



NOFA Notes

FALL 2020

ABENAKI LAND LINK 3
 FARM SHARE 4
 WINTER CONFERENCE..... 4
 POLICY UPDATE 7
 ENID WONNACOTT FUND..... 8
 AG LITERACY 8
 EMERGENCY FUNDS 9
 FARM TRAILS..... 9
 SHARE THE HARVEST 10

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

Feeding Those Who Feed Us

By Livy Bulger, Education & Engagement Manager

This summer, we traveled the state with our mobile pizza oven to make lunches for hard-working farmers and farmworkers as a gesture of our deep gratitude for those who are feeding us. These essential workers never stopped working, tirelessly meeting the need for local food for our communities during this pandemic. As thanks, we baked them some love, NOFA-style, with delicious wood-fired pizza!

At each stop, two or three neighboring farms were also invited to pick up pizzas. We chose the farms across the state based on a variety of criteria including farms that utilize best organic and environmental practices, and embody our mission. Here's a little more about the special characteristics of each farm we visited:

Red Wagon Plants & Family Cow Farmstand, Hinesburg

Curbside pick ups: Trillium Hill Farm, Full Moon Farm

Red Wagon and Family Cow provide key services to their communities: local, nourishing food and healthy plants. Family Cow specializes in certified organic raw milk and a robust farm stand filled to the brim with products from over 40 local producers. Red Wagon Plants, also certified organic, helps others grow food and beautiful plants, and partners with many local organizations to donate plant



starts, host events and fundraisers, and promote gardening education. This effort highlighted the rise of at-home gardening and efforts towards self-sufficiency spurred by the pandemic.

River Berry Farm, Fairfax

Curbside pick ups: Knee Deep Farm, West Farm

Dave Marchant and Jane Sorenson shared that River Berry Farm has had over 280 employees since it was established in 1992, at least 20 of whom they know have gone on to create their own food and farm businesses. Their commitment to keeping their workforce local has trained a generation of farmers and food workers, and has allowed many people the opportunity to participate in the work it takes to grow food in Vermont.

Lamoille North Supervisory Union's School Nutrition Team, Hyde Park

School nutrition professionals have continued to work tirelessly to provide healthy meals for students across the state, and Karyl Kent's team in the Lamoille North School District has gone above and beyond as they served 8,000+ meals per week to students over the summer. They partnered with Green Mountain Technology and Career Center's school-farm and many other area farms and producers to add Lamoille-grown flair to many of their homemade meals.

Stony Pond Farm, Enosburg

Curbside pick ups: Bittersweet Valley Farm, Maple Valley Jerseys

Cows make milk every day, pandemic or not. Tyler and Melanie Webb care for their herd



Above, NOFA-VT's Livy Bulger—who developed the "Feeding Those Who Feed Us" initiative—tops pizzas in Hyde Park to honor hard-working school nutrition staff.

of mostly Jersey cows, rotationally grazed on nutrient-rich, certified organic pasture. The farm's milk has repeatedly earned awards for superior quality, and the Webbs demonstrate excellent land stewardship by practicing pasture-based dairying, attending to the health of their soils, and adhering to the origin of livestock rule, under which livestock products that are sold, labeled, or represented as organic must be from livestock under continuous organic management.

Cedar Circle Farm, E. Thetford

Cedar Circle Farm is a leader in soil-building and other climate-friendly practices like no-till vegetable production, which keeps carbon in the soil. Their team of 45 employees is highly involved in promoting organic and regenerative

Feeding Farmers, continued on page 5

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Fall Thoughts from Grace

We are in the thick of change—the overwhelming abundance and intense effort of harvest season, the start of a new school year taking shape in a dramatically changed form, late summer afternoon’s triumphant sunflowers giving way to the shimmering silver of morning frost. With the pandemic, we are collectively shifting from the sense of “urgent crisis” into a different stage of living in this new normal, finding ways to persist through uncertainty, changing conditions, and anxieties. We are tired, and we still have a long way to go.

But what we have learned so far through this time, and what brings us great hope, is that in our communities, on our farms, and in our neighborhoods, even as we are physically distanced, it is truly through relationships that we are strong. As we shift our view towards the longer term, our relationships provide the foundation of our sustenance not just through this emergency, or the next, but as the cornerstone of how we might rebuild our systems.

Our connections nourish us like mycelium in the soil; we network, share resources and rely on each other, and in turn these actions grow our resilience, creativity, and strength. We need each other, and we are strengthened by each other.

This issue of NOFA Notes is a celebration of the relationships and partnerships that have been deeply supportive, nourishing, and hopeful in this challenging time. These are some of the collaborative efforts that have filled us with purpose and clarity.

In this issue you can learn about:

- ✦ The Abenaki Land Link project, a partnership that supports food sovereignty and indigenous crops through collaborations between Abenaki community members and growers across the state (page 3);
- ✦ A farmworker justice coalition that has been working for equity and relief for all Vermont’s essential farmworkers, regardless of citizenship status (page 7);

- ✦ A geographically diffuse orchard being collectively tended across the state by farmers and in loving memory of Enid Wonnacott (page 8);
- ✦ A major increase in our Farm Share Program through a collaboration with the Vermont Foodbank, ramping up our support for both farmers and food insecure Vermonters (page 4);
- ✦ Agricultural Literacy Week, a collaboration between libraries and our agricultural community to help build community awareness and understanding of the culture of agriculture (page 8);
- ✦ A cross-organizational effort to share accessible trail maps on farms across the state to get more Vermonters outside and on farms accessing our state’s beautiful working landscape (page 9);
- ✦ All the farms and farmers whose crews, families, and friends we fed over the summer season through our ‘Feeding those Who Feed Us’ program, whose strong relationships with both the earth they tend and the communities they feed provide us with the inspiration for all our work (cover).

