



WINTER 2019-2020

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The Quarterly Newsletter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

Celebrating our Interdependence

Each year, the NOFA- VT Winter Conference provides a valuable opportunity for farmers, homesteaders, gardeners, land managers, educators, producers, and other food-system activists to participate in our vibrant organic community by sharing ideas, resources, and skills, and to celebrate all we are making happen together.

The theme framing this year's conference will be **Celebrating Our Interdependence**. At a time when divisiveness and fracture can feel like the status quo, NOFA-VT seeks to convene, reunite, connect, and imagine how we might come together to build a food system for the future. Come join this conversation!

We are thrilled to host the incredible keynote speaker, Niaz Dorry, to start this conversation on Saturday. Niaz has been a community organizer for over 30 years. Niaz describes her life changing moment in 1994, when she switched from organizing in communities fighting for environmental justice to organizing fishing communities. From the start, she recognized the similarities between family farmers' fight for a more just and ecologically responsible land-based food system and that of community-based fishermen fighting to fix the broken sea-based food system. She has been the coordinating director of the Northwest Atlantic

Marine Alliance since 2008 and is also the director of the National Family Farm Coalition. Niaz worked to create a partnership between both organizations

We all have a role to play in building a more democratic, just, a verdant food system, of and for the people.

– Grace Oedel, NOFA-VT Executive Director

to further cement the relationship and interdependence between land and sea.

Sunday's keynote will be a panel discussion facilitated by Lisa Fernandes, the Director



Top: Saturday's keynote speaker, Niaz Dorry, with a friend. Above: Lisa Fernandes, who will lead the panel discussion on Sunday.



of Communications for Food Solutions New England & Founder of the Resilience Hub in Portland, Maine. The panel guests will be Mariah Gladstone (Indigikitchen), Nancy & John Hayden (The Farm Between), and Hilary Martin (Diggers' Mirth Collective Farm), and their discussion will challenge the narrative of competition and scarcity, weaving a new story about interdependence, bounty, and the possibility of what happens when we come together to imagine a bold, interdependent, mutually beneficial food system with people, land, and justice at the core. This conversation will share ideas for what a thriving future might look like, if we work together.

At the conference, you can also participate in your choice of eighty workshops and roundtable discussions, and four Monday Intensives. Your favorite conference traditions like the lively Exhibitors' Fair and Sunday Ice Cream Social will be back, as well as the Sunday morning Wellness Fair and breakfast treats!

More information, and registration, at nofavt.org/conference.



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Winter thoughts from Grace

At a time when divisiveness and fracture can feel like the status quo, our mission calls us to reunite, to connect, and to imagine how we might come together to build a food system for the future. Our theme for our upcoming winter conference is "Celebrating our Interdependence." We see this call an important one in an election year especially. We want to welcome people into a conversation about unity instead of division, into a collective charting of the path towards a positive, thriving future of mutual benefit, resilience, and connection. We all need each other, and when we gather, we have all the tools we need.

Organic farmers understand that the health of the land is measured by the relationships in the ecosystem: farmers with soil, soil with fungi, fungi with plants, plants with pollinators, pollinators with eaters, eaters with farmers. A diverse, interdependent system is a healthy system, an ever more complex and interwoven system. The more relationships, the stronger and more resilient the system. We all need each other.

If increased social fracture and continued ecological decline is one option, organic farmers illuminate a more compelling path—one of relationships, of bio-regional unity, and of interconnected systems. We know that we must come together as a region, and then as a nation, to imagine even more boldly what the future of our food system can be. We know that we must build an agriCULTURE system rooted in, and sustained by, relationship.



We all have a role to play in building a more democratic, just, a verdant food system, of and for the people—whether we are farmers, eaters, parents, teachers, truck drivers, community organizers, artists. The challenges facing agriculture are problems that face us all. We can only solve them when we come together, all of us smarter together than any of us alone.

Grace Oedel, NOFA-VT
Executive Director



Calling Prospective Board Members!

There are currently 4 openings on the NOFA-VT Board (our by-laws allow a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 12 members.) When developing a slate of board candidates, the NOFA-VT Executive Committee evaluates several factors, including: gaps in expertise/skills the board needs, geographic distribution, and gender balance. The Executive Committee will be reviewing board nominees in January. If you are interested in nominating yourself or another member for the Board of Directors, please contact Grace at grace@nofavt.org or (802) 434-4122 ext. 17. Members who attend the Winter Conference will be given a ballot and new board members will begin their terms in April, 2020. Thank you for your participation!

Vermont Family Farmer of the Month Award

NOFA Vermont in partnership with VHC Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program, Shelburne Farms, and the Vermont Grass Farmers Association is excited to announce the release of the Vermont Family Farmer of the Month Award. This new fund makes a financial award to a Vermont family farmer each month for a project that will improve the viability of the farm. Awards recognize farmers whose businesses are contributing to a resilient Vermont agricultural landscape and demonstrate environmental stewardship through sustainable practices.

Learn more about eligibility and the application timeline at vermontfamilyfarmeraward.org/ or contact NOFA Vermont at info@nofavt.org, 802-434-4122. 



