



## SUMMER 2018

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

# Mushrooms, moths, medicine making, milk quality and more...join us for on-farm workshops

Are you interested in learning more about soil health, how to grow your own mushrooms, or how to identify and use common edible weeds? Come and learn with NOFA-VT this summer at one of our on-farm events! Our workshop series features over two dozen on-farm opportunities where gardeners, homesteaders and commercial farmers can gain practical knowledge, share experiences and ideas and get to know your local farm community.

Our summer series has workshops for every background. We have soil health workshops for both the gardener, homesteader and commercial grower. Come and learn how to assess your soil health and implement practices to build carbon in your soils, making them more resilient to the changing climate. Both avid gardeners and growers will find our two organic pest management workshops helpful. Join Scott Lewins & Victor Izzo of UVM as they share their latest research using organic methods to control Leek Moth and Colorado Potato Beetle.

If you're interested in learning how to grow and forage your own food, join us at our Grow Your Own Mushroom workshop at Peaceful Harvest Farm in Worcester. At this hands-on workshop, you'll plug your own logs, take a tour of the farm and learn about indoor cultivation and the medicinal



properties of mushrooms. Join Katherine Elmer of Spoonful Herbs at one of our two Weed Walk and Medicine Making workshops where you'll walk around a local farm, identifying and gathering edible weeds. Katherine will share some tips on their medicinal uses and will show you how to prepare medicine from the herbs collected.

Share a meal with your community from our wood-fired pizza oven and take a tour of a local farm at one of our on-farm Celebrate Your Farmer Socials this summer; from Westfield to Whitingham- we'll be holding twelve socials all over the state, visit our website [www.nofavt.org/onfarmworkshops](http://www.nofavt.org/onfarmworkshops) to find the summer event nearest you! We look forward to seeing you out on the farm!

NOFA-VT members take note! In addition to a farm tour and delicious wood-fired pizza

from our mobile oven, six of our twelve pizza socials this summer will also include a discussion about NOFA-VT's strategic plan for the next five years. We encourage members especially to attend these socials and share your thoughts to help shape our goals and priorities as we look toward the future.

Members are encouraged to bring friends and/or family members to a pizza social in your area! They are a great way to introduce people to NOFA-VT and to a local, organic farmer. You can also help us spread the word by posting our workshops and socials on the events section of your local Front Porch Forum or in the calendar of your local newspaper!

See the back page for a complete list of all workshops and pizza socials. See you at the farm!



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## Summer Thoughts from Enid

The strategic planning committee of NOFA board and staff have been working since the spring to articulate what our organizational values are. Of course, NOFA-VT has had mission and vision statements for a long time, but we have never worked through a process to articulate our values. It has made me think about the process as an individual, as well. You live your life according to your values, but it is difficult to be inward-facing and introspective and try to name what it is you feel, how you act, and why.

Every 5 years, as we work on a new strategic plan, we reevaluate our mission and vision, and reflect on why we do the work we do. Values are enduring and distinctive core beliefs. They are guiding principles that never change. Core values are part of our strategic foundation: the beliefs and purpose that we are truly committed to. Values define not *how* we do our work, or *what* work we do, but *why* we do what we do. Our process began with all board and staff articulating five values, which were then clumped into themes by a committee. Since so many words have so many meanings (e.g. "health") and so many words are (almost) interchangeable (ie, inclusivity, accessibility, equity) it was a more challenging process than we envisioned at the outset.

The themes that have emerged, at the end of this winnowing process, are: food equity, farm viability, education, community, health, respect for farmers, stewardship and organic integrity. All of the values have descriptive statements that accompany them. For example, for food equity, we qualify that "all people, regardless of circumstance, should have access to nourishing local and organic food."

Explaining your purpose and reason you exist can be motivating and inspire people to act. Our four new board members—Peter Forbes, Brooke Dimmick, Eric Sorkin and Joe Bossen—started their NOFA tenure with a lot of navel gazing and analysis. The mission, vision and values were approved by the Directors at the July board meeting.

The other strategic planning work we are doing this summer is to ground truth our goals and

objectives at the Celebrate Your Farmer Socials. We are holding 12 socials this summer, and 6 of them will provide the opportunity for members to give input on our goals and objectives, on the *What* and the *How* NOFA works. Per usual, we will have our mobile pizza oven to cook dinner for all who attend, featuring products from the farm. Please join us and give your input into our work. One of the best things that members can do is

invite friends and neighbors to attend an on-farm social with you. It is a great opportunity to introduce more people to another one of our values: Community. We detail that theme with the following description: "Engaged

communities are resilient communities. Food creates genuine connection between people and the land, nurtures relationships, and provides the opportunity to celebrate those who feed others." I am so appreciative of the organic farming community and look forward to seeing many of you throughout the course of the summer!

Enid Wonnacott  
NOFA-VT Executive Director

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# Food, Money, & Joy: How Direct Markets Support Eaters & Farmers

By Kate Spring, Good Heart Farmstead

"I'm in it for the view!" It wasn't what we were expecting to hear when we asked CSA members why they chose our CSA, though the Worcester Mountains do stand prominently across the valley from our hillside farm. What we expected was to hear more about vegetables. And for sure, getting fresh local organic vegetables was a driving force for our members, but there was also so much more:

"I am committed to eating locally as much as possible—keeping more money in the local economy, reducing environmental harm, supporting small businesses and getting beautiful, fresh food," one member wrote. Another said her key motivators were "supporting a farm directly and having as close a relationship as possible to the production of as much of the food I eat as possible, without having to grow it myself. Knowing exactly where my food comes from and participating in community efforts to be self-sustaining."

It quickly became clear that community, the environment, and the economy all weave together when it comes to buying food. Vermont eaters want more than fresh produce—they want to know that the food they're buying plays into a larger solution to environmental issues, a stronger local economy, and a stronger community. Across Vermont, direct food sales through CSAs, farmers markets and farm stands play a role in all three of these.

Let's start with the economy. According to a study done by the American Independent Business Alliance, "On average, 48 percent of each purchase at local independent businesses was recirculated locally, compared to less than 14 percent of purchases at chain stores." Whether it's dairy, maple, produce or fruit, skipping the supermarket and instead buying food directly from Vermont farmers helps keep more money in the local economy, and in turn helps grow the economic well-being of Vermont.

Direct sales not only help the wider economy, they also contribute to the economic feasibility of small farms. While wholesale sales are part of many farms' income streams, farmers retain all the profits from direct sales and can receive 40% more money for each sale, because no intermediary businesses are taking profits. This can help lead to more financially sustainable farm businesses. At the

same time, direct sales through farmers markets, CSAs and farm stands aren't more expensive for eaters.

In fact, a 2015 Vermont Agency of Agriculture led price comparison study between farmers markets and retail stores found that, "When comparing local products, farmers' market prices are competitive a majority of the time, and, in some cases, local products available at farmers' markets are actually less expensive than the same local products available at retail establishments." A follow-up 2016 study by NOFA-VT, which included CSAs and farm stands, found certified organic CSAs to be the most financially competitive compared to retail stores, likely because of the built-in 10-15% discount many CSAs offer. Whether it's a farmers market, farm stand, or CSA, these studies show that direct markets offer a financial win-win for farmers and eaters.

Of course, it's not just about the money. The natural landscape and environment is at the heart of who we are as Vermonters, and organic farmers are among those on the front lines of environmental stewardship. We use practices that build soil, reduce erosion, and increase both flood and drought resistance. From these practices we're able to grow food that is healthy for eaters in a way that enhances the sustainability and regeneration of the land. It's not just lip service—direct markets offer the highest level of transparency short of growing your own food. When buying direct, eaters can ask farmers about their practices, and in the case of many CSAs, eaters regularly visit the very farms their food is grown on. So just as every dollar spent in direct sales supports farmers who are working to build and maintain a resilient landscape, direct sales also allow eaters to know exactly how and where their food is grown.

In eating local and buying direct from farms, eaters support their health, their families, the environment, and Vermont farmers. But more than that, they have experiences that make their lives happier. Picking up a CSA share or strolling through the farmers market is about so much more than food. It's about cultivating relationships and community, both of which are roots of happiness.



A happy customer at the Middlebury Farmers Market.  
Photo by Penni Rand

In a Harvard study called Very Happy People, results showed the correlation between social support and happiness is higher than the correlation between smoking and cancer. Over the last five years of running our CSA, we've seen that the community aspect of the share is just as big a draw as the vegetables. When we asked our members what they value most about the CSA, they responded:

- "I value the high quality food and great relationship with the farmers."
- "I value the community focus, farmer knowledge and friendliness."
- "The gorgeous produce, and the community feeling."

As a farmer, it's a deep privilege and joy to hear how kohlrabi brings someone back to childhood, how eating from our farm keeps their memories of their grandfather alive, or how their kids will finally eat fresh vegetables (to the detriment of having exactly no snap peas left by the end of the car ride home).