When we turn towards each other, we find ways to use this time not to sink into isolation, but to draw close, to strengthen the connections that will help nourish the food system we need for the long term. A great teacher of our time, Joanna Macy, writes of the moment we are living in as ‘The Great Turning’, in which we must help hospice dying systems at the same time as we help midwife the birth of new ones. We are in this process together, knowing that what we tend together now will grow into our future. How we do this work is just as important as any particular outcomes—valuing our relationships to the earth and each other, together.

Warmly,



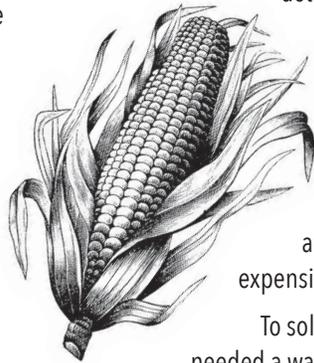
Grace Oedel, NOFA-VT Executive Director

Exploring the Abenaki Land Link

A Special Contribution by Chief Don Stevens, Nulhegan Band of Coosuk - Abenaki Nation

The Abenaki Land Link Project is a partnership between the Nulhegan Band of Coosuk - Abenaki Nation, NOFA-VT and the Vermont Farm to Plate Network's Rooted in Vermont Project to provide indigenous seeds to gardeners, homesteaders, and farmers around Vermont who are dedicating land to grow and harvest food on behalf of Abenaki citizens this season.

As a disadvantaged population, the Abenaki are faced with many issues. We are in a constant struggle to keep our culture, traditions, and language from extinction. We are the only race of people that cannot self-declare and must rely on European Government acceptance. This process alone kept us from being legally accepted and recognized until 2011. Implicit bias toward the Abenaki people and systemic assimilation reinforced the stereotypes that we were no longer here and our culture exists only in the past tense. Thus, forcing many Abenaki to



blend into the community; allowing our school systems to ignore education surrounding our native community.

How does this pertain to the Abenaki Land Link?

Three years ago, I was involved with the State of Vermont Health Assessment. This study showed that Native People were highly susceptible to chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease. Many also suffered from obesity. After further evaluations, it was

determined that many Native people's metabolism doesn't process sugars the way others do. It also confirmed that many Native people are below the poverty level, which limits their access to healthier, often more expensive, foods.

To solve some of these issues, we needed a way to provide access to our native food systems. I worked with the State of Vermont, corporations, and individuals to allow access to lands that have been long denied to us. Through easements, licenses, and MOU's, our citizens can now gather and harvest natural foods from lands all over Vermont in the manner our ancestors have for thousands of years. We also needed access to healthy localized crops to distribute seeds and healthier foods to those who could not grow crops themselves. This started the unique partnership with Sterling and Middlebury Colleges, UVM, NOFA-VT and Vermont Farm to Plate Network's Rooted in Vermont project, and growers around Vermont; to help us in growing our food system and allowing



access to lands within their control.

NOFA-VT and Rooted in Vermont make up coalitions of commercial and individual farmers who are a perfect partner with the Nulhegan Abenaki Tribe. Stewardship goals aligned with ours include the preservation and the healthy access to food sources. The Abenaki people have long been environmental stewards of these lands and the connection with animal and food sources around them.

This program provides a unique opportunity for all who participate. It provides access to those farmers and gardeners, participating in the project, to indigenous crops that have been grown by Abenaki people for thousands of years. It also provides a way to become educated in Abenaki traditions, culture, and our history around food systems. The Abenaki Land Link provides Nulhegan Citizens with retention of our seeds for distribution to individual gardens. It also provides us with necessary access to healthy food for those most in need. Our citizens will not have to worry about choosing heat over a healthy meal. Most of all, it provides partnerships and a bridge between cultures to celebrate our gifts with one another. It uplifts all involved because it is the right thing to do as human beings.

In a society that has been focused on taking what they can from others, it is refreshing that we can do our part to give back to one another and share in the abundance that the creator has provided to us. We are but a part of the web of life and have the responsibility to be good stewards of this land and the environment around us.

To learn more about the Abenaki Land Link, please contact Livy Bulger, livy@nofavt.org, (802) 434-7153.



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Partnering with the Vermont Foodbank to Expand Farm Share

By Emmet Mosely, NOFA-VT Community Food Access Programs

The COVID-19 pandemic and economic fallout that has followed has increased food insecurity in Vermont as much as 25% according to research by UVM Food Systems Professor, Meredith Niles. In response, NOFA-VT has expanded our programs connecting limited-income Vermonters with high quality local food.

