernest Levesque, Bolton Valley, VT
Esperanza Ash, Waterbury, VT
Esther Brown, Brattleboro, VT
Eudoxic Christelle & Mercedes Roja, Rutland, VT
Fairview Farm of East Dover, LLC, East Dover, VT
Farnham Farm Maple Sugaring
Farnham Livestock, Williamstown, VT
Felipe Sevilla, Rutland, VT
Food Connects, Brattleboro, VT
Forest Ravi, Putney, VT
Fozah & Jasem Aloka, Rutland, VT
Gary Glasman, Waterbury, VT
Gayle Patria DiMasi, Winooski, VT
Gina Robinson, Barre, VT
Ginette Turgeon, Wallingford, VT
Gioia Cabri, South Strafford, VT
Glo Webel, Johnson, VT
Grace Thorssin, Weston, VT
Green Mountain Animal, LLC
Greta Hardy-Mittell
Gretchen Hill, Ludlow, VT
Hamidullah Khiran, Montpelier, VT
Hannah Adamah, Hardwick, VT
Hannah Anderson, Belmont, VT
Hannah Bristol, Bellows Falls, VT
Hayley Hornus, Williston, VT
Heather Buckner, Tunbridge, VT
Heather Gaura, Ira, VT
Heather Knoll, Belmont, VT
Heidelise Corriveau, Jericho, VT
Heidi Austin, Northfield, VT
Heidi Cadoret, West Hartford, VT
Helen Lindsey, Saint Albans, VT
Hidden Springs Maple LLC, Putney, VT
High Ridge Meadows Farm, East Randolph, VT
Hypolete Laomi & Adi Laobela, Rutland, VT
Ida Robertshaw, Jamaica, VT
Iqbal Ahmadzai, Dummerston, VT
Isabel Rose, Brattleboro, VT
Isabella Poloes, Essex Junction, VT
Izaak Ruel, Rollinsford, NH
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Janine Ndagijimana, Burlington, VT
Janis Hall, Brattleboro, VT
Jean Huston, Stowe, VT
Jean Santa Maria, Hyde Park, VT
Jean-Gabriel Leclaire, Brattleboro, VT
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Jeannie Randall, Moretown, VT
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Jessica Goldblatt, Concord, VT
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Jessie McHugh, Waterbury, VT
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Joanna Doria, Ripton, VT
Jocelyn Emilo, Essex Junction, VT
Jocelyn Peknik, Townshend, VT
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Jodi Rorison, Perkinsville, VT
Jodie Masterman, Jamaica, VT
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Joey Carroll, Brattleboro, VT
Johanna de Graffenreid, South Royalton, VT
John Hughes, Windsor, VT
Joi Webster, Springfield, VT
Joseph Santorufo, East Wallingford, VT
Judith Engle, White River Junction, VT
Judith Severy, Hinesburg, VT
Julia Kimball, Milton, VT
Julie Hutchinson-Smith, Sunderland, VT
Julie Paroline, Underhill, VT
Juliette Keller, Jericho, VT
Juniper Kozlowski, Putney, VT
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Justin Zafran, Northfield, VT
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Karen Jenne, Derby Line, VT
Karyl Kent, Huntington, VT
Kate Bentley, Lincoln, VT
Katelyn Rodier, Bennington, VT
Katherine Brown, Newfane, VT
Katherine Wolff, Huntington, VT
Katy Knuth, Stannard, VT
Kelli Moran, Putney, VT
Kelly Bocash, Tunbridge, VT
Kelly Dixon, Morrisville, VT
Kelly Fairchild, East Montpelier, VT
Kelly Friend, Pittsfield, VT
Kelsey Taddei, Townshend, VT
Kelsy Allan, Brattleboro, VT
Kerri Hansen, Wolcott, VT
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Kim Belongia, Waterbury Center, VT
Kim Kanios, Charlotte, VT
Kim Myers, Montpelier, VT
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Korinne Harvey, Corinth, VT
Kris & Mike Lance, East Hardwick, VT
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Kristen Elliott, Montpelier, VT
Kristina Weeks, Brattleboro, VT
Krystal Graybeal, Brattleboro, VT
Lalitha Mailwaganam, Montpelier, VT
Lamoille Soil, Morrisville, VT
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Larissa Darias, Fayston, VT
Larry Montague, Middlebury, VT
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Laura Keeler, Brattleboro, VT
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Laura Star, Waterbury Center, VT
Laura TimmKreitzer, Montpelier, VT
Laura Walker, Brattleboro, VT
Laurel Carey, Brandon, VT
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Lauren Tessier, Barre, VT
Laurie Mulhern, Bennington, VT
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Leanne Estridge, Underhill, VT
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Linda Looney, Burlington, VT
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Lindsay Miles, North Ferrisburgh, VT