On CSA pick-up days, our members visibly relax as they step out of their cars and shake off their work days. They linger in the farm stand, talking with us and other members,

*Direct Markets, continued on page 5*

# Dear Callie,

I have recently been hearing about a new labelling program called the Real Organic Project. I have been an organic vegetable farmer for over 20 years. I have been wondering what this program is about, how it affects the organic label and whether someone like me should be interested in a program like this?

Confused in Calais

## Dear Confused,

Born out of the frustration that the National Organic Program (NOP) no longer represents the original values of the organic movement, the Real Organic Project (ROP) was created by two Vermont organic greenhouse growers Dave Chapman of Long Wind Farm and David Miskell of Miskell's Premium Organics. These two producers originally became involved in the national conversation about how to define organic when they realized that the NOP was allowing hydroponic produce to qualify as organic. They realized that their product—tomatoes, kale and other produce—grown in carefully managed soil in greenhouses was being replaced in the marketplace with produce grown in a medium with no nutrients (usually coconut coir) and fed non-synthetic fertilizers, that was also cheaper to produce. The emphasis

on “feeding” the plant and not the soil, struck them as in conflict with the original values of the organic movement where managing soil was the foundation for plant nutrition, as well as how to protect the natural resources of the farm. As these two farmers got more involved in national policies, they discovered some other areas where the NOP was failing small growers. The areas of concern included the NOP's recent decision to withdraw the organic livestock and poultry practices rule which would have made significant changes to the organic regulations regarding animal welfare, specifically prohibiting the practice of allowing “porches” to qualify as the outdoors for organic poultry.

Essentially the ROP is attempting to call attention to these problems by creating a labeling and certification program that does not allow controversial practices like hydroponic production and requires poultry to have real access to the outdoors as well as verifying other animal welfare requirements. At issue here is how to raise awareness of these important failings of the NOP, without losing consumer confidence in the organic label. One way that the ROP is attempting to do this is by setting up their program as an “add-on”

label. This means that a producer interested in getting certified as ROP must first obtain USDA organic certification. Some advocates of ROP feel that this will actually attract more producers to the USDA organic program.

Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF), the USDA accredited certification program of NOFA-VT is supportive of the ROP's efforts. However, farms certified by VOF are not hydroponic, nor are they keeping poultry confined to porches. Our Vermont organic farms embody the consumers' vision of the family farm that raises and grows healthy food without synthetic chemicals while also protecting the natural resources of their farm. It is our unique challenge in Vermont to continue to promote our organic growers and organic farming in general while also working to improve the National Organic Program. Hopefully, the ROP is another way to do just that.

Sincerely,  
Callie



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# An interview with long-time homesteading NOFA-VT members: Sarah & Charlie Calley

By Enid Wonnacott, NOFA-VT Executive Director

When we received a membership renewal form from Sarah and Charlie Calley last year, I was intrigued when they said that they were one of NOFA-VT's longest renewing members. I instantly wanted to meet with them! As an organization that continuously asks, How do we reach new members?, and What drives members to renew?, and How can we most effectively engage our members? – getting to meet with long-time members is a real plus.

I visited the Calleys on a beautiful fall day and they spent some time discussing their homestead and their membership commitment over the years. The Calleys live in South Ryegate where they moved from New Hampshire in 1980. They live off the grid, manage a 210 acre hill farm currently raising American Milking Devons, and raised 3 children on the lamb, chicken, pork and vegetables they produced over the years.

## How did you first get introduced to NOFA-VT?

Both Charlie and Sarah were influenced by the back to the land movement of the 1970's, and first became members in 1973, soon after NOFA-VT's incorporation in 1971. Charlie was a reporter in New Hampshire for the NH Times and was writing a lot about agricultural subjects. Longtime NOFA-VT member Robert Houriet invited him to an organizing meeting in New Hampshire, and he found many people with the same interests at the meeting.

## What NOFA-VT programs have you been involved in over the years?

The Calleys used to attend the annual winter conference when it was held at VTC.

In addition, they used to attend summer workshops that were close to their home; Charles said he wanted to learn to be a good farmer and he knew that "to be a good farmer, you have to be smart and brave." He took advantage both of workshops and the on-farm technical assistance of Willie Gibson, then Technical Advisor for NOFA-VT.

## What motivates you to renew your membership annually?

Sarah and Charlie said, "NOFA-VT supported us through education and access to a support network of like-minded people when we needed it, so we want to support you at this point. There are a lot of resources that are helpful, including the TNF (NOFA's regional quarterly newspaper), Acres farming magazine and the Small Farm Journal from Oregon." They added, "NOFA-VT is intelligent, decisive, inspirational, serious, and we know you are not fly-by-night."

