

# AGRiVIEW



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## Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program Celebrates Its 15th Anniversary

*\$264,000 in New Federal Funding Received*

By Ela Chapin, Vermont Farms & Forest Viability Program Director

This winter the Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program, a program of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, celebrates 15 years supporting the growth and success of businesses that keep Vermont's working landscape in production. Since its creation, the Viability Program has provided business planning and technical assistance to over 500 farm, food, and forestry sector enterprises. Due to its strong track record, the program received two federal awards to expand the reach of these vital services – \$100,000 from USDA Rural Development and \$164,000 from the Northern Border



Andy Duback

Crawford Family Farm in Whiting, VT

Regional Commission – which will result in business growth and job creation in the agricultural and forestry sectors across the state.

Since the Viability Program began, twenty percent of eligible farms

in Vermont have participated. A robust and interconnected network of organizations and consultants provide a business advisor, or in some cases a team of advisors, to meet over 1-2 years with enrolled

business owners, including the Center for an Agricultural Economy, DairyVision VT, Intervale Center, Land for Good, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, University of Vermont Extension, Vermont Agricultural Development Program, and Vermont Woodlands Association. On the Viability website, a map of all participants shows the breadth of the program's influence, and a video featuring four farms – Donegan Family Dairy, Laughing Child Farm, Snug Valley Farm and Stony Pond Farm – highlights the value of the program to business owners: <https://vimeo.com/189827461>.

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## AGRiVIEW

**Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets**

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## THE VIEW FROM 116 STATE STREET

It has been a great honor to serve Vermont's agricultural community as Secretary of Agriculture over the last six years. From Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, a weather event that both literally and figuratively re-shaped Vermont, to expanding Farm to School Programs, to improved Maple Grading Systems, to the recently passed Required Agricultural Practices that will help to protect the integrity of our state's waterways for generations to come, the last six years have witnessed many changes for Vermont's agricultural communities. Thanks to the commitment, leadership, ingenuity, and collaborative spirit of Agency of Agriculture staff, our partner groups throughout the state, and our vast community of farmers, producers, