



## SUMMER 2019

Erin's Thoughts .....	2
Hemp Operation .....	3
Ask Callie .....	5
Enid's Orchard.....	5
Summer Farmers Markets ..	8
Strategic Plan Update .....	9
Farm Beginnings Prog.....	11

## The Quarterly Newsletter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

# Welcome Grace!

We are pleased to announce Grace Oedel will be leading NOFA-VT as our new Executive Director, starting July 1st.

During the last 30 years, under the leadership of the late Enid Wonnacott, NOFA-VT has grown to become an active, thriving organization deeply woven into the fabric of Vermont agriculture, with a \$2.6 million operating budget encompassing many diverse programs managed by a team of 20+ talented staff. NOFA-VT has a devoted Board of Directors, and a passionate and committed membership. As Executive Director, Grace will build on Enid's strengths of vision, creativity, management, eloquence, and joy, while bringing new skills and ideas to the table.

"I am deeply honored, excited, and humbled by the opportunity to serve NOFA-VT as Executive Director," said Grace. "NOFA-VT's wonderful long-time director, Enid Wonnacott, grew the NOFA community and movement through her incredible ability to show up for people and with people, in order to build coalition and power through inclusion and connection. I am profoundly grateful to her work, and am committed to honoring and continuing the tradition of her open-hearted leadership."

Grace has spent her career making change

through building community. She comes to NOFA-VT most recently from Ohavi Zedek Synagogue in Burlington, Vermont, where she served as Executive Director of this community hub since 2016. Grace brings a diverse and deep base of organizational management skills including program development, community organizing, strategic planning, fundraising, human resources, and financial management. During her time at Ohavi Zedek, she managed a large staff team and nurtured a diverse member constituency. Grace oversaw the organization's budget, cultivated donors, and worked to build community through a variety of innovative measures. She started a preschool center that has become an important childcare resource for community members inside and outside the synagogue, and has infused the Synagogue with new life and members. Grace has focused on building interfaith coalition around social and environmental justice issues. She currently serves on the board of Vermont Interfaith Action.

Agriculture has been foundational to Grace's career. Prior to moving to Burlington, Grace established and directed Dig In Farm in Shutesbury, Massachusetts, a farm-based educational center, focused on the intersection of social and environmental justice within the context of a working farm. She designed the farm's approach and structure for education and farm operations, and ran new farmer training programs for young women. Prior to founding Dig In Farm, Grace served as a member of the education team at Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association



*I am committed to honoring and continuing the tradition of Enid's open-hearted leadership.*

*– Grace Oedel*

(MOFGA), where she developed and administered educational workshops and conferences. Early in her career, Grace served as program director of a new Farm-to-Table program at the Woolman Semester School in Nevada City, CA, worked on an organic commercial vegetable farm, and managed the Yale University student farm.

"After an extensive search process, the NOFA-VT Board was unanimous in their choice of Grace Oedel as the next Executive Director," said Board president Andrew Knafel, of Clear Brook Farm in Shaftsbury, Vermont. "We are confident that her thoughtful outlook and tremendous skill set will be a great strength in reaching NOFA-VT's new goals moving forward, while deeply valuing its past."

*Grace, continued on page 3*



## NOFA VERMONT

NOFA: 802-434-4122

VOF: 802-434-3821

info@nofavt.org | www.nofavt.org

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joe Bossen  
Cheryl Cesario  
Abbie Corse  
Brooke Dimmick  
Peter Forbes  
John Hayden  
Annette Higby  
Caitlin Jenness  
Andrew Knafel  
Eric Sorkin

### STAFF

Kyla Bedard  
*Certification Specialist*

Kirsten Bower  
*Finance Director*

Livy Bulger  
*Educational & Outreach Events Coordinator*

Erin Buckwalter  
*Market Development Director*

Megan Browning  
*Winter Conference Coordinator*

Nicole Dehne  
*Certification Director*

Bay Hammond  
*Materials Review Specialist & Staff Inspector*

Kim Norman Mercer  
*Communications Coordinator*

Jen Miller  
*Farmer Services Director*

Maddie Monty Kempner  
*Membership & Advocacy Coordinator*

Abbie Nelson  
*Food Systems Education Director*

Laura Nunziata  
*Quality Assurance Specialist*

Grace Oedel  
*Executive Director*

Jennie Porter  
*Community Food Security Coordinator*

Winston Rost  
*Certification Specialist*

Brian Shevrin  
*Certification Specialist*

Jaime Silverstein  
*Farm Business Advisor*

Alice Smolinsky  
*VOF Office & Database Manager*

Gregg Stevens  
*Certification Specialist*

Becca Weiss  
*Share the Harvest Coord. & Office Assistant*

Kayla Strom  
*Office Manager*

## Summer thoughts from Erin

The sun, the sun, the sun! As I'm writing we finally have sun after many cool and rainy days. It's been a slow start to summertime weather, but we know you've all been busy prepping to plant crops, get pasture space set-up, and hopefully every once in awhile stopping to smell the apple blossoms. We've all been busy here at the NOFA office too and have a lot to report on - an exciting season of on farm workshops and socials coming up (learn more at [nofavt.org/onfarmworkshops](http://nofavt.org/onfarmworkshops)), the 5th anniversary of both NOFA-VT's Farmer Olympics and the statewide Open Farm Week (p. 11), and more.