## What could NOFA-VT do to support you more?

The Calleys would like NOFA-VT to start a Common Ground Fair (like MOFGA has) at the Tunbridge Fair grounds, expand the Bulk Order with more seeds, support pollinator protection, and continue to support farmers markets, "a highlight of community building that can provide balance to the doom and



gloom." In addition, as is true of many back to the landers, the Calleys are in their 70's, downsizing and interested in succession planning to keep their land free from synthetic fertilizers and toxic pesticides.

.....  
Interviewer's note: If I were starting all over again, I might jump on the Common Ground Fair bandwagon – this has come up a lot over the years! Both the NOFA-VT board and staff are committed to interviewing members and stakeholders annually to ask them what they care about, and I ended my interview by asking the Calleys what they are currently thinking about. They responded that they care about the Monarch butterfly, and always leave milkweed in their pastures. They care about climate change, immigration policy, the direction of education and health care rights. They also care about seeds and were the "keepers of the corn" for the Abenaki Indians' corn for 35 years. Thank you Charlie and Sarah for being so committed to nurturing your Vermont hill-farm and for your long-time commitment to NOFA-VT!



Direct Markets, continued from page 3

asking questions, swapping recipes, sharing stories, catching up on school board issues and soccer games.

Unlike a grocery store, the CSA pick-up is a place where people introduce themselves and get to know each other. It's a place where we grow the social networks that can support us both physically, through fresh food, and emotionally, through relationships. More than once I've listened as a CSA member teared up and shared the challenges they were facing.

And when we as farmers face challenges—my husband throwing out his back, my Lyme diagnosis—our CSA members show up with open ears offering support back to us.

Whether it's through a CSA share, a farmers market, or farm stand, buying food directly from farms is a vital way to grow strong communities. Direct markets support the heart of Vermont and play a foundational role in the authenticity of who we are as a state and as Vermonters. This is how we connect to each other and the land; how we give everyone the opportunity to be part of the land, part of

their food, and part of something bigger than themselves.

Direct markets lead to direct connections, and in this way, they have the power to not only feed Vermonters healthy food and support the economic feasibility of farmers, they also have the power to literally make us happier. So this season, seek out your local farmers market. Join a CSA. Buy your veggies from a farm stand. I promise, you'll be happy you did.



# Summer Policy Update

By Maddie Kempner, NOFA-VT Membership & Advocacy Coordinator

## VERMONT LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

2018 has been a busy year in both the state and federal policy realms. Because there are so many updates to share, we're providing a summary of our top issues below. Find a full recap on our advocacy page at [nofavt.org/advocacy](http://nofavt.org/advocacy)

### H.663 - AG ENTERPRISE BILL

We are excited to share that H.663, the ag enterprise bill, was signed into law by the Governor on May 21! NOFA-VT worked in close collaboration with other farm organizations and town/regional planners to move H.663 through the legislature this session. This legislation will provide a level playing field for farms across the state who wish to start and operate accessory on-farm businesses such as farm tours, meals, educational workshops and farm stays.

We are proud of the collective effort of farm groups including Farm to Plate, Vermont Farm Bureau, and Rural Vermont, who came together in support of this bill and in support of Vermont farmers. Stay tuned for details regarding an on-farm celebration of its passage!

### H.903 – “REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE” BILL

H.903 would have put the Agency of Agriculture's Vermont Environmental Stewardship Program (VESP) into law and provided the program with additional funding. The bill passed the House but did not make it through

the Senate. We expect some form of a regenerative agriculture or healthy soils bill to emerge again next session.

### FARM BILL

With the 2014 Farm Bill set to expire at the end of September, Congress is busy writing its replacement. The House version, which contained substantial cuts to nutrition funding and completely eliminated funding for key programs like organic certification cost share and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), passed a full House vote in June, after failing to do so during an initial vote in May.

The Senate version released the week of 5/28 was passed by the full chamber and is bipartisan, where the House version was not, and is a major improvement over the House version in terms of funding for organic certification cost share and other NOFA-VT priorities.

The two chambers will now form a conference committee in order to reconcile the two versions and try to pass a new bill before the current one expires in September. NOFA-VT is in regular contact with our Congressional delegation, advocating for a Farm Bill that supports organic farmers and limited income Vermonters.