Seeking Young Chefs!

Jr Iron Chef VT is a statewide culinary competition organized by Vermont FEED (a project of NOFA-VT and Shelburne Farms) challenging teams of middle and high school students to engage in improving their own health and the health of their community by creating nutritious, local dishes to inspire school meal programs. Registration is now open for the 2020 competition, visit vtfeed.org/jrironchefvt to register.

Competition Details

- March 14, 2020 • 9:00AM–3:30PM
- Champlain Valley Exposition, Essex Junction
- **Admission:** \$3 per individual or \$5 per family (up to 4 people)
- **Morning heat:** 9:30–11:00AM; awards 12:00–12:30PM
- **Afternoon heat:** 12:30–2:00PM; awards 3:00–3:30PM

2019-20 Deadlines

- **November 15, 2019:** Early bird registration opens (\$130 per team)
- **December 13, 2019:** Early bird registration closes / regular registration opens (\$150 per team). Scholarship applications due.

Roasted Roots

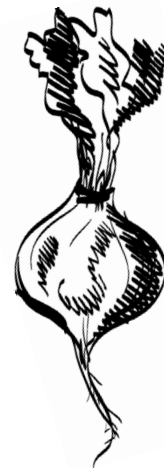
Roasted roots are a favorite of NOFA staff, and we love to serve these up (for free!) at the Winter Conference. Of course, when you roast roots at home you can use any root vegetable you like, including celeriac, carrots, or sweet potatoes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large butternut squash, halved, seeded and peeled
- 3 large Yukon gold potatoes, scrubbed
- 1 bunch medium beets
- 1 medium onion
- 2 large parsnips
- 1 head garlic, cloves separated, peeled, and minced
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Preheat 2 baking sheets.
2. Cut all the vegetables into 1" pieces. Cut the onions through the base core to keep some of the layers in chunky pieces. Toss all the vegetables with garlic, olive oil and salt in large bowl. Season generously with pepper.
3. Carefully remove the heated baking sheets from the oven; brush or drizzle with olive oil. Divide the vegetables evenly between the 2 pans, spreading them out to assure they don't steam while roasting. Roast the vegetables until tender and golden brown, stirring occasionally, about 45 minutes to 1 hour.



Farmers & Producers!

Coming up in 2020, as part of our work on the Farm to School Project VT FEED (a collaboration with Shelburne Farms), we will be working across the state to help schools purchase Vermont beef and Vermont maple syrup. This is part of the statewide Harvest of the Month program.

- **February** local beef will be featured
- **March** local maple syrup will be featured

For more information, contact our new Farm to School Director, Helen Rortvedt at helen@nofavt.org.



Meet Dave & Susan Folino of Hillsboro Sugarworks

By Winston Rost, VOF Certification Specialist

Picture a maple sugaring operation and what you do think of? Steam gushing out of a sugarhouse, lights on late at night? Miles of blue tubing along the old county road? Fully-crowned old maples with sap buckets hung out? But out of view from the road is the sugar maker looking for a leak in the vacuum system. The same leak that drove him crazy last week. You might also see the wash out from the latest torrential rainstorm this past Halloween.

Or you might miss Dave Folino tripping on an old shovel while pulling taps out of trees at the end of the season. He found it years ago and has since marked the spot on his sugarbush map as "the patched shovel". It had been worn in the middle and had been "painstakingly" re-patched with another piece of metal, only to be worn out again and then finally discarded.

Dave says he and Susan don't have that innate thriftiness those old sugarmakers had. "Sure," he says, "we try and make stuff go as long as we can but it's pretty amazing what they used to do." The reverential manner he uses to describe the patched shovel helps explain some of Dave and Susan's approach to things. Scrounge. Make do. Patch it up. Fix it. "I like to scrounge for equipment," Dave says. He showed off the Cleaver Brooks steam boiler that came from a box factory in St Albans, a Busch vacuum pump dug up in California, and a repurposed maple syrup filter press from a candy cane factory in Louisiana.

Working in the VOF office, certifying more than 200 maple producers, the VOF staff get to thinking of them as numbers. They all have a sort of "stat line" for us: Number of acres, number of taps, number of Forest Management plans, yield of maple syrup or sap per tap. Dave and Susan's stat line looks something like this: 356 acres, 15,000 taps, 1 forest management plan, and a 40 year average yield 2/5 of a gallon of maple syrup per tap. For the math inclined, take 15,000, multiply it by .4 and you get 6,000 gallons of maple syrup per year. But as always, behind the numbers are the farmers and their work. In this case, a lifes' work of working the woods, sugaring and building a business



around maple syrup.

Dave made sure I knew right from the start that the business was co-run by him and his wife, Susan. Dave does all the woods work and sugarmaking, Susan does the marketing, bookkeeping and most deliveries. They both pack syrup together. He says its great working together, except when it's not. Sometimes in the sugaring season they will talk maple at 6 in the morning and at 9 at night they are still talking about the business. "You have to make

You never think trees grow, but when you do a thinning in 1980 and then another one 20 years later, you can see it.