Since our last edition of NOFA Notes, we've finalized our strategic plan and are excited to share it with you. This plan is for 2019-2023 and we believe provides both the clarity on NOFA-VT's work to make important changes in the local food system but also the flexibility to respond to big challenges or opportunities. The three headlining goals of the plan are: be the leader of Vermont's organic food movement, nurture a viable organic farm sector, and create a vibrant and responsive organizational structure. On page 9 you can read a little more about the process we used to develop our plan,

and if you're interested you'll also find a link where you can read the details.

July 1st also marks the start of our new executive director, Grace Oedel. We're very excited to have Grace on board and believe she's going to bring a lot to the organization. Please welcome her! We also hope you'll come out and meet Grace this summer—four of our Celebrate Your Farmer Socials will feature meet and greet opportunities with Grace. She'll be out and about all summer at other events too and we're planning even more opportunities for her to meet our members, farmers and broader community so keep up to date on our e-news and social media. As Grace transitions into the executive director role, I'm going to head back to work on other projects at NOFA. I truly appreciate all the support you have provided to me and our staff during this transition and look forward to seeing you out and about this summer too!

Cheers!



Erin Buckwalter, NOFA-VT Acting Director

## Welcome to our newest staff!

### ALICE SMOLINSKY VOF Office & Database Manager

Alice graduated from Green Mountain College with a BA in environmental studies focusing on environmental education. She worked as staff at summer camps in northern Vermont during and after college. Prior to coming to VOF, she was at Vermont Soap for seven years, doing various jobs and projects, including submitting their organic certification application. Alice is on the organizing board for two Contra Dances in northern Vermont, and is learning how to teach and call dances.



### KAYLA STROM Office Manager

Sustainable agriculture and food access have been the main threads weaving together Kayla's education, work, and way of life for the past 8 years. After graduating from the University of Vermont with a degree in Community and International Development, Kayla went on to manage school food and farm programs in Hawaii for three years. She helped to break down barriers for families to access nutritious and affordable food by providing resources and education. Kayla is excited to be back in Vermont continuing her passion for community food systems as NOFA-VT's new Office Manager. When she's not at our Richmond office, you can find her playing in the woods with her dog Indy, sipping tea with friends, or diving into another new craft project.





# A glimpse inside a hemp extraction/CBD operation

By Brian Shevrin, Vermont Organic Farmers Certification Specialist



Hiss-pop-pop. Hiss-pop-pop. A gleaming stainless steel behemoth occupies an entire wall of the industrial building that is home to Kria Botanicals, it drones on and on: hiss-pop-pop. Hiss-pop-pop. The rhythmic din is ceaseless as the tidy tangle of pipes, cylinders, valves, lights, and touchscreens performs some hidden but strenuous task. Filling the rest of the space are organized collections of scientific lab equipment. Pristine glass distillation columns and rotary evaporators sit here and there waiting their turn. A chemical analysis machine stands perched next to a computer, displaying previous data and hungrily anticipating the opportunity to produce

more. Everything is spotless, everything is in its place. But what, exactly, is this place?

All of these machines and instruments serve one purpose - to extract cannabidiol, or CBD, from certified organic hemp. Much attention has already been paid to the explosion in the number of farmers in Vermont planting hemp this year. After the 2018 farm bill made it federally legal to do so, many organic growers

saw a promising opportunity to cash in on the trend of growing hemp, a cannabis cousin of marijuana.

*"As a proud Vermont business, we're totally focused on quality, from the hemp we source to the products we sell. Attaining organic certification is a key differentiation for us in a crowded market and it's already helping our business grow. We're proof that NOFA's leadership in Vermont is directly leading to job creation and economic growth."*

- Bill Lofy, CEO Kria Botanicals

Once these farmers grow their hemp crop another step is required if they want to make CBD products. Through some method they must extract a concentrate of the CBD. There are several ways to go about this, but the method applied at Kria Botanicals is called super-critical carbon dioxide extraction. The hissing and popping machine pumps liquid and gas phases of carbon dioxide through ground up hemp material. The carbon dioxide is recovered and the resulting output is a highly pure extract of cannabinoids.

Organic growers bring their hemp to Kria for this service and receive back prepared CBD extracts, which Kria formulates with other organic ingredients such as coconut oil.