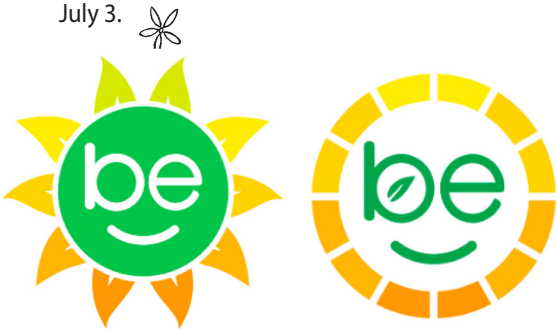
### ORGANIC CHECK-OFF

On May 15, the USDA announced that it was terminating its rulemaking proceedings to establish a multi-commodity organic research and promotion program,

also known as the organic check-off. The proposed check-off was backed by Organic Trade Association but was controversial within the organic community. In our comments on the proposal, NOFA-VT expressed concerns about farmer representation, increasing paperwork burdens (even for those farmers exempt from paying into the check-off), and limitations around marketing/messaging to promote organic through USDA.

### GMO LABELING

On May 3, USDA released its proposed rules for implementing the federal GMO labeling law. Congress passed the so-called National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Law in July 2016, preempting Vermont's much stronger labeling law just one week after it took effect. Among other things, USDA's draft rules propose using the abbreviation "BE" (for bioengineered) rather than commonly used "GE" or "GMO", and they propose use of a symbol (pictured below) that is deceptive at best. For a complete summary of the proposed rule, visit our blog at [nofavt.org/blog](http://nofavt.org/blog). NOFA-VT submitted comments on the proposed rule on July 3.





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# The state of dairy in Vermont

By Kyla Bedard, Dairy Certification Specialist, Vermont Organic Farmers

Dairy farms are quintessential to Vermont's working landscape; a predominant reason for the open meadows, fields of grain and agricultural infrastructure we see statewide. Many farmers choose to farm for the opportunity to work the land, their love of animals, and being an important part of a rural community. Today, this way of life is being threatened by a global oversupply of milk and a broken commodity market in which farmers are being paid close to or below their cost of production. Dairy farming has always had its cycle of ups and downs, but for the last several years, conventional dairy prices have remained depressed without the usual upswing and now there is a similar shrinking of profit margins in the organic industry as well. These negative changes in the dairy market are forcing smaller farms to go out of business and leading to increased consolidation of the farms that remain. In 2010, there were 1,015 dairies in Vermont but today only 735 remain, of which over 25% (194) are certified organic.

Until early 2017, there was steady growth in the organic milk market and the four milk buyers in Vermont - Organic Valley, Horizon, Stonyfield, and Upstate Niagara - were steadily adding more farms to their truck routes. Organic milk is more expensive than conventional milk for a farmer to produce but it also commands a higher price and, until last year, the price was enough to offset expenses and have money left over for farmers to pay themselves and invest in their farms. However, in the fall of 2017, organic dairy farm income decreased in direct response to the global oversupply of organic milk. Some organic dairies have seen their pay price drop by almost \$10 for every hundred pounds of milk (also known as hundred weight or cwt) and some have been put under a quota by their milk buyers - limiting the amount of milk the buyer will purchase at the organic price. In addition to directly impacting many farmers' bottom lines, conventional farmers who are interested in transitioning to organic may not have an opportunity to do so until 2020.

The cause of this organic milk oversupply is complex and influenced by many factors. There is no national supply management system for milk in place in the U.S. - the market is controlled by the milk buyers. Organic milk buyers overestimated the growth of the

organic milk market, and combined with poor supply management, encouraged a large number of farms to transition to organic at a time when the market was perceived to be stronger. As these farms completed their transition to organic, the sudden influx of milk from these farms has contributed to the oversupply.

Additionally, in the western U.S. there has been an expansion of large, 5000+ cow organic dairies, which are often vertically integrated and able to produce more milk at a lower cost. This milk is mostly sold under private labels for companies such as Walmart, Costco, and Target. Different interpretations of the national organic standards by certifiers have allowed many of these large dairies to continually transition youngstock into their operations, which some argue goes against the intent of the standards. On the contrary, Vermont Organic Farmers, the organic certifier of the majority of Vermont's organic dairy farms, believes the standards allow for only a one-time, whole herd transition. The continual transition of youngstock allowed by some certifiers allows these other farms to raise youngstock conventionally at a lower cost to the farms than those in Vermont that are raising them organically, contributing to the oversupply of organic milk.