We are excited to share that the Vermont Foodbank has subawarded some of their Coronavirus Relief Act funds, awarded by the Vermont Legislature, to NOFA-VT in part to help expand our Vermont Farm Share Program for the fall and winter seasons. This generous partnership has allowed us to accept many more applicants than in years' past. This means that more of Vermont's economically stressed families will have a steady supply of local healthy food through the winter. It also means that farms can expand their customer base to include those for whom a CSA share would otherwise be financially out of reach, and receive the full cost for those shares to support their farm's viability.

The Farm Share Program has wide ranging benefits for those who receive shares through the program. We know through surveys of last year's participants that having access to a CSA through the Farm Share Programs allowed 94% of participants to increase the amount

and variety of fresh fruits and vegetables they consumed. Participating in the program also helps expand their agricultural literacy. Seventy-four percent of participants reported that they or their children tried new fruits and vegetables as a result of their participation in the program and 88% reported feeling more connected to their communities. Furthermore, participating in the Farm Share Program allowed 98% of participants to divert their financial resources towards other basic needs such as heating, rent and medical bills.

Last winter we funded 49 winter shares from 20 farms, which helped feed 146 Vermonters. This winter, we are planning to fund at least 200 shares from 30 farms; providing nourishing local food for 600 Vermonters and paying over \$20,000 directly to Vermont farmers. This \$20,000 is then matched by \$20,000 paid directly to farmers by the participants. For example, Bread and Butter Farm in Shelburne will provide a minimum of 10 winter Farm Shares this year, compared with one last year.

"This year, with COVID-19, one of our community's greatest needs is food security," explained Bread and Butter Farm's CSA Manager, Bekah Gordon. "We have honored that by keeping our CSA pick ups rolling through the seasons rather than having any



Produce on display at the Bread & Butter farm stand in Shelburne (contributed photo).

pause." She also expressed her gratitude for the program: "We've been thrilled to be partnering with NOFA-VT to offer more subsidized shares to folks than ever before."

Beyond simply allowing us to fund more shares, these funds will allow us to keep the dollars raised through our annual Share the Harvest fundraiser in reserve for next spring's CSA season, ensuring that the program can continue to meet the increased need for shares in 2021. You can support the Farm Share Program's future by making a donation at: nofavt.org/farmshare/donation or by participating in this year's Share the Harvest fundraiser - find out more about Share the Harvest and participating businesses on p. 10.



Update on our Beloved Yearly Winter Conference

It might seem cliché to say it, as it's being said so often, but this is an unprecedented time we're living in.

Although we look forward to a time when we are able to gather safely in person, it isn't safe now to plan to hold a thousand-person gathering this winter. We are filled with sadness to miss being together at our annual NOFA-VT Winter Conference, and we're also excited for the possibilities to continue connecting during this unique time.

We will not let physical distance keep us from continuing to build community, strengthen a just, organic food movement, and learn and celebrate together. Next February, NOFA-VT will host an incredible month-long series of events,

with many different opportunities for online learning, gathering and movement building.

2021 is NOFA-VT's 50th (!!) anniversary, and we're using this month of events in February to kick off a year-long series of opportunities for reflections, celebrations, movement building, and envisioning the future we long for in the coming 50 years.

After a rich February with a "conference-ish" experience spread out over the course of the month—inspiring speakers, workshops, lunchtime roundtables, community art, advocacy and movement building opportunities—we will move into a continued celebration of 50 years of NOFA-VT: the community that you helped to create and will help to innovate into the next 50

years.

Each month in 2021, we will share stories of the last fifty years of the organic food and farming movement. We will celebrate the elders on whose shoulders we stand, while assessing where we are now and then imagining boldly, what is possible for our shared future. We will create space to explore together: Where are we going? What can we envision for our future in ten, twenty, fifty years? How are we planting seeds now for the food system we need for our grandchildren?

Keep an eye out for more details. And please share your thoughts, memories, and ideas with us. We're looking forward to gathering, learning, and celebrating with you soon!



READ MORE ABOUT CONFERENCE PLANNING, ALONG WITH SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES: NOFAVT.ORG/CONFERENCE

Feeding Farmers, continued from page 1

agriculture as a climate solution, showing up at the statehouse, hosting community events, and spreading awareness of these techniques.

Black Dirt Farm, Stannard

Curbside pick ups: Flywheel Farm, Cate Hill Orchard, Provender Farm

Black Dirt Farm has a deep commitment to practices that center on the health of the land, animals and people. The farm collects food scraps from their community, raises hens, and makes compost and worm castings to nourish their soils and crops. When we visited on July 1st, it was a particularly meaningful day to be on their farm because it was the very same day that Vermont's Universal Recycling Law took full effect, requiring, among other things, that all food scraps be diverted from landfills.

Walker Farm, E. Dummerston

Curbside pick up: High Meadows Farm

Since 2007, Walker Farm, an organic diversified vegetable farm and plant nursery, has participated in two core NOFA-VT programs, *Farm Share* and *Senior Farm Share*, to increase



Above, the crew at Black Dirt Farm enjoys lunch together. Below, school nutrition staff from Lamoille North Supervisory Union pick up their freshly baked pizzas in Hyde Park.



food access for low-income households and seniors in their community. Since they began participating, they have provided shares to 260 seniors and 65 households in their community.