As the clean and tidy facility would indicate, the Kria team is highly professional and knowledgeable. While the hemp industry suffers from an image problem, the Kria team defies any potential stereotype. On a recent visit, the NOFA Vermont staff were impressed by the level of detail and care with which Dan, Bill, and Rhea approach their hemp extraction process. Like most organic producers, they value the quality of their product - and the satisfaction it can bring to the consumer - above all else. ✨

Grace, continued from page 1

Grace has an inclusive vision for agriculture and a robust understanding of the many current challenges our agricultural community faces now and into the future. "In Vermont--and in the whole country--we are currently facing a number of intimidating challenges. An erratic climate, degradation of rural communities, an aging farmer population, lack of economic opportunity for young people, and rampant social and environmental injustice," said Grace, while reflecting on the role of organic farming in Vermont's future. "The organic farming movement can offer potent solutions to all of these most pressing problems. I am grateful to join the NOFA-VT team to help support NOFA's amazing work offering viable, elegant, joyful solutions for a hopeful, resilient--and delicious--future." ✨



## Meet Grace!

NOFA-VT's new Executive Director, Grace Oedel, will be traveling around the state to several of our socials this summer. Join us for delicious pizza, a farm tour, and to learn more about Grace and what she brings to the organization. Join NOFA-VT & Grace at the following Celebrate Your Farmer pizza socials:

**7/18 - Green Wind Farm (Fairfield)**

**7/24 - Harlow Farm (Westminster)**

**8/1 - Small Axe Farm (Barnet)**

**8/14 - Meeting Place Pastures (Cornwall)**

**Directions & details: [nofavt.org/onfarmworkshops](https://nofavt.org/onfarmworkshops)**





# Strawberry Musings

By Eugenie Doyle, Last Resort Farm

My birthday is the summer solstice so I think I was born to grow strawberries and I have (with Sam) since 1980! My favorite way to eat them is fresh from the field, a no-brainer if they are organic and of varieties selected for flavor instead of size and ability to ship long distances. And I am usually too busy this time of year to prepare strawberry dishes. Luckily, our customers are not! Here is a recipe from longtime customers, Brian Appleberry and Gabrielle Mikula.

I also want to mention that our absolute most enthusiastic PYO strawberry fan was Enid. She came every year even in the early days when we were transitioning from conventional to organic growing and hardly knew what we were doing. Then she brought her family, her neighbors, everyone she could nab from Huntington and Richmond.

I don't have her son Eli's smoothie recipe but I know that was one of the last foods she could truly enjoy and it had to be from Last Resort berries.

**We dedicate our PYO season this year to Enid! Pick, eat, share, and enjoy.** 



## Strawberry Vinaigrette

(For Asparagus or almost anything else)

This is best made using the same method as when making mayonnaise, with a blender. When done it should be the consistency of a creamy salad dressing.

Pour into a blender:

- 3/4 c tarragon vinegar (make your own, if you want)
- 1/2 c strawberries, fresh or frozen (thawed)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- Pinch dry mustard
- 2 cloves (or to taste) pressed garlic

Turn the blender on high and very slowly (1/8" stream) pour in:

- 3 c vegetable oil

Serve over lightly steamed hot or cold asparagus. If desired, marinate 1 hour. Refrigerate leftover vinaigrette in a closed container. Keeps for a long time.

# Local Products Wanted!

  
**City Market**  
Onion River Co-op

## Current Local Food Sourcing Needs

### Grocery

Beet Sugar  
Nuts (black walnuts,  
hazelnuts, etc)  
Flour Tortillas

### Grains

Barley  
Buckwheat  
Rolled Oats

### Meats

Buffalo  
Duck  
Ham

### Dairy & Perishables

Goats' Milk  
Single-Source Cottage Cheese  
Eggs

For a full list, visit [www.citymarket.coop/local-product-gaps](http://www.citymarket.coop/local-product-gaps) or contact Claire Ross at 802-861-9747 or [CRoss@citymarket.coop](mailto:CRoss@citymarket.coop).

[www.citymarket.coop/local-product-gaps](http://www.citymarket.coop/local-product-gaps)

## Your Community-Owned Grocery Stores

82 S. Winooski Ave, Burlington, VT  
Open 7am - 11pm every day • (802) 861-9700

207 Flynn Ave, Burlington, VT  
Open 7am - 9pm every day • (802) 540-6400

[www.citymarket.coop](http://www.citymarket.coop)



# Ask Callie

Dear Callie,

**I have been following the debate on whether or not hydroponic products should be labeled organic. Recently I heard a rumor that "organic" hydroponic operations have been allowed to spray herbicide on the land underneath their hydroponic containers. Can you please explain this very concerning development?**

Sincerely,  
Clay Loam

Dear Clay,

The essential problem with allowing hydroponic products to bear the organic label is that in doing so, one has to ignore a good bit of the organic regulations in order to justify the decision. The organic regulations require that all organic farmers improve the quality of their soil. In addition, the farm's soil must be free of prohibited substances for a minimum of three years prior to harvesting crops that will be labeled as organic. In order to allow hydroponic produce to be labeled as organic, certifiers and the USDA have essentially said that the sections of the regulations that apply to soil fertility and crop rotation are not relevant and can be ignored. This means that farmers that grow product in coconut coir and other nutrient free media can have their peppers, cucumbers, blueberries, tomatoes and raspberries fertilized continuously with

natural fertilizers and define that as organic production. This is much easier to do than manage and improve soil fertility on a farm. Organic growers that grow crops in the soil are working to improve the soil fertility in order to allow the plants to thrive. They are rotating their crops to prevent pests, diseases, and to cycle between plants with different nutrient needs. The difference between these two growing practices is tremendous. One practice feeds the soil and plants; the other practice feeds only the plant.