Finally, there is a shortage of available processing facilities for organic dairy products, impacting the amount of milk that buyers have been able to process and sell. While we've seen slight growth in the demand for full-fat products such as whole milk and butter, this has left an oversupply of skim milk. Historically, the surplus milk was dried and stored as milk powder, but milk is an international market, and as production and stores of dry milk have increased globally, it has become harder to find a market for that surplus product. We've seen an increase in demand for milk alternatives (e.g. nut beverages such as soy, almond, and coconut milk), further competing with the milk market.

These market circumstances are one of the many challenges both organic and conventional farmers are faced with right now. Farmers have seen an increase in paperwork and regulatory requirements; being certified organic is not an easy feat, it requires thorough record keeping, an annual

application and inspection. Coupled with market challenges, dairy farmers are dealing with increased water quality regulations, and public scrutiny due to Vermont's impaired waterways, of which agriculture is a contributor. While there is support from UVM Extension and NOFA-VT farm advisors to help farmers with both production technical assistance and business planning, change takes time and often costs money, and with the added financial challenges of the milk market, is a lot for farmers to handle in addition to milking, feeding and caring for their animals every day, 365 days a year.

Many of us choose to call Vermont home because we have a love for local food, the working landscape and our strong rural communities yet the future of Vermont's working landscape is now in jeopardy. What will Vermont look like without small, family dairy farms and what will take their place? How do we protect this way of life? These are tough questions that many in the industry and throughout the state are asking. We have been working with partners to determine what we can do to help dairy farmers in this time of genuine crisis.

Recently, we've seen an increase in non-natural disaster requests for our Farmer Emergency Fund from organic dairy farmers who need financial assistance. Through this Fund, certified organic and NOFA-VT member farms can apply for up to a \$2,500 grant and/or \$2,500 0% interest loan. We realize that this will not prevent farms from going out of business but we see it as a way to provide Vermont organic dairy farmers with some cash flow in times of emergency, where farmers cannot purchase feed for their cows or need help paying essential bills. We are concerned that as dairies continue to see a decrease in the amount they are paid for their milk, we will see even more requests. In anticipation of this, we are fundraising to grow our Farmer Emergency Fund, with a goal of raising \$50,000. Please consider contributing what you can to this fund to support our farmers. Donate here: <https://nofavt.org/blog/support-organic-dairy-farmers>.

And as always, choosing a brand that is local or that purchases from Vermont farms is a great way to support Vermont dairies in this time of need. 



# When life gives you weeds, eat em' (or share them with your local herbalist!)

By Katherine Elmer, Community herbalist, UVM faculty, and co-founder of Spoonful Herbs, Burlington Herb Clinic and Railyard Apothecary

As a Vermont herbalist and wild-crafter, I look forward to the lush spring greens available weeks before the arugula, kale and basil is ready in my garden. Together with my colleagues at Spoonful Herbs, every year we whip up a "Wild Weeds Pesto" for our spring offering of our Herbal CSA share. It almost always contains nettles, violet leaf, dandelion leaf, and lamb's quarters, plus seasonally inspired flair in the form of lemon balm, sage, or, my favorite because it provides an invasive species removal service; garlic mustard.

A few summers ago, I taught a course on the modern food system at the University of Vermont. One of the text books, *Consumed*, by Sarah Elton, set the stage for her account of the perils of our food system in the era of climate change with a rather dramatic statement that, according to climate projections, the only plant that will be able to grow in 2050 is lamb's quarters. No doubt this statement was meant to strike terror, and I would hope, action, into the hearts of readers. I already consider myself a climate activist but what had me the least phased was the prospect of living in a world with only lamb's quarters. Granted, I would miss the other plants, but if I had to choose a tasty, vigorous and nutritious green companion to nourish me into the future, that plant would be on the top of my list. Lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium album*) is also known as pigweed, goosefoot, or wild spinach. It contains high amounts of Vitamins C and A, Calcium, Phosphorous, Iron, and several amino acids.

Jill Winger speaks my mind in her blog post entitled "When life gives you weeds, eat em' (Or what to do with lamb's quarters)"- check it out at [www.theprairiehomestead.com](http://www.theprairiehomestead.com) for more fun facts and recipes. This is not only a chance to minimize your own garden labor or that of invasive species removal squads, there's wisdom (and science) behind eating plants from your local environment. The unique cocktail of plant chemistry in your backyard weeds has been carefully selected by that plant to ensure fitness in the unique environmental conditions it exists in. When that complex chemistry synergizes with the complex receptors and pathways of your physiology, it is relaying that fitness to the same environmental conditions to you. Rather than a harbinger of the perils of climate change, it may well be that lamb's quarters (and other backyard plants) are key allies as we adapt to the variable environmental conditions characterized by a changing climate. So, yes, we at Spoonful Herbs are coaxing you onto the "eat your weeds" band wagon (if you weren't already on it!). Taste the vitality (and the invasive weeds) by making your own batch of Wild Greens Pesto. ✿



Lamb's quarters or pigweed (*Chenopodium album*) is an abundant invasive weed commonly found in veggie gardens and disturbed soil. We often partner with Intervale Community Farm which gladly offer us their weeds for our pesto.