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Mary Margaret Mulligan, Huntington, VT
Maryann Cavlier, Northfield, VT
Maryann Twyman, Bristol, VT
Maryellen Taft, Hinesburg, VT
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Melissa Boyles, Whitingham, VT
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Nadege Wakepalm, Rutland, VT
Nadya Bedford, Marlboro, VT
Nan Tierra
Nancy Leik, Ludlow, VT
Nancy Riege, Greensboro, VT
Nathan Livie, Merrimack, NH
Nathaniel Hall, Putney, VT
New Learning Journey, Inc, Fayston, VT
Nicholas Livestock
Nicole Clark, Plainfield, VT
Nicole Lopez, Essex Junction, VT
Nicole Shea, Jeffersonville, VT
Noah Galley, Belmont, VT
NPC Processing Inc, Shelburne, VT
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Olivia Toomey, Burlington, VT
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Paige Lock, Jeffersonville, VT
Paige Sady, Brandon, VT
Parker Beaupre, Bethel, VT
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Phil Liben, Hartford, VT
Phoebe Sunflower, Jericho, VT
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Qianru Jiang, Bristol, VT
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Rachel Goldsmith, St Johnsbury, VT
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Rachel Libman, Brattleboro, VT
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Rachel Olsson, Waterbury, VT
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Sarah Bailey, Burlington, VT
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Sarah de Haven, Montpelier, VT
Sarah Monego, Colchester, VT
Shannon Hottinger, Warren, VT
Shannon Jones, Waterford, VT
Shannon Kittell, Swanton, VT
Shannon McIntyre, Montpelier, VT
Shari Kampitsis, Brattleboro, VT
Sharon Vollmuth, Brattleboro, VT
Shelby Cushing, Essex Junction, VT
Shenanigans Communal Farm & Gardens, Vergennes, VT
Simone McNamer, Jeffersonville, VT
SJ Muratori, Brattleboro, VT
Skylee Morrill, South Royalton, VT
Sophia Seman, Underhill, VT
Sophie Carver, Montpelier, VT
Sophie Evans, Huntington, VT
Sophie Slonka, Hinesburg, VT
Sprague Huntington, Bristol, VT
Stace Fulwiler Wood, Montpelier, VT
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Sue Anne Stager, Warren, VT
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Summers Williams, Ludlow, VT
Susan Le Grand, So Burlington, VT
Susan McNeil, West Topsham, VT
Susan Menard, Winooski, VT
Suzanna Crowner, Concord, VT
Suzanne Ruse, Dummerston, VT
Suzen Moffatt, Woodbury, VT
Sydney Decker, Burlington, VT
Sydney Roberts, Brattleboro, VT
Tahira Whitcomb-Paulson, North Chittenden, VT
Takako Ueda, Putney, VT
Taryn Ouellette, Peru, VT
Tavis Rose, Townshend, VT
Taylor Franklin, Guilford, VT
Tensel Charity, Burlington, VT
Tess Barber, Concord, VT
Tess Lindsay, Putney, VT
The Farmers Traveling Mechanic, Plainfield, VT
Therrien Farm, North Troy, VT
Thomas Chagnon, South Hero, VT
Thomas Hutchinson, Weston, VT
Thomas Nolan, Dummerston, VT
Tim Counts, Arlington, VT
Tina Berry, N. Clarendon, VT
Tina Bryan, Charlotte, VT
Tina Machia, St Albans, VT
Tinder Kiely, Waitsfield, VT
Tneopista Joseph, Rutland, VT
Toby Record, Barton, VT
Top Notch Jerseys, Morrisville, VT
Tracy Barret, Bennington, VT
Valerie Ryan, Bennington, VT
Vanessa Swann, Warren, VT
Vermont Ayrshire Club
Vermont Hard Cider Company, LLC, Middlebury, VT
Vern Cope, Springfield, VT
Wanda Mooney, Bennington, VT
Wendy Chen, Putney, VT
Wendy Levy, Brattleboro, VT
Wendy Wilson, Putney, VT
Whitney Kittredge, Williamstown, VT
Will Durkin, Burlington, VT
Winterfound Forest Farm, Woodstock, VT
Yalla Vermont, LLC, West Townshed, VT ◊

New Organic Certifications

Vermont Organic Farmers welcomes the following new producers who have recently obtained organic certification for all or a portion of their operation!

Elam Stoltzfus
Jacob Emerson
Mack Farms, Inc.
Make Do Farm, LLP
Pure Masa, LLC
Rick Browe
Taliesin Farm, LLC
Thomas Salva
Tucker Hill Cheese Inc

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Thank You for a Great Summer!

This summer, we gathered on farms for pizza socials and enriching workshops, and we embarked on countless farm tours, visits, meetings, and more. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who joined us at an event!