But why does this mean that hydroponic producers can label their produce as organic and use herbicides? Because some certifiers consider the soil fertility parts of the rule as not applicable to hydroponic growing. With this understanding, the natural next step is to make another determination that the soil underneath the hydroponic containers is also "not applicable" to the growing practices of the hydroponic operation. If the soil underneath the containers is not considered relevant to the organic farm then spraying herbicides to kill weeds would be an allowed practice.

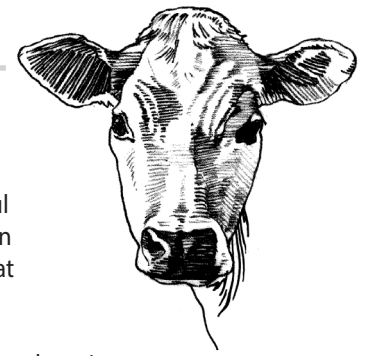
Fortunately, many people in the organic community vehemently disagreed with this idea and demanded that this practice be immediately discontinued. The USDA put out a formal statement on June 3rd to prohibit the practice of allowing herbicides to be sprayed

under hydroponic containers. This wrongful interpretation illustrates that the practice of certifying hydroponic products is incompatible with the organic regulations. If we are allowed to ignore some of the standards, how do we know which ones can't be ignored?

In addition to improving soil fertility, organic growers are required to improve biodiversity. This means, managing farms for beneficial insects, birds and other wildlife. If acres and acres of soil are covered in landscape fabric, as is common for hydroponic container production, how is that farm encouraging biodiversity? Is this another standard that is not applicable to hydroponic production?

We are certainly in uncharted and dangerous waters. If we want our organic farms to meet the organic regulations, then core organic farming principles like soil fertility and biodiversity cannot be ignored.

Sincerely,  
Callie



## Enid's Orchard: a growing legacy

by Jen Miller, NOFA-VT Farmer Services Director

As many of you know, one passion of our beloved Enid was building community over shared food. Enid traveled the state-talking, eating, and cultivating connections throughout the agricultural community. This spring, Enid's Orchard was established on farms around the Vermont, creating a growing legacy for all to remember her by.

The idea was simple. To represent each of the 31 years Enid worked at NOFA-VT, 31 heritage apple trees were planted on Vermont farms. Many of the farmers were among the first to work with Enid to become certified organic. All of the farmers shared her passion for organic and sustainable agriculture and her love for their communities. Each tree is connected by a tag designating it as part of Enid's Orchard.

And the idea has spread. Many other people who were part of Enid's life have planted a fruit tree at their houses, farms, and schools. These trees all bear the Enid's Orchard tag as well, building out the community beyond the 31 core trees just as Enid would have done- the bigger the Orchard, the more bounty that will be harvested and shared!

Many thanks to Scout Proft of Someday Farm, with whom the idea for Enid's Orchard originated and would not have come to fruition without! If you are interested in planting a fruit tree in Enid's honor, there's still time. Select and source your tree, email Scout Proft (info@somedayfarmvt.com) to procure, at no cost, a metal "Enid's Orchard" tag for your tree, then nurture the tree as it roots and grows. A complete map of all the trees in Enid's Orchard



will be unveiled this fall on the NOFA website and displayed at the 2020 NOFA-VT Winter Conference.





## Living Potting Soil for Organic Growers

**"The Fort Light potting soil has been a mainstay on my farm for the last nine seasons. For healthy seedling production there is nothing better, more consistent, or dependable on the market."**

– Katrina Becker, Cattail Organics, Athens, WI



vermontcompost.com • 802-223-6049




# NOURSE

The Best Berry Plants Since 1932

### The Leading Small Fruit Nursery Today!

- Excellent Customer Service
- Wide Variety Selection
- Technical Support
- Complete Lab Facility for  
Tissue Culture & Virus Indexing

**Strawberry**  
**Raspberry**  
**Blackberry**  
**Blueberry**  
**Currant**  
**Gooseberry**  
**Elderberry**  
**Asparagus**  
**Rhubarb**



Nourse Farms  
41 River Road  
South Deerfield MA 01373  
413.665.2658

noursefarms.com  
info@noursefarms.com






### NATURAL FERTILIZERS & SOIL AMENDMENTS

ENVIRONMENTALLY COMPATIBLE PEST CONTROLS

**FRUIT & VEGETABLES**  
**LANDSCAPING**  
**NURSERIES**  
**ORCHARDS**  
**TREE & TURF CARE**  
**AND MUCH MORE...**

\* for a complete list of WSDA & OMRI listed products  
please see our website.

More info on  
**NORGANICS.COM**  
or call for the location of your  
nearest wholesale distributor

ph: 802-222-4277  
email: info@norganics.com  
fax: 802-222-9661



# Join us in Amherst

## For the annual NOFA Summer Conference

If your summer schedule is filling up fast make sure the 45th NOFA Summer Conference is on your calendar. August 10th-11th will be alive at Hampshire College with fun lively bands, dancing, workshops, youth programming, panels, and meetups. We will be there, and it would be amazing to see you there too!

This years keynote speaker is Sandor Katz, acclaimed author of "The Art of Fermentation" and food activist.



Don't miss the opportunity to be nourished by the collective wisdom and knowledge of decades of farming, gardening and activism that makes up the work of our 7 NOFA chapters. There are scholarships, volunteer opportunities and other discounts on registration that can all be found at [www.nofasummerconference.org](http://www.nofasummerconference.org).