## WILD GREENS PESTO

A delicious and deeply nourishing pesto made with abundant spring or summer weeds instead of basil! Rich in vitamins, minerals, potent antioxidants, and detoxifying plant power!

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Place all ingredients in a blender and mix to a paste. Makes about 1 quart. Spread on bread or crackers, over pasta, with eggs, or mix with hummus or other spreads. Refrigerate or freeze. Best if used fresh within 1 week.

### INGREDIENTS:

Approximately 4 Cups Greens

1. Wild greens such as: Stinging Nettle, Wood Nettle, Lambs Quarters, Chickweed, Violet Leaf, Dandelion leaf, Garlic Mustard
2. Other Edible Greens like Spinach or Arugula
3. Other flavorful Herbs like Cilantro, Basil, Parsley, Dill, Lemon Balm or Mint

½ - ¾ cup nuts or seeds (sunflower seeds, pine nuts, almonds, or walnuts)

4-6 cloves of garlic (or scallion, chives or garlic scapes!)

½ - 1 cup olive oil

Lemon juice to taste lemon zest (start with a Tbsp.)

Salt to taste

Optional: add parmesan or other hard cheese

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[www.VermontFarmFund.org](http://www.VermontFarmFund.org)



# Thank you for supporting organic agriculture!

**NOFA-VT welcomes the following members who joined us during the 2nd quarter of 2018.**

## New & Renewing Business Members

Joan Aleshire, Cuttingsville, VT  
David Allen, Maple in Vermont, Charlotte, VT  
Angus Baldwin, Brewster Uplands Conservation Trust, Jeffersonville, VT  
Margaret Becker, Montpelier, VT  
Leslie B. Haynes, Rough Terrain Farm, Randolph, VT  
David Hughes, Essex Jct., VT  
Tammy Maberry, Charlestown, NH  
Eden Marceau-Piconi, Woodstock, VT  
Michael Murphy, Atkins Family Farm, Lincoln, VT  
Micah Murray, Murray Dairy, Fairfield, VT  
Jackie Osanitsch, Newbury, VT  
Ronald Patenaude, Green Valley Organic, Derby Line, VT  
Daniel Redondo, Orwell, VT  
Nathan Rich, Barnard, VT  
Tim & Sonya Roberge, Oughta-Be Farm, Chelsea, VT  
Joyce-Marie Sabourin, Sabey-Dog Flower Farm, New Haven, VT  
John Silloway, Silloway Farms, Randolph Center, VT  
Charles Williamson, Fairview, NC  
Brian & Patti Wilson, Morningside Farm, Shoreham, VT  
Jeff Meller, Cambridge, MA  
Megan Brakely, The Knoll at Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT  
Sarah Proulx, Burlington, VT

## New Members

Sarah Waring, Center for an Ag Economy, Hardwick, VT  
Amiel Cooper, Mountain Meadows Farm, Jamaica Plain, MA  
Catherine Kenyon, Nitty Gritty Grains of Vermont, Charlotte, VT  
Joel Pominville, Quarry Road Farms, Middlebury, VT  
Sjon & Elysha Welters, Rhapsody Natural Foods, Cabot, VT  
Susan Whitman, Richmond Community Kitchen, Richmond, VT  
Sunja & David Hayden, Sunja's Oriental Foods, Inc, Waterbury, VT  
Sue Miller, Upper Valley Food Coop, White River Junction, VT  
Suzanne Leiter, Vermont Land Trust, Woodstock, VT  
Mike Davis, Willsboro Farm, Willsboro, NY  
Claire Gear, Yestermorrow Design/Build, Waitsfield, VT  
Casey Lyon, Ismael Imports, Burlington, VT  
Deb Frimodig, Highland Sugarworks, Websterville, VT  
Martin Philip, King Arthur Flour, White River Junction, VT  
Stephani Kononan, Hunger Mountain Coop, Montpelier, VT  
Carla Kevorkian, O Bread, Shelburne, VT  
Doug Bell, CBD Vermont, Middlesex, VT  
Sam Fuller, All Souls Tortilleria, Waitsfield, VT