Blue Heron, Grand Isle

Curbside pick ups: Savage Gardens, Sandy Bottom Farm, Health Hero Farm

From the establishment of their farm in 2004, Blue Heron has set up the bounty of their fields to be accessible for everyone. Their CSA has always operated on a sliding scale payment system and offers payment plans, and they accept EBT at their farm stand and farmers markets booth. When COVID-19 hit Vermont, they quickly added a "Pay What You Can" option to their CSA to make sure everyone, regardless of their income, could eat good food. The farm saw their CSA grow from 50 to 85 families this spring.

Clear Brook Farm, Shaftsbury

Curbside pick ups: Mighty Food Farm, Someday Farm, Grateful Morning Farm, True Love Farm

Since 2003, Clear Brook Farm, an organic diversified vegetable farm and plant nursery, has also participated in NOFA-VT's *Farm Share* and *Senior Farm Share* programs. Since they began participating, the farm has provided shares to over 1,500 seniors and 15 households in their community. Last year, the farm joined the pilot of NOFA-VT's 3SquaresVT *Farm Stand Match* program, where customers save 50% on fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs and plant seeds and starts when they spend their 3SquaresVT benefits at participating farm stands. The program continues this summer with four farms now participating around the state.

Maxwell's Neighborhood Farm

Maxwell's Neighborhood Farm is a 3rd generation dairy that employs eight migrant farmworkers and participates in the *Milk with Dignity* program. This program, created by Migrant Justice, brings together farmworkers, consumers, farmer owners and corporate buyers with the principal goal of fostering a sustainable Northeast dairy industry that advances the



Above, Tucker Levy, NOFA-VT's seasoned baker, bakes pies for farmers in Enosburg on a hot July day.

FEEDING THOSE WHO FEED US, THIS SUMMER BY THE NUMBERS:

Number of pizza baked: 420

Number of events: 10

Number of farm crews fed: 28

**Number of school nutrition
professionals fed: 45**

**Number of miles the mobile oven
traveled: 1,290**

human rights of farmworkers, supports the long-term interests of farm owners, and provides an ethical supply chain for retail food companies and consumers. To date, the *Milk with Dignity* program supports 250 farmworkers on nearly 70 dairy farms in Vermont and New York.

While we haven't been able to gather around our pizza oven in our usual ways, we were delighted to share our deep appreciation for some of the essential workers who are filling our plates. These farmers and farmworkers have continued their hard work throughout the pandemic ensuring we all stay nourished, and we are enormously grateful!

Read full articles on each of the farms we visited this summer on our website, nofavt.org/feeding-farmers.



Local Products Wanted!



City Market
Onion River Co-op

Current Local Food Sourcing Needs

Grocery

*Beet Sugar
Flour Tortillas*

Dairy & Perishables

*Goats' Milk
Single-Source Cottage Cheese
Eggs
Oat Milk*

Grains

*Barley
Buckwheat
Rolled Oats*

Meats

*Buffalo
Duck
Pork*

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Fall Policy Update

By Maddie Kempner, NOFA-VT Policy Director

Life during COVID-19 is full of lessons and revelations - many painful, others hopeful, all calling us to expand our capacity for empathy and action toward creating a new and better normal. One of the lessons that I'm carrying every day during this time is how much the success of our individual causes truly depends on our collective success. Shining examples of this have emerged through our advocacy work over the past several months. In every area of our work to move policy, being in coalition, and even moreso, in relationship, has been the central factor in achieving our goals.

In this update, I'm excited to share stories of the partnerships we've been part of that have allowed us to continue moving closer to our mission during these trying times.

Immigrant Families Relief Fund

In partnership with Migrant Justice, Rural Vermont, and the Vermont Human Rights Commission, NOFA-VT has been advocating since April for the creation of a \$5 million fund that would provide stimulus payments for individuals and families in Vermont who were left out of federal COVID-19 relief because of their immigration status. While the majority of Vermonters received \$1200 per adult and \$500 per child after the CARES Act passed in April, an estimated 4,000-5,000 people in Vermont were excluded because they don't have social security numbers or because they file taxes jointly with someone without a social security number. Despite significant initial pushback and many roadblocks, our coalition has persisted in demanding that this fund be set up, that it cover everyone in Vermont excluded from the federal program, and that payments be equivalent with the federal program. In August, Governor Scott included the program in his proposed budget, but at \$2 million, his proposal still fell short of full funding. In September, the House passed H.968, creating the Vermont Coronavirus Economic Stimulus Equity Program, and fully funding it at \$5 million. As of this writing, the bill now moves to the Senate where we hope to see widespread support. In a time of so much unrest and injustice, this is one critical step toward finally recognizing the humanity, hard work, and unique struggles of the thousands of immigrants who choose to make Vermont their home and many of whom are essential workers

in our food system.

Food Security Coalition

Since early on in the pandemic, NOFA-VT has been meeting weekly with a coalition of partners including the Vermont Foodbank, Shelburne Farms, Hunger Free Vermont, the Agency of Agriculture, and the Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance to try to ensure all Vermonters are able to stay fed during this time of soaring unemployment and food insecurity. Working collectively, we successfully advocated for \$12 million in CARES Act funding for summer meal programs and \$4.7 million for the Vermont Foodbank to meet increased needs, purchase food directly from Vermont farmers, and to support the *Farmers to Families Food Box* program. Thanks to our close partnership throughout the spring and summer, the Vermont Foodbank generously subgranted \$75,000 of their allocation to NOFA-VT to increase the *Crop Cash* match at farmers markets, and expand the *Farm Share* program to subsidize more than four times our usual number of fall CSA shares (see page 4).