— Dave Folino

a conscious choice to get away from it (the work)." That's when they look forward to the annual post sugaring season trip after all the taps have been pulled and the operation is put to bed. Last year

they went to Cape Breton, Canada and a few years before that it was New Orleans. The best part of working together is being able to know "that we pulled it off."

Dave attended the recent Farm to Plate Gathering in Killington and was touched by all the smart, hard working, diligent farmers who are having a tough time making it work. "We got going at the right time," he said. Some of the hurdles these young farmers are coming up against, Dave and Susan have already "crawled over." Land was cheaper in 1979 and they were able to establish markets over 30 years ago that they still sell to. His first year, he made 15 gallons with scrounged equipment and leaky

buckets, but that was the beginning.

With a bachelor's degree in elementary education at UVM and an MBA from RPI, he didn't set out to be sugarmaker. He was in the publishing business, but he was the guy who always noticed how nice it looked outside and didn't necessarily want to be a desk jockey. "I had competence but not satisfaction." When he bought his first piece of land in Hanksville, VT, he also bought a Husqvarna chain saw. He took it home, started it up, but could not get it to cut anything. He called the dealer over the phone and the two of them put together that Dave had the chain on backwards.

You can say he has learned a few things since then. One of the things he is most proud of is the work in the woods itself. "You never think trees grow, but when you do a thinning in 1980 and then another one 20 years later, you can see it." The maple tree he favored was, "a little dinky thing and 30 years later you go 'whoa'."

Dave tells me: "If you produce it, you have to go sell it directly." It never occurred to Dave to sell maple syrup wholesale. They sell most of their crop directly, unless they have a big crop. They sell to a lot of co-ops, natural food stores, and some restaurants. They value the long-term relationships they have with so many of their customers. "When they ask us to deliver on Thursday at 1:30, we're there." They also have a busy online store, with customers from all over the place, and being certified organic has helped open some doors for them.

Relics in the woods, old barbed wire to trip over, a patched shovel. We marvel that people were so industrious and eked a living out in the woods, so long ago. The Folinos are doing the same. Will someone in the future stumble on their handiwork long after we're all gone?



Creative Cooking with Kids

By Maria Buteux Reade, NOFA-VT Farm to Community Mentor

A ten-year old boy licks the chunky batter off his finger and rolls his eyes in bliss. A thirteen-year old girl gently guides a less confident peer on how to carefully dice a carrot. At the sink, a pair of classmates giggle and chatter as they wash mixing bowls and muffin tins.

Welcome to Creative Cooking with Kids (CCK), developed in 2018 by NOFA-VT's Farm to Community Mentor, Scout Proft and Barb Smith. Now in its second year, this hands-on after-school program enhances elementary and middle school students' culinary skills and broadens their knowledge of the natural connection between farm-grown foods and healthy cooking. "CCK is not a standard cooking class," Scout explains. "We wanted to celebrate nutrition and the local farmers producing these ingredients."

Each class has a focal point, such as locally grown grains, beans, eggs, fruits and veggies, honey, maple, and dairy. Local professionals in the farm and food sector visit the class and explain what they grow or produce, and then the class prepares a related dish. A visit by a local beekeeper is followed by whole wheat biscuits slathered with raw honey; a dry bean grower shares his knowledge and the class

bakes black bean brownies (hands-down favorite!). Conversations with area orchardists and veggie farmers result in apple crisp or roasted veggie quesadillas. "We choose recipes that are nutritious, low cost, and easy to replicate at home," says Scout. "Every child goes home with a container of whatever they cooked that afternoon, and at the final class, they each receive a binder with all the recipes so they can continue to cook at home."

The flexible program, which can roll out in once-a-week sessions over the course of six to ten weeks depending on the school's needs, has been taught at four schools in the Manchester region. Suitable for fourth through eighth graders, ideally in groups of eight to fifteen, the host school provides the classroom and kitchen space. A trio of facilitators (a chef, an activity coordinator, and an assistant) supply essential equipment, utensils, materials, and all cooking ingredients in addition to the instruction and supervision. In the Manchester region, sponsors include Someday Farm, and The Kitchen Store at JK Adams. The school covers student tuition.

"CCK is more than measuring and mixing," Scout concludes. "It's designed to emphasize the importance of eating healthy, local



farm-produced foods and preparing them in kid-friendly recipes. We want the students to become more confident cooks, try new foods, learn about their local farmers, and have fun. Based on the feedback we get after each session, it seems to be working!"

A template is underway for 2020 so that Creative Cooking with Kids can be implemented in other schools across Vermont.



NOFA-VT Staff Updates

We've had some shuffling at the NOFA office recently! Erin Buckwalter has been promoted to the new position of Development & Engagement Director where she will work on fundraising, sponsorships, a capital campaign, and communications. Filling her role with direct markets will be Jennie Porter, in a new role as the Direct Markets Manager. Also, we are pleased to welcome the following new people to Team NOFA:



Helen Rortvedt, Farm to School Program Director

Helen brings an extensive professional background in food systems and experiential education. As Executive Director of KidsGardening, she worked to advance the school and youth gardening movement across the country. She was part of the founding team at Food Connects in Brattleboro, where she helped to establish and grow Farm to School programs with school nutrition programs and local purchasing. In addition, she has worked as both a classroom teacher (in Honduras and Vermont) and a field-based educator (in Virginia, Bolivia, and Peru). She also served as an environmental education Peace Corps Volunteer in Bolivia. Helen is a graduate of St. Olaf College and holds an M.A. in Sustainable Development from SIT Graduate Institute.