## NEW VOF CERTIFICATIONS

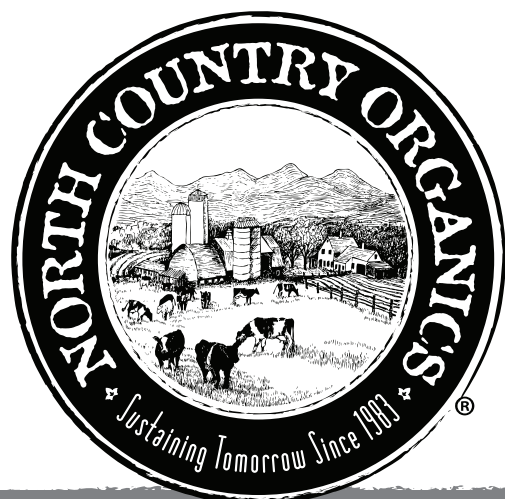
*Vermont Organic Farmers welcomes the following new producers who have recently obtained organic certification (certified between 3/1/18-6/1/18) for all or a portion of their operation, joining the nearly 700 organic farmers & processors throughout the state.*

Hunt's Farm Supply LLC  
Manning's Maple  
Sunnyside Dairy, Inc dba Sunnyside Maples  
Long Field Farm  
Patrick's Artisan Bakery  
Snowcap Brewing Company  
Murray Dairy LLC  
Maple in Vermont  
Silloway Farms, LLP  
Evening Song Farm  
Blackbird Organics LLC  
Watershed Farm  
David's Organics  
Myer's Produce



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

*Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our member survey! The results will be very helpful as we plan upcoming events and publications, and especially as we continue to improve our role advocating for organic farmers and all of you who care about a sustainable food system! Please visit our blog to see the results (pie charts & graphs!): [nofavt.org/memberresults](http://nofavt.org/memberresults).*



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## NOFA-VT's annual report is online

To save paper and mailing costs, we've posted our 2017 Impact Report on-line instead of mailing copies to all of our members. However, if you'd like a hard copy, we'd be happy to send you one. Just call our office at (802) 434-4122 or email [info@nofavt.org](mailto:info@nofavt.org). The report details the impact of our programs in 2017 and provides a financial overview. **FIND IT HERE: [WWW.NOFAVT.ORG/ABOUT](http://WWW.NOFAVT.ORG/ABOUT)**



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## 2018 ON-FARM WORKSHOPS & CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIALS • [NOFAVT.ORG/OFW](http://NOFAVT.ORG/OFW)

- 7/11 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (South Royalton)
- 7/12 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (Bakersfield)
- 7/18 – Organic Pest Control Study: Leek Moth (South Burlington)
- 7/19 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (Jericho)
- 7/20 – Weed Walk and Medicine Making (New Haven)
- 7/21 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (Whitingham)
- 7/24 – Improving Milk Quality and Pasture Systems (Newport)
- 7/25 – Robot Grazing Systems & Forage Harvesting (Washington)
- 7/27 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (W. Danville)
- 7/29 – Grow Your Own Mushrooms (Worcester)
- 7/31 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (E. Middlebury)
- 8/2 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (Windham)
- 8/3 – Organic Pest Control Study: Colorado Potato Beetle (Burl.)
- 8/4 – Weed Walk and Medicine Making (Putney)
- 8/6 – Pasture Management and Youngstock (Cornwall)
- 8/7 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (Westfield)
- 8/8 – Farmer Olympics (Craftsbury)
- 8/11 – Building Soil from the Ground Up (Hartland)
- 8/16 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (Brandon)
- 8/21 – Improving Soil Health for Commercial Growers (Worcester)
- 8/23 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (Barre)
- 8/30 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (Shaftsbury)
- 9/6 – ☆ **CELEBRATE YOUR FARMER SOCIAL** (Grand Isle)



## MEMBERS TAKE NOTE!

In addition to a farm tour and delicious wood-fired pizza from our mobile oven, six of our twelve pizza socials this summer will also include a discussion about NOFA-VT's strategic plan for the next five years. We encourage members especially to attend these socials and share your thoughts to help shape our goals and priorities as we look toward the future.

Members are encouraged to bring friends and/or family members to a pizza social in your area! They are a great way to introduce people to NOFA-VT and to a local, organic farmer. You can also help us spread the word by posting our workshops and socials on the events section of your local Front Porch Forum or in the calendar of your local newspaper!