*See you there!*



### Labels for Direct Marketing & Value-Added Products

**Questions on labeling your products?  
We have solutions.**

We design and print labels for farm products including beverages, cheese, fruit, meat, pickles, salad greens, yogurt and vegetables.

Do you need a freezer label or one that is biodegradable? Are you looking for great value and responsive customer service?

To get started, fill out the Quote Request Form on our website today.

CATALOG ONLINE  
[www.growersdiscountlabels.com](http://www.growersdiscountlabels.com)  
1-800-693-1572  
[info@growersdiscountlabels.com](mailto:info@growersdiscountlabels.com)



## Harvest

by Caitlin Gildrien

for Enid

The way people married a long time  
begin to resemble each other, her life's work  
was there in her face: sunshine,  
good earth, the kind of richness  
that rises from deep below,  
that is carefully tended,  
that can neither be painted on  
or washed away.

I didn't see her near the end,  
but even the late photos still have it,  
despite everything — that shine,  
like a just-scrubbed carrot,  
burnished and glowing in the hand.

Perhaps that seems a lowly praise.  
Perhaps you've never dug a carrot

from good loam, felt it tug back against your pulling,  
all the fine roots that tethered it there,  
the finer mycorrhizae that fed it from the waste  
that you had piled in the back corner  
and turned until it grew warm and dark  
as a womb, then dark and cool,  
then spread it upon the beds  
where you lay down a triple line  
of little ridged seeds. Perhaps  
you've never felt their particular roughness  
between the pads of your fingers  
and thumb as you sprinkle them.

Perhaps you've never put your nose  
inside a bag of carrot seeds,  
and startled at their uncarrotty spice.

Perhaps you've never grown carrots  
to store for winter. Never let them go to frost,  
let the tops wilt down a bit,  
so that the sunshine gathers somehow  
even stronger inside them,  
then dug one — it's too early, not the harvest day,

but you couldn't wait, dug just this one  
from the row, felt it resist your pull,  
then the sudden release  
as it comes free,  
the damp soil clinging,  
then falling away.  
Perhaps you've never known  
that sweetness.



# VERMONT'S SUMMER FARMERS MARKETS

SATURDAY

- 1 Bennington • 10-1 pm
- 2 Brattleboro • 9-2 pm
- 3 Burlington (Downtown) • 8:30-2 pm
- 4 Craftsbury • 10-1 pm
- 5 Grand Isle • 10-2 pm
- 6 Londonderry • 9-1 pm
- 7 Middlebury • 9-12:30 pm
- 8 Montgomery • 9-1 pm
- 9 Montpelier • 9-1 pm
- 10 Morrisville • 9-1 pm
- 11 Newport • 9-2 pm
- 12 Norwich • 9-1 pm
- 13 Randolph • 9-1 pm
- 14 Rutland • 9-2 pm
- 15 Shelburne • 9-1 pm
- 16 St. Albans • 9-2 pm
- 17 St. Johnsbury • 9-1 pm
- 18 Waitsfield • 9-1 pm

SUNDAY

- 19 Dorset • 10-2 pm
- 20 Glover • 10-2 pm
- 21 Putney • 11-2 pm
- 22 Winooski • 10-2 pm

TUESDAY

- 2 Brattleboro • 4-7 pm
- 23 Burlington (Old North End) • 3-6:30 pm
- 24 Northfield • 3-6:30 pm

WEDNESDAY

- 25 Danville • 9-1 pm
- 26 Jeffersonville • 4:30-8 pm
- 7 Middlebury • 9-12:30 pm
- 11 Newport • 9-2 pm
- 14 Rutland • 3-6 pm
- 27 South Hero • 3-6 pm
- 28 St. Albans Bay • 4:30-7:30 pm
- 29 Woodstock (Village Green) • 3-6 pm

THURSDAY

- 30 Burlington (UVM Medical Ctr) • 2:30-5 pm
- 31 Fair Haven • 1-3 pm
- 32 Jericho • 3-6:30 pm
- 33 Killington • 3:30-6:30 pm
- 34 Manchester • 3-6 pm
- 35 Milton • 3:30-7 pm
- 36 Peacham • 4-7 pm
- 37 Poultney • 9-2 pm
- 38 Royalton • 3-6 pm
- 39 Waterbury • 3-6 pm

FRIDAY

- 40 Arlington • 4-7 pm
- 41 Bellows Falls • 4-7 pm
- 42 Brandon • 9-2 pm
- 43 Chelsea • 3-6 pm
- 44 Hardwick • 3-6 pm
- 45 Hartland • 4-7 pm
- 46 Ludlow • 4-7 pm
- 47 Lyndon • 3-6 pm
- 48 Richmond • 3-7 pm
- 49 Rochester • 3-6 pm
- 50 Townshend • 4:30-7 pm



For the most up-to-date  
directions & details for  
2019 VTFMA member markets, visit:  
**WWW.NOFAVT.ORG/  
VTFARMERSMARKETS**