Equity and Access in Agriculture Assistance Programs

In mid-August, as the legislature was returning for its short budget session, NOFA-VT along with seven other agriculture and working lands organizations, sent a letter to legislators urging them to make changes to the COVID-19 agriculture assistance programs that would make them equitable across all types of farms and forestry businesses. Our requests included extending the deadlines to allow more time for businesses to apply, removing restrictions on applications from sole proprietors, and eliminating a provision requiring a business to show no net profit between March 1 and August 1 of this year in order to be eligible. The House and Senate Agriculture Committees took up our requests, and at a joint (virtual) hearing in early September, fourteen farmers and advocates



presented deeply compelling testimony, moving the committees to make the necessary changes and allow more farmers and food producers to access the relief they need.

S.54 Working Group

Starting in June, NOFA-VT joined forces with a group of racial justice and grower advocates including Justice for All, Rural Vermont, the Vermont Growers Association, and Trace, Inc. to fight S.54, the bill that would create a retail market for cannabis in Vermont. With stress about budget shortfalls swirling in the virtual halls of the State House, some legislators are eager to pass this policy that disproportionately benefits existing dispensary owners, while disadvantaging Vermont farmers and legacy market growers, and failing to repair the past and present damages of cannabis prohibition to BIPOC communities. We have seen how similar policies have played out in other states like Massachusetts, where "social equity" licensees have waited years to be able to open their businesses while existing medical dispensaries reap massive profits. S.54 has already passed both chambers of the legislature, and as of this writing, the Conference Committee is poised to reach agreement, at which point it will go back to the floor of the House and Senate for final votes. We are continuing to strongly oppose S.54 and are committed to working together to develop better, more equitable cannabis policy. Vermont can, and must, do better.



Update on the Enid Wonnacott Fund

By Erin Buckwalter, NOFA-VT Development & Engagement Director



Enid Wonnacott led NOFA-VT with grace, humor, and humility for thirty-one years. Enid changed Vermont for the better, and created an aspirational model for our country's organic food movement. What we remember Enid most for, however, is how she brought people together. She cared for people and used food as a tool to build community. Enid spun a web of connection, support, and relationship that wove together into a broad,

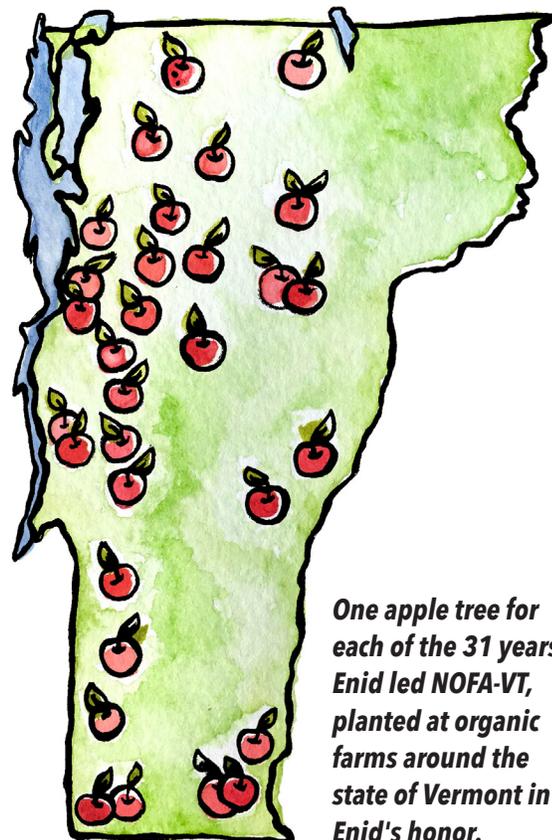
strong movement. It's easy to overlook her kindness and care for what it was: a tool for change-making through relationships. Enid left us far too early.

Enid loved hiking and being outside, enjoying the beautiful home we share. We've helped gather some beautiful walks through the farmland of Vermont and invite you to go for a walk this fall in Enid's memory. (More details on about Farm Trails on page 9).

We are humbled and delighted to share that we have reached our goal of raising \$500,000 for the Enid Wonnacott Fund. We are so thrilled to have this lasting tribute to Enid! The Enid Wonnacott Fund assures that Enid's values and legacy will be carried forward long into NOFA-VT's future. These funds have supported NOFA-VT through the year of transition and we will steward the remainder as long-term nourishment and reserve in Enid's memory in The Spirit of Enid Wonnacott Fund for the community-building, joyous work that she loved.

We all have a role to play in continuing the good work and joyful community that Enid tended. Visit nofavt.org/enid to learn more about Enid and her time at NOFA. You can learn more about the Enid Wonnacott Fund at nofavt.org/enidfund. It's also not too late to make a contribution if you'd like - we will be accepting ongoing donations to support this important work. Thank you for being a part of our community. ✨

ENID'S ORCHARD



One apple tree for each of the 31 years Enid led NOFA-VT, planted at organic farms around the state of Vermont in Enid's honor.