Bill Cavanaugh, Farm Business Advisor

Bill recently joined the team at NOFA-VT after working in livestock and meat value-added production. His background includes working on pastured livestock farms, retail and custom butchery, and most recently, business planning assistance for Vermont food makers at the Mad River Food Hub. He is excited to join the team at NOFA and be a part of the great work being done to support farmers statewide. Bill lives in Granville with his wife and young son, and spends his time gardening, making cider, and rounding up wayward chickens.

Local Products Wanted!

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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*

For a full list, visit www.citymarket.coop/local-product-gaps or contact Claire Ross at 802-861-9747 or CRoss@citymarket.coop.

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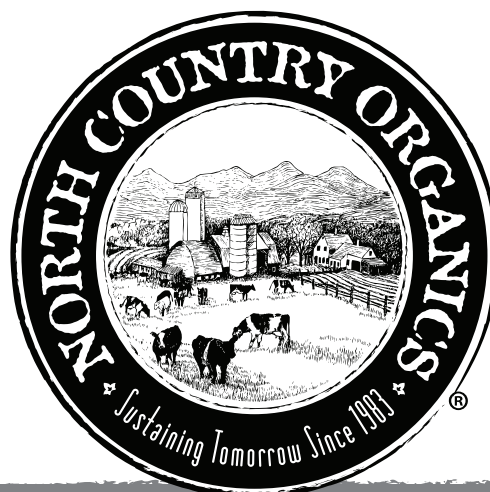
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Winter Policy Update

By Maddie Kempner, NOFA-VT Policy Advisor

This winter, NOFA Vermont is proud to be involved in a number of coalitions aiming to improve environmental outcomes of farming in Vermont. Each in their own way, the Payment for Ecosystem Services Working Group, the Pesticide Free VT Coalition, and the Dairy and Water Collaborative, are aiming to support farmers while encouraging transition toward more ecologically beneficial practices.

Payment for Ecosystem Services Working Group

In 2019, the Vermont legislature created the Soil Conservation Practice and Payment for Ecosystem Services Working Group (PES Working Group), to provide recommendations for financial incentives for farmers to implement practices to improve soil health, enhance crop resilience, and reduce agricultural runoff. Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) is a model that compensates farmers for services they provide for public benefit through ecologically sound land stewardship (e.g. water filtration, flood mitigation, pollination), in addition to the food and fiber for which they are paid in traditional markets.

NOFA Vermont was appointed to the seat designated for a representative of small scale, diversified farming and has been serving on the Working Group since September. As the Working Group nears our January deadline for reporting back with recommendations to the legislature, it is becoming clear that the 5-month timeline given for our legislative charge is insufficient. While no recommendations have been officially written, the group will likely seek more time to continue learning and exploring options for a model that will improve both farm viability and ecological resilience.

Pesticide Free Vermont Coalition

NOFA-VT is proud to continue our work on the Pesticide Free Vermont Coalition, which worked collaboratively to support the passage of H.205 (now Act 35) during the 2019 legislative session. Act 35 classifies neonicotinoid

pesticides as “restricted use” and provides additional resources for pollinator protection, technical assistance and education through the Agency of Agriculture. This winter, the coalition is back to work developing a campaign for stronger state action on pesticides in 2020. As the body of research demonstrating damaging effects of chemicals like neonicotinoids, glyphosate, and atrazine on human and ecological health steadily grows, we are seeking solutions to phase out the use of these and other harmful inputs in agriculture, while supporting producers in transitioning to less chemically-intensive practices.

Dairy and Water Collaborative

Throughout 2019, NOFA Vermont has been participating in the Dairy and Water Collaborative, a multi-sector stakeholder group focusing on the nexus between dairy farming's contribution to water quality improvement and improving the economic future of Vermont's dairy sector. Through our participation, we are supporting existing organic dairy farmers while also seeking to support more producers in transitioning to organic practices and away from chemical inputs.

NOFA-VT Members! Your support of NOFA is a vote for the kind of agriculture we all know can sustain healthy people and a healthy planet into the future. Now is the time to speak up in support of a resilient farming and food system. Can we call on you to raise your voice with us? Ready to find out how you can get involved? Email Maddie Kempner, Policy Advisor at maddie@nofavt.org.

Origin of Livestock Rule

In October, the USDA reopened its comment period regarding the Origin of Livestock rule for organic dairy animals, originally proposed in 2015. If implemented, the rule will close a loophole currently allowing some organic dairy producers to continuously transition animals from conventional to organic production,



rather than transitioning animals using a one-time, whole herd transition as intended by the organic regulations. This loophole puts producers meeting the intent of the regulations at a substantial economic disadvantage and undermines the integrity of the organic label.

On December 2, NOFA-VT and VOF submitted comments strongly supporting the origin of livestock rule and urging USDA to implement the rule without delay. Visit the NOFA-VT blog to read our full comments.