**VERMONT**  
AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOODS & MARKETS

**#RootedinVermont**



**BUY FRESH. BUY LOCAL. BUY DIRECT.**



# NOFA-VT's Farm Share Program: A win-win for farmers & eaters

By Jennie Porter, Community Food Security Coordinator

NOFA-VT's Farm Share Program turns 25 this year! This program brings nutritious, fresh foods to the tables of Vermonters who might not otherwise have access to them. Started in 1994 in response to the increase in food insecure children and adults in Vermont, the Farm Share Program draws on NOFA-VT's long relationship working with farmers committed to community food production and feeding all members in their communities regardless of income. Each year, the program subsidizes half the cost of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares for over 200 households, providing a season's worth of fresh, nutritious farm products to limited-income families and children. The 50% savings on shares is achieved through an innovative cost-share structure in which community members and current CSA members support their neighbors' shares by donating funds that are matched by NOFA-VT's Share the Harvest fundraiser. The program has grown from serving a dozen individual families and three farms in 1995 to more than 500 low-income Vermonters (216 of which were children) and 38 farms in 2018.

The need for the Farm Share Program

in Vermont is great. According to Hunger Free Vermont, 10% of Vermonters (and 15% of Vermont's children) live in food insecure households, meaning they do not have regular access to nutritious food. Adults in households considered to be food insecure are so limited in resources that they are running out of food, reducing the quality of food their family eats, feeding their children unbalanced diets, or skipping meals so their children can eat. Vermonters' growing need for food assistance is also evident in the Farm Share Program where a growing interest in the program has translated into longer waiting lists for program applicants.

What makes the Farm Share Program unique among food assistance programs is that it simultaneously promotes farm viability and community food systems while helping limited-income households. It is a win-win for both farmers and those in need of fresh, nutri-



tious food. Farmers receive the full price for shares and are able to recruit new customers that otherwise wouldn't be able to participate in their CSA. Limited-income Vermonters are able to participate in the local food economy and support their neighbors. Supporting local farm businesses keeps money in our state and people employed, and protects our working landscape. ✨

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION,  
AND TO DONATE, VISIT  
[WWW.NOFAVT.ORG/FARMSHARE](http://WWW.NOFAVT.ORG/FARMSHARE)**

## Our 5-year Strategic Plan is complete!

By Erin Buckwalter, NOFA-VT Acting Director

Twice a decade, we pause to reflect deeply on our work, to celebrate our achievements and endeavors, and to create a new strategic plan for the coming five years. To ensure this plan focuses on the most pressing needs, NOFA-VT staff and board started by listening. We conducted dozens of stakeholder interviews, completed a full-member survey, and gathered feedback at our 2018 Celebrate Your Farmer socials around the state. The board and staff also analyzed statewide and national trends to develop an understanding of how we can position our organization to address the major challenges facing the local and organic agricultural sectors. Looking internally, NOFA-VT staff completed a 12-month program strategy process which included program assessment, visioning, (re)articulation of program strategies and identifying implementation plans. We looked earnestly at the organization and developed strategies to maximize our strengths, while addressing our weaknesses. The result is a plan that ensures the continuity and refinement of our hallmark

programs through an agile lens, allowing us to respond nimbly to emergent needs and important opportunities.

This year's planning process coincides with a monumental transition for our organization. In December 2018, after 31 years of executive leadership, Enid Wonnacott retired and shortly after passed away. Enid was an important advocate for organic agriculture, not just in Vermont, but across the country. Her belief in building a "big tent" (bringing together people from all different backgrounds to work on common goals) and her focus on the importance of vibrant, agriculturally-based communities have informed NOFA-VT's work over the past three decades and positioned NOFA-VT as a central organization in Vermont's agricultural support system. Enid will be deeply missed, and this strategic plan is a testament to the strong organization she helped to build as well as a road map that honors her legacy in the organization's next chapter.

With this plan, we hope we have captured



our excitement and passion for building an economically viable, ecologically sound and socially just Vermont agricultural system. The three primary goals of the plan are: 1) be the leader of Vermont's organic food movement; 2) nurture a viable organic farm sector; and 3) create a vibrant and responsive organizational structure. Please take some time to read through our plan to steward our work over the next five years. We invite you to join us in this important work. ✨

**We invite you to review the  
NOFA-VT 5-year Strategic Plan online...  
visit: [nofavt.org/strategicplan](http://nofavt.org/strategicplan)**

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

We welcome the following members who joined us or renewed their membership in the second quarter of 2019:

## NEW MEMBERS

Christine Anderson, Manchester Center, VT  
Matt & Rex Gillilan, E Fairfield, VT  
Mark Mihaly, East Calais, VT  
Philip Wagenbach, Castleton, VT  
Tucker Andrews, Jericho, VT  
Marc & Stephanie Bourdelle, Sheffield, VT  
John Cushman, Waterville, VT  
John DiGiuseppe, Johnson, VT  
Hilary Famolare, Brattleboro, VT  
Robert Grim, Colchester, VT  
Michelle LaRocque-Tipton, West Burke, VT  
Frederick LeBlanc, Colchester, VT  
Joie Lehouillier, Johnson, VT