Agricultural Literacy Week 2020: Building Resilient Communities

Tune in for this week-long (virtual) celebration to inform, educate and create community around the topic of resiliency in all of its forms. Each night, November 16th through 19th, will feature a webinar bringing together the voices of our community: farmworker rights group Migrant Justice, Abenaki chef Jessee Lawyer, students of gender studies and agriculture at Bennington College, and organic farmers building soil health. All events are free and open to the public. Be on the lookout for workshop details and registration information in October.

Agricultural Literacy Week is a project of NOFA-VT, the Vermont Department of Libraries and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. Contact Livy Bulger, livy@nofavt.org or (802) 434-7153 with questions.

Featured Events:

Monday, November 16th, 6-7:30 pm
Special presentation from Abenaki chef Jessee Lawyer - More details coming soon!

Tuesday, November 17th, 6-7:30 pm
#MilkwithDignity - Join Migrant Justice for this workshop to learn more about the Milk with Dignity Program, farmworkers' continued struggle for justice and how you can get involved to help expand this powerful solution to the Hannaford supermarket's supply chain.

Wednesday, November 18th, 6-7:30 pm
Building Soil Health Resilience - Join us for a panel discussion featuring Misse Axelrod (Drift Farmstead), Nic Cook (Cedar Circle Farm & Education Center), Tyler Webb (Stony Pond

Farm), and Kate Spring (Good Heart Farmstead). Farms that build soil, sequester carbon and grow nutritious foods for their communities are webs of life. Mimicking the natural world and the deep ties of how we are all connected, resilience starts with soil, and builds out into whole-systems thinking.

Thursday, November 19th, 6-7:30 pm
Community Gardening to Address Food Insecurity - Bennington College students and guests will discuss how gender identity intersects with farm livelihoods.



Resilience Grants Provide Emergency Funds to Farm

By Bill Cavanaugh, NOFA-VT Farm Business Advisor

In May of this year, NOFA-VT created a *Farmer Resilience Grant* program to provide emergency funds to farms that were pivoting their operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. With unprecedented upheaval in the marketplace, Vermont's farms were faced with the loss of restaurant and institutional sales, uncertainty around farmers markets, and increased demand for locally produced food. Does' Leap farm is an excellent example of a farm that quickly changed their business in response to the crisis.

Run by Kristan Doolan and George van Vlaanderen, Does' Leap Farm in Bakersfield produces goat cheese and farm-made sausages. Prior to the pandemic, they relied on the Burlington Farmers Market for about a third of their sales. When word came down that they might have to do away with their quick-selling (and delicious) grilled sausage sandwiches, they knew that they would need to find a way to recoup what would be an entire season of lost farmers market sales.

An unused intern cabin on their farm provided the perfect spot for a farm stand—a sales outlet that many Vermont farms have chosen to take on this year. While the cabin was in good shape and they were able to spruce it up themselves, the Farmer Resilience Grant that

they received from NOFA-VT was instrumental in helping purchase a reach-in freezer and complete some needed electrical upgrades. As Kristan puts it, receiving the grant meant “not sticking our necks out quite as far as we would have otherwise.”

So far sales at the farm stand have been great, with a couple of additional benefits. For example, selling right from their farm has deepened the connection with their local community. Locals who have never tasted their products before have expressed their gratitude through notes they leave behind; one read, “we're really glad you're here.” Additionally, as much as Kristan and George miss their customers at the Burlington Farmers Market, being able to pivot to on-farm sales through their farm stand has freed up their weekends to rest and work on projects around the farm.

While this is just one example, applicants to the fund represented a wide range of farm sizes and enterprises, and all had a unique, creative plan to respond to the difficulties presented by the health crisis. In total, NOFA-VT was able to fund 44 excellent projects, and we're excited to see how these changes lead to the long term sustainability of Vermont's organic farms. ✨



The Farm Walk Trail Network

Escape to a Vermont farm where a meandering walk awaits you. Venture out as a solo explorer or with loved ones, and discover the sounds of crickets in hayfields, birdsong in sugarwoods, and humming equipment in the fields as farmers produce food, forage, fiber, and timber.

The Farm Walk Trail Network through DigInVT.com is a new twist on an old idea: that farms can be places for both production and recreation. Momentum for the project built over time, as organizers observed the success of the countryside walking culture in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and other international destinations. The onset of COVID-19 catalyzed the project, as people sought safe places to be outdoors.

“We believe in sharing our land,” Peter

Forbes of Knoll Farm in Fayston, one of the participating farmers said, “and in this moment everyone needs beauty, health and access to nature.” Knoll Farm offers daily passes to the farm, so they know at all times who is on the property and can cap the number of visitors. Other farms have their own systems for welcoming visitors: some ask to be notified ahead-of-time and have set hours, while others encourage walkers to stop by.

Organizers hope that the project will help boost the agricultural economy, directing walkers to in-person and online farm stores, but agree the primary goals are offering a healthy and safe place to be outside to engage with the working landscape and for Vermonters to get to know their agricultural neighbors.

Learn more and explore a farm trail near you

by visiting: www.diginvt.com/farmwalks

For farms interested in learning more about participating, contact diginvt@vermontfresh.net.

The Farm Walk Trail Network is a collaborative initiative of food, farming and agritourism organizations to create a directory of walking trails on farms across Vermont. Partners include: the Farm-Based Education Network, NOFA-VT, Shelburne Farms, UVM Extension, Vermont Fresh Network / DigInVT, and the Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing. ✨



Share *the* Harvest



**A FUNDRAISER FOR
NOFA-VT'S FARM
SHARE PROGRAM**

*"We ate so many more veggies!
We loved having the veggies come
weekly and the challenge of finishing
them before the next week. The
produce was incredible."*



*"I am so grateful...without this
program, we could not afford to
participate in a CSA!"*

Want to help local farmers & food insecure Vermonters at the same time?

Throughout the month of October, you can Share the Harvest to support our Farm Share Program, which provides half-priced CSA shares for limited-income Vermonters from local farms around the state. The need for this program has increased exponentially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Generous restaurants, coops, breweries, and food stores statewide (see list below!) will be making a donation to the program. Eat out or shop at these businesses in October, and visit nofavt.org/share-harvest for more listings. Stay tuned on our social media accounts too, as we'll be raffling off gift cards and other special items from our participating businesses all month!

Please support these businesses who support the NOFA-VT Farm Share program

Brattleboro Food Co-op ▾ brattleborofoodcoop.coop

Cedar Circle Farm and Education Center ▾ cedarcirclefarm.org

Colatina Exit ▾ colatinaexit.com

Deep Root Organic Co-op ▾ www.deeprootorganic.coop

Middlebury Co-op ▾ middleburycoop.com

Penny Cluse Cafe Burlington, VT ▾ pennycluse.com

Springfield Food Coop ▾ springfieldfood.coop

Stone Leaf Teahouse in the Marbleworks ▾ stoneleaftea.com

The Waybury Inn ▾ wayburyinn.com

Hunger Mountain Co-op ▾ hungermountain.coop

Bristol Harvest Fest ▾ thebobcatcafe.com

City Market ▾ citymarket.coop

The Alchemist ▾ alchemistbeer.com

**More businesses
added regularly...
check [nofavt.org/
share-harvest](http://nofavt.org/share-harvest) for
updates!**

Please help us support limited-income Vermonters to access fresh, organic food all season.

Donations to the Farm Share Program are welcomed and needed year round: NOFAVT.ORG/FARMSHARE/DONATE

NOFA-VT Members: thank you for supporting organic agriculture!

A warm welcome to the following members who joined us or renewed their membership in the 3rd quarter of 2020:

NEW MEMBERS

Marielle & Michael Ambroch,
Montgomery Center, VT
Laurn Axelrod, West Pawlet, VT
Josiah Bergeron, Winooski, VT
Philip Bloch, Putney, VT
Josh Brill, Tinmouth, VT
Seth Butler, Pawlet, VT
Allihea Cary, Brattleboro, VT
Danielle Cohen, South Burlington, VT
Elizabeth Cousens, Washington, DC
Paul Dayton, East Montpelier, VT
Kyle Doda, Brookfield, VT
Everett & Linda Driver, Newport Center,
VT
Vedanta du Mas, Danby, VT
Lauren Gitlin, Tunbridge, VT
Richard Hudak, Swanton, VT

Brennan Kensey, Bridport, VT
Robert Letourneau, W Charleston, VT
Shelley Lewton, Swanton, VT
James Mayer, Brattleboro, VT
Doty McCarty, Middlebury, VT
Suzanne McCullough, Stockbridge, VT
Bryan Miller, East Calais, VT
Kenneth Nierwienski, Lowell, VT
Simon Renault, Dummerston, VT
Shona Sanford-Long, S. Royalton, VT
Julie Scott, Edgartown, MA
Monique Szechenyi, Mt. Holly, VT
Jason Upton, Burlington, VT
Eloise Van Meter, Fairlee, VT
Subramani Venkatesh,
Amesbury, MA
Isaiah Webb, Brandon, VT

NEW & RENEWING BUSINESS MEMBERS

3rd Generation Farming/Heinz Hill
Farm, Montpelier, VT
Addison County Commission Sales
Inc., Middlebury, VT
All Souls Tortilleria, Burlington, VT
American Flatbread Waitsfield,
Waitsfield, VT
Banner Greenhouses, Nebo, NC
Bravo Botanicals LLC, Brattleboro, VT
Cattis LLC, Hardwick, VT
CT Greenhouse Company LLC,
Middlefield, CT
Depot Farm Supply, Whiting, VT
Dobra US LLC, Burlington, VT
Franklin Foods Inc, Enosburg Falls, VT
Green Mountain Spinners, Putney, VT
Harvest worx LLC, Stowe, VT
Highland Sugarworks, Barre, VT
Ismael Imports, LLC / Boswellnes,
Colchester, VT
Johnny's Selected Seeds,
Northampton, MA
Joseph and Sara Farley, Stowe, VT
King Arthur Baking Company, White
River Junction, VT
MG Coffee Roasting Enterprises LLC,
White River Jct., VT
Michael Lennon, Leicester, VT
Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op,
Middlebury, VT

Mocha Joe's Roasting Company,
Brattleboro, VT
Nitty Gritty Grain Company of
Vermont, Charlotte, VT
North Branch Coffee, Montpelier, VT
Northeast Hemp Commodities,
Middlebury, VT
Northeast Kingdom Hemp, Barton, VT
Northeast Processing LLC, Brattleboro,
VT
O Bread Bakery, Shelburne, VT
Phoenix Feeds Organix, LLC, New
Haven, VT
Red Hen Baking Company LLC,
Middlesex, VT
Reinhart Food Service, N. Springfield,
VT
Rhapsody Natural Foods, Cabot, VT
Ron Miller, Woodstock, VT
Rose Wilson Consulting,
Norwich, VT
Sawdog Coffee Roaster, S.
Burlington, VT
Sunja's Oriental Foods,
Waterbury, VT

NEW VOF CERTIFICATIONS

Vermont Organic Farmers welcomes the following new producers who have recently obtained organic certification (certified between 6/1/20-9/1/20) for all or a portion of their operation, joining the more than 700 organic farmers & processors throughout the state.