Support for the Origin of Livestock rule is nearly unanimous among the organic community nationwide. In addition to submitting our own comments, NOFA-VT and VOF signed on to a letter circulated by the Organic Farmers Association (OFA) in support of the rule, along with 77 other organizations. ✿

THANK YOU!

NOFA-VT held its annual **Share the Harvest** fundraiser on October 3rd. This fundraiser supports NOFA-VT's Farm Share Program, which helps subsidize memberships for limited-income Vermonters at local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms. This year, 53 stores, restaurants, co-ops, and breweries participated by pledging to make a donation of sales on October 3rd. As of this publication date \$11,840 has been raised towards our goal of \$20,000.

Information about the Farm Share Program and Share the Harvest can be found on the NOFA-VT website at nofavt.org/share-harvest. Donations towards NOFA-VT's Farm Share Program are tax deductible and are accepted year round.

Grow Your Farm with Effective Marketing

By Kate Spring, Farmer & Writer at the VOF Certified Organic Good Heart Farmstead L3C

Many farmers I meet are scared of marketing. They say it makes them feel icky, they don't know how to do it, or where to even start. Maybe that's where you find yourself, too.

If you've ever thought:

- "I'm an organic farmer! People should just know my produce is the best."
- "I don't need to do marketing – we have the highest quality products, so customers will find us."
- "Marketing is only for people who have to trick others into buying their stuff."

You're not alone. The problem is, this approach to marketing stunts your business growth. Before we go any further, let me ask you: what do you think of when you hear the word "marketing"? Is it a used car salesman or a Mad Men type executive, trying to convince you to buy something you don't want? That's the old marketing.

Today's marketing is based on permission, genuine relationship-building, and generosity. It's about connection, storytelling, offering something that will improve another's life, and doing it in a way that's honest and transparent. Today's marketing is about growing relationships. And as an organic farmer, you're perfectly positioned to successfully market your farm.

Think of it like building soil – one of the most important things you do as a business owner, and something you should be doing consistently. In much the same way, farmers who learn how to honestly share their farm's story and genuinely connect with customers can grow a thriving farm.

Instead of hoping people will come to you, you can reach out to them, and flip the script in your head to something like this:

- Since I'm an organic farmer, I can feel proud to reach out to customers and market my farm.
- We have the best quality produce, and helping customers find us means they'll be able to eat healthier and learn how good veggies can actually taste.

- Connecting with people in a genuine way helps us build trust with our customers, and that trust leads them to growing a relationship with the land and us as farmers.

So, ready to learn how to amend your relationship with marketing and start growing the customer relationships that will keep your business healthy? Here are three steps to get started with marketing:

1. Start with why. In his book *Start With Why*, Simon Sinek writes "people don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it."

If you have a choice between an organic tomato from a local farmer whose mission is to grow the best-tasting food possible and a conventional tomato from a conglomerate whose mission is to make food as transportable as possible, which will you choose? There is a distinct "why" behind each choice. Taste vs. Transport. Care for the land vs. Convenience. You can say a tomato is a tomato, but which one we buy is based on the why behind each option.

As a business owner, you need to know your why. Why are you running a business? Why are you farming? The answer to this question will inform what and how you communicate with your customers. For example, instead of simply saying what you do, you'll be able to add why you do it: We believe food should taste great, so we choose heirloom varieties known for their flavor, and we use organic practices to grow the healthiest plants possible – because healthy plants produce tastier tomatoes.

2. Tell stories. There's a saying that goes, "facts tell, stories sell." The most effective marketing sprouts from stories, and when you're telling your own story you don't have to worry about competition. Even if every other farmer in your region is growing tomatoes, you're the only one with your story of how and why you farm. Stories don't have to be long – you



Good Heart Farmstead L3C

Published by IG Kate Spring · [?] · August 28 · 🌱

Is Waylon really happy to be selling veggies, or did I trick him into a smile by saying "whatever you do, don't smile!"

Every Thursday we go to a sweet little market in Worcester, just a few miles from the farm. I see Waylon for a few minutes while I set up, and then he leaves the stand to run around with friends, only stopping back to gulp up his mandatory dinner before getting a homemade popsicle from another vendor.

It may be a small market, but it's got big heart. If you're local, stop by The Landing at 66 Elmore Rd this Thursday for music, food, and an evening campfire.

Also, if your kids aren't smiling for a photo, telling them not to smile works every time 😊



can communicate something personal and compelling in just a few sentences. Let's look at two examples:

Example 1: "We grow brandywine tomatoes because they taste great. Want to try one? They're \$5/lb."

Example 2: "My grandma used to slice tomatoes, sprinkle them with salt, and dish them out to me and my cousins on summer afternoons. I can still hear the smile in her voice every time I bite into a ripe brandywine. Want to try one? They're \$5/lb."

Stories let your customers feel the why behind your product and create a tangible connection between your offering and their desires. In both scenarios, you're not tricking anyone into buying a tomato. But in the second one you are offering an honest glimpse into why you grow tomatoes, and that story creates an opening for a customer to connect with you and decide to buy.