Jennifer Lewis, Enosburg Falls, VT  
Justin Michaels, Waterbury, VT  
Heidi Thunberg, Brownsville, VT  
Paige Wener, New Haven, VT  
Karen Wiseman, Worcester, VT  
Morgan Laurent, Derby Line, VT  
Judy Geer, Morrisville, VT  
Nasser Abdel-fatah, Braintree, VT  
Kari Anderson, Morrisville, VT  
Elizabeth Dronkert, Lyndonville, VT  
BB Farrell, North Ferrisburgh, VT  
Casey Hodge, Mount Holly, VT  
Nola Kevra, Ripton, VT

Sherry Maher, Athens, VT  
Orest Pelechaty, Benson, VT  
Maurice Perrault, Fairfield, VT  
Genevieve Smyth, Enosburgh, VT  
Robin Baldwin, Huntington, VT  
Nana Delaney, Craftsbury, VT  
Bob Hooker, Pittsford, VT  
Maureen Hurley, Topsham, VT  
Heather Owens, Madison, MS  
Meadow Squier, Tinmouth, VT  
Heather Strachan, Jamestown, NY  
Dr. Joyce R. Young, N.D., Orleans, MA

## NEW & RENEWING BUSINESS MEMBERS

American Flatbread Waitsfield, Waitsfield, VT  
Black River Produce, North Springfield, VT  
City Market, Burlington, VT  
Clear Brook Farm, Shaftsbury, VT  
Community Bank N.A., Plattsburgh, NY  
Cooperative Insurance, Middlebury, VT  
Dobra US LLC, Burlington, VT  
Farm Viability Program VHCb, Montpelier, VT  
Elizabeth Ferry, S Royalton, VT  
Gardener's Supply Co, Burlington, VT  
Green Mountain College, Poultney, VT  
Green Mountain Organic Creamery, Hinesburg, VT  
High Mowing Organic Seeds, Wolcott, VT  
Iroquois Valley Farms, Arlington, VT  
Ismael Imports, LLC / Boswellnes, Colchester, VT  
Kennedy Farms, W Charleston, VT  
Luce Farm Wellness, Bethel, VT

Marandale Farm, Westford, VT  
Mocha Joe's Roasting Company, Brattleboro, VT  
Phoenix Feeds Organix, LLC, New Haven, VT  
Quarry Road Farms, Middlebury, VT  
Red Hen Baking Company LLC, Middlesex, VT  
Rhapsody Natural Foods, Cabot, VT  
Rose Wilson Consulting LLC, Norwich, VT  
SolarFest, North Bennington, VT  
Sunja's Oriental Foods, Inc, Waterbury, VT  
The Corse Farm Dairy LLC, Whitingham, VT  
The Sugarman of Vermont, Inc., Hardwick, VT

Upper Valley Food Coop, White River Junction, VT  
Upstate Elevator Supply Company, Burlington, VT  
UVM Center for Sustainable Ag, Burlington, VT  
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Montpelier, VT  
Vermont Bean Crafters Co, Waitsfield, VT  
Vermont Farm Bureau, Richmond, VT  
Vermont Public Radio, Colchester, VT  
Vermont Soap, Middlebury, VT  
Willsboro Farm, Willsboro, NY

## NEW VOF CERTIFICATIONS

*Vermont Organic Farmers welcomes the following new producers who have recently obtained organic certification (certified between 3/1/19-6/1/19) for all or a portion of their operation, joining the nearly 700 organic farmers & processors throughout the state.*



**Kria Botanicals**  
**Organic CBD LLC**  
**Black River Produce**  
**Ananda Gardens**  
**Norman Shorey**  
**Big Gear Coffee Roasters**  
**Common Roots**  
**Maurice Perrault**

**Kevin Brown**  
**Sapsicle Farms**  
**Gavin Ryan**  
**John Tiffany**  
**John Hayes**  
**Scott & Sherri Joyal**

*Learn more about the benefits of certified organic, locally grown at [www.nofavt.org/why-organic](http://www.nofavt.org/why-organic)*





# Celebrating 5 years of Vermont Open Farm Week: 8/9-8/15

Do you love local food and farms? Want to get to know your farmer better -- and to get a behind-the-scenes look into Vermont's vibrant working agricultural landscape? During Vermont Open Farm Week, you can meet the farmers, plants, and animals that bring your favorite high-quality Vermont products to your plate.

What's the greatest part about Open Farm Week? Every farm is unique! Milk a cow and harvest a carrot at one farm, sit on a tractor and take in the smell of freshly cut hay at another. Find up-to-date lists of participating farms and search by location or product at DigInVT.com, your portal to Vermont's agriculture and culinary experiences.

### FAQ's:

When will the list of participating farms be ready? We'll finalize and post the complete

list of participating farms in July 2019.

### What can I do at the farms?

The activities will vary from farm to farm. Some farms might have scavenger hunts or wagon rides. Others may have tours, pick-your-own crops, produce for purchase, or animals that you can meet.

Still other farms will offer on-farm dinners or workshops. When you arrive at a farm, check in with a farm employee to see what will be offered during your visit.

What should I wear, and what should I bring to the farm? Weather in August can be unpredictable! Dress in layers and wear close-toed shoes that can get muddy. Bring along a water bottle, bug spray, rain gear, sunscreen



and a camera! You may also want to bring a cooler, in case there are items you'd like to purchase during your visit.