Chocolate Hollow LLC
Creeks End Beef and Maples
Edgar Morrison
Eugene Ethier
Family Cow Farmstand LLC
Flying Dog Farm LLC
Green Mountain Buds LLC
High Goose Farm LLC
James Clark
Mark Morrison

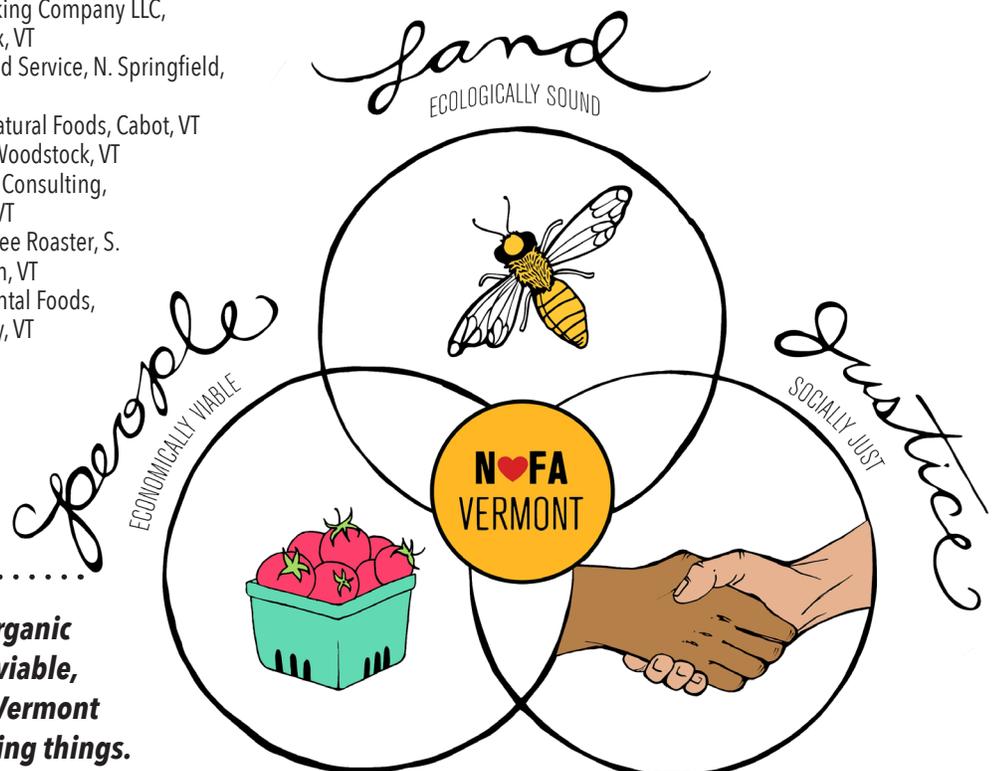
Michael Rooney dba Hill Section
Farm
Polish Springs LLC
Purple Lark Farm LLC
Russell Deberville
Susan McGarry
Three Dozing Dogs Farm LLC
Travis Ryan
Yellow Birch Farm LLC



Learn more about the benefits of certified organic, locally grown at www.nofavt.org/why-organic

Surfing Veggie Farm, E Hardwick, VT
Sweet Tree Holdings 1, Island Pond, VT
The Maple Standard, Burlington, VT
The Sugarman of Vermont, Inc.,
Hardwick, VT
True North Granola LLC, Brattleboro, VT
Upstate Elevator Supply Co.,
Burlington, VT

Vermont Bean Crafters, Waitsfield, VT
Vermont Bread Company,
Brattleboro, VT
Vermont Soap, Middlebury, VT
Vermont Tortilla Company,
Burlington, VT
VT Artisan Coffee & Tea Co, Waterbury
Center, VT



Our mission: NOFA-VT promotes organic practices to build an economically viable, ecologically sound and socially just Vermont agricultural system that benefits all living things.



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NOFA Notes is our quarterly newsletter mailed to members and supporters, with amazing rates!

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1/8 pg - \$30 (3"w x 2.25"h)

1/4 pg - \$50 (3"w x 4.75"h)

1/2 pg - \$85 (7"w x 4.75"h)

Call (802) 434-4122 or email kim@nofavt.org for sizes, rates, and deadlines

Upcoming NOFA-VT events:

Share the Harvest

October, all month, statewide. See page 10 for more information, or visit nofavt.org/share-harvest

Agricultural Literacy Week

November 16-19, online events. See page 8 for more information, or visit nofavt.org/agliteracy

Winter Conference

February, all month, mostly online. Sponsorship opportunities available! See page 4 for more information, or visit nofavt.org/conference