3. Ask yourself: How would I communicate if I were talking to my ideal customer?

There are people who will choose the conventional tomato over the heirloom organic

(continued on next page)

Spotlight on Soil Health

By Maddie Kempner, NOFA-VT Policy Advisor

This year, we have been busy digging into soil health as a key part of the solution to climate change and other ecological challenges. Healthy soil contributes substantially to climate resilience by filtering and slowing the flow of water across our landscape, mitigating the impacts of both flooding and drought, and sequestering excess carbon from the atmosphere.

In September and October, we hosted a 3-part on-farm workshop series aimed at facilitating farmer-to-farmer learning about soil health techniques and exploring policy approaches to improving soil health. The workshops took place at Rebop Farm, a highly diversified, grass-based livestock farm in Brattleboro; Choiniere Family Farm, a fourth generation, 100% grass-fed dairy farm in Highgate Center; and Elmer Farm, a certified organic mixed vegetable and flower farm in Middlebury.

Each workshop included an on-farm learning component, led by the farmer hosts, who shared their extensive knowledge and experience

using techniques like intensive rotational grazing, compost bedded pack systems, and organic no-till practices like direct seeding into overwintered cover crops. Following the field walk and discussion, each workshop concluded with a discussion about the opportunities and challenges farmers are seeing in innovating around soil health, and policy changes that could help expand opportunities and remove barriers.

This winter, takeaways from these discussions are being used to inform the Payment for Ecosystem Services Working Group about farmer perspectives. (To learn more about



the PES Working Group, check out the Winter Policy Update on page 7.) For a full recap of the series, visit our blog.

Looking ahead to 2020, we are excited to have funding support from Patagonia to continue organizing in support of soil health as a climate solution. Stay tuned for details about a second series of soil health workshops as well as farmer focus groups, each with an emphasis on climate resilience.

In addition, with Patagonia's support, we will be filming a 4-part video series, to be released throughout the year. The video series will feature organic farmers as leaders in soil health and climate resilience, while educating viewers about why healthy soil matters to us all.

We are dedicated to advocating for soil health as a solution to our most pressing environmental challenges, but we can't do it alone. A critical element of this work will be continuing to deepen our collaboration with partners across the state in favor of improved soil health and overall ecological resilience. ✿

Grow your Farm, continued from previous page

tomato. That's okay. The key to effective marketing isn't to try to convince people who don't share your ideals – it's to talk to those who do.

Everytime you go to share a story on Instagram, Facebook, or your website, imagine you're talking to your ideal customer. The one who also believes food should taste great, the one who understands that food is more than what you eat, it's a connection to those you love. When you speak to someone who's already looking for what you have, you can switch from pushing to offering. From convincing to sharing.

When you know your why, tell meaningful stories, and offer something to people that they genuinely want, not only will they feel good about buying from you, but they'll tell their friends, too. And no matter how targeted Facebook and Instagram Ads can get, word of mouth marketing is priceless. Because relationships can't actually be bought – they're grown story by story, seed by seed. So take these steps and start growing your marketing. Your farm will grow along with it. ✿

Kate Spring will be presenting a workshop at the Winter Conference. Connect with her at thegoodheartlife.com.