Will there be food at the farm? Some farms will be serving food, but look at each farm's listing to confirm what they are offering.

**We can't wait to see you at Vermont Open Farm Week 2019!**

## NOFA-VT launching Farm Beginnings Program this fall

By Jen Miller & Jaime Silverstein, NOFA-VT Farmer Services Team



Farmers need to be experts in so many fields; focusing solely on production will only get even the most skilled grower so far if they lack capacity in marketing, financial management, human resources, or equipment maintenance. To enhance our Farmer Services Program's ability to support farmers in developing this range of skills, NOFA-VT is launching our Farm Beginnings® program this fall! Farm Beginnings is a year-long program designed for aspiring and beginning farmers that is farmer-led and community based. The curriculum for Farm Beginnings was developed in 1996 by the Minnesota-based Land Stewardship Project and a group of farmers who recognized the need for more cohort-based learning opportunities that would support beginning farmers in developing their core skills. A Farm Beginnings Collaborative evolved so the curriculum could be shared widely and also to create opportunities for shared learning among service providers. The Collaborative includes thirteen agricultural organizations across the country - and NOFA-VT is now number fourteen!

Our Farm Beginnings program will start in the late fall with a

series of in-depth business-planning sessions taught by farmers and service providers who will offer first-hand knowledge on topics such as goal-setting, land access, equipment selection, accounting, and marketing. Participants will increase their knowledge on all aspects of farm management, improve their decision-making ability, and develop a business plan for their farm (or future farm). With their plans in hand, participants will move from the classroom into the fields for the second half of the Farm Beginnings program in which they will learn from an experienced farmer mentor and attend on-farm workshops throughout the season.

Farm Beginnings is a great option for both aspiring farmers (those that have farm experience and a goal of starting their own farm business) and beginning farmers in the first few years of running their own business looking to enhance their skill sets. Look for the release of the full application and program schedule later this summer. To learn more and to receive updates about our Farm Beginnings program, visit [www.nofa.org/farm-beginnings](http://www.nofa.org/farm-beginnings) or email Jaime Silverstein at [jaime@nofavt.org](mailto:jaime@nofavt.org).

### Winter Conference RFP



We invite you to participate in our vibrant Winter Conference by sharing your ideas, resources, and skills. We are currently accepting proposals for workshops for next year's conference, to be held on February 15th-17th, 2020 at the University of Vermont in Burlington.

**Read more online:**  
[nofavt.org/winterconference](http://nofavt.org/winterconference)



**NOFA VERMONT**  
**PO BOX 697**  
**RICHMOND, VT 05477**

*Return Service Requested*

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 37  
Richmond, VT



*Join us on the farm!*

[nofavt.org/onfarmworkshops](http://nofavt.org/onfarmworkshops)

## ON-FARM WORKSHOPS & CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIALS 2019



*Learn something new this growing season!*

*Are you interested learning about practices to improve soil health and efficiency on your farm? Making your homestead or backyard into an edible landscape? Creating your own medicinal salves from Vermont-grown plants? At a Pizza Social, you can visit a beautiful farm, meet other NOFA-VT members, and enjoy wood-fired pizza with place-based toppings sourced from that farm.*

- 7/11 - Celebrate Your Farmer Social: De La Bruere Organic Dairy (Essex)
- 7/18 - Celebrate Your Farmer Social: Green Wind Farm (Fairfield)\*
- 7/24 - Celebrate Your Farmer Social: Harlow Farm (Westminster)\*
- 7/27 - Vital Signs: Knowing Soil from the Ground Up (Quechee)
- 7/31 - Celebrate Your Farmer Social: Wildstone Farm (Pownal)
- 8/1 - Celebrate Your Farmer Social: Small Axe Farm (Barnet)\*
- 8/6 - 5th Annual Farmer Olympics (Burlington)
- 8/7 - Raising Youngstock & Barn Design (Danville)
- 8/8 - Grass-milk Production Systems (Charlotte)
- 8/14 - Celebrate Your Farmer Social: Meeting Place Pastures (Cornwall)\*
- 8/15 - Celebrate Your Farmer Social: West Farm (Jeffersonville)
- 8/17 - Edible Landscapes for the Homesteader/Gardener (Plainfield)
- 8/21 - Veggie Wash-Pack Getting You Down? (Starksboro)
- 8/28 - Celebrate Your Farmer Social: Rogers Farmstead (Berlin)
- 8/29 - Pest & Disease Walk for Commercial Growers (S. Royalton)
- 8/30 - Medicinal Herb Gardening & Salve-Making (Lincoln)
- 9/5 - Pasture Management & Annuals for Summer Grazing (Cornwall)
- 9/17 - Exploring Practices & Policies for Improving Soil Health Series (Brattleboro)
- 9/26 - Exploring Practices & Policies for Improving Soil Health Series (Highgate Center)
- 10/1 - Exploring Practices & Policies for Improving Soil Health Series (Middlebury)

*Join us at select  
socials marked with  
an \* to welcome  
NOFA-VT's New  
Executive Director,  
Grace Oedel!*