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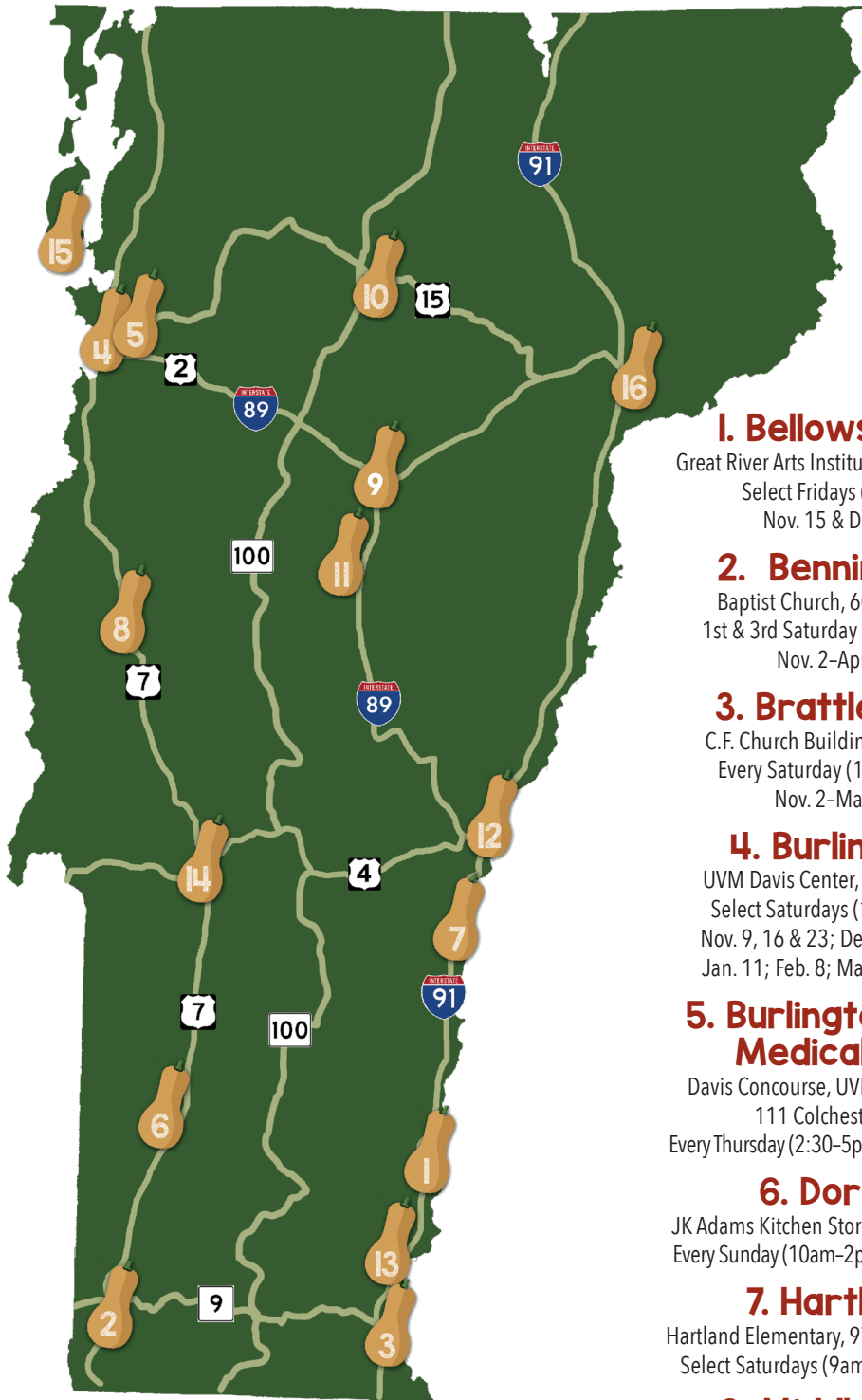
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Vermont's 2019-2020 Winter Farmers Markets



#RootedInVermont

VERMONT
AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOODS & MARKETS

1. Bellows Falls

Great River Arts Institute, 33 Bridge St.
Select Fridays (4-7pm)
Nov. 15 & Dec. 20

2. Bennington

Baptist Church, 601 Main St.
1st & 3rd Saturday (10am-1pm)
Nov. 2-Apr. 18

3. Brattleboro

C.F. Church Building, 80 Flat St.
Every Saturday (10am-2pm)
Nov. 2-Mar. 28

4. Burlington

UVM Davis Center, 590 Main St.
Select Saturdays (10am-2pm)
Nov. 9, 16 & 23; Dec. 7, 14 & 21;
Jan. 11; Feb. 8; Mar. 14; Apr. 11

5. Burlington UVM Medical Ctr.

Davis Concourse, UVM Medical Ctr.,
111 Colchester Ave.
Every Thursday (2:30-5pm), Nov. 7-Apr. 30

6. Dorset

JK Adams Kitchen Store, 1430 VT Rt. 30
Every Sunday (10am-2pm), Nov. 3-May 3

7. Hartland

Hartland Elementary, 97 Martinsville Rd.
Select Saturdays (9am-1pm), Dec. 14

8. Middlebury

VFW, 530 Exchange St.
Every Saturday (9am-12:30pm)
Nov. 2-Apr. 25

9. Montpelier

Location TBD
Every other Saturday (10am-2pm)
Dec. 7-Apr. 25

10. Morrisville

Green Mtn Support Services, 93 James Rd.
Select Saturdays (9am-1pm)
Nov. 23 & Dec. 14

11. Northfield

Plumley Armory, 24 ID White Ave.
1st Sunday of the month (11am-2pm)
Nov. 3-Apr. 5

12. Norwich

Tracy Hall, 300 Main St.
Select Saturdays (9am-1pm)
Nov. 9 & 23; Dec. 14 & 21; Jan. 11 & 25;
Feb. 8 & 22; Mar. 14 & 28; Apr. 11 & 25

13. Putney

Green Mtn. Orchards, 130 West Hill Rd.
Every Sunday (11am-2pm)
Nov. 24-Dec. 22

14. Rutland

VT Farmers Food Center, 251 West St.
Every Saturday (10am-2pm)
Nov. 2-May 2

15. South Hero

Congregational Church, 24 South St.
Select Saturdays (10am-2pm)
Nov. 9 & 23; Dec. 7 & 21

16. St. Johnsbury

St. Johnsbury Welcome Ctr, 50 Depot Sq.
1st & 3rd Saturdays (10am-1pm)

More details & directions:
NOFAVT.ORG/BUYDIRECT

Buy fresh. Buy local. Buy direct.

NOFA-VT Members: THANK YOU for supporting organic agriculture!

We welcome the following members who joined us or renewed their membership in the 4th quarter of 2019:

NEW MEMBERS

Eric Andersen, East Montpelier, VT
Gary Carrier, Carrier Farm, Washington, VT
Harvey Chaffee, Montgomery Center, VT
Skylar Clemens, South Stratford, VT
Kris Colby, Silver Spring, MD
Ollie Cultrara, Cornwall, VT
Tim Dooley, Glen Head, NY
Kate Eastman, Woodstock, VT
Plowshare Farm, Greenfield, NH
Dane Felton, Wilton, NH
Kimberly Goodling, Washington, VT
Susan Haney, Framingham, MA
T Hanson, Waitsfield, VT
Sue Haynie, St. Johnsbury, VT
Jessica Laporte, Stowe, VT
Emery Lynd, Cabot, VT

Ryan Miller, Commonwealth Botanicals, LLC, Lyndonville, VT
John Nicol & Christine Pierpont, Yellow Birch Farm LLC,
Peacham, VT
Laura Ramos, Quill Hill Farm, Poultney, VT
Janet Schwarz, Bristol, VT
Sarah Shaw, Hillside Botanicals, Randolph, VT
Madeleine Siegel, Colchester, VT
Les Snow, Marshfield, VT
Katie Sullivan, Irasburg, VT
John Tiffany, Enosburg Falls, VT
Brian Tijan, Underhill, VT
Marie Van Drunen, Chester, VT
Karina Warshaw, Burlington, VT
J. Peter Young, Plainfield, VT
Mary Young, Norwich, VT

NEW & RENEWING BUSINESS MEMBERS

Basin Harbor Club, Vergennes, VT
CT Greenhouse Company LLC, Middlefield, CT
Farmers To You, LLC, Calais, VT
Five Point Extractions, Johnson, VT
Highland Sugarworks, Websterville, VT
Northeast Hemp Commodities, Pittsford, VT
Resource Management, Inc., Holderness, NH
Richmond Community Kitchen LLC, Richmond, VT
Snowcap Brewing Company, LLC, Colchester, VT
South Royalton Market, S Royalton, VT
The Alchemist, Waterbury, VT
Vermont Soap, Middlebury, VT

NEW VOF CERTIFICATIONS

Vermont Organic Farmers welcomes the following new producers who have recently obtained organic certification (certified between 9/1/19-12/1/19) for all or a portion of their operation, joining the more than 700 organic farmers & processors throughout the state.



All Bliss Cannabis, LLC
American Hemp Company, LLC
Biddie's Knob Crops, LLC
Black Dirt Farm, LLC
Bravo Botanicals
Chip Natvig dba Pebble Brook Farm
Commonwealth Botanicals
Creek Valley Cannabidiol
Dean Hewitt
Doug Edwards, dba Green Point Acres (GPA)
FoodScience Corporation
Gary Carrier
Gildrien Farm, LLC dba Pryzm Hempworks
GMG Farms
Green & Gold CSA
Green Health CBD, LLC
Jason Basford
Joe Dixon
Josiah Jackson
Justin Michaels dba Hunger Mtn. Hemp
Matthew Morin dba Holland Hemp

Meristem Farms
Mountbrook Farm, Inc.
Northeast Hemp Commodities
Northeast Kingdom Hemp
Northeast Processing, LLC
Petrichor Farm, LLC
Piccolo Farms
Robert Butterfield, dba Butterfield Hemp
Shawn Lenihan, dba Kismet Farm
Stephen Pratt
Steve Coon
Suzanne McCullough
Sweet Lou's Farm
Theresa McDonough
Todd Murray
Tri County Corn, LLC
Upstate Elevator Supply Company
Vermont Organic Science
VT Terps LLC
WTSmed Inc/Restorative Formulations
Yalla Vermont, LLC

PIZZA POWER

During the 2019 season, our mobile pizza oven served more than 3,013 pizzas at 40 events statewide from as far south as Brattleboro to Orleans up north.

Many thanks to our many volunteers who joined us this season to bring pizza to the people, and to our amazingly talented baker, Rachel Jackson (pictured below), who spent the season exploring every part of the state with our mobile oven in tow!





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We stand at a critical moment in history. The work that NOFA-VT does—to support organic farming practices that nourish land, sustain farmers, and build a just food system—is more needed than ever.

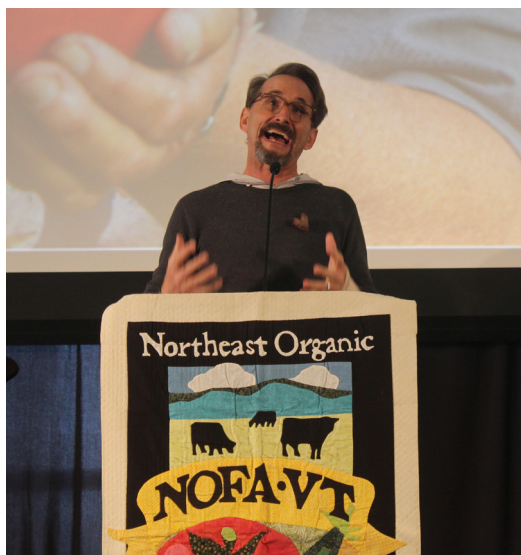
Please support our work with a donation to our annual appeal. You may use the enclosed envelope to mail a check, or donate online at nofavt.org/donate.

Thank you!

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OUR INTERDEPENDENCE**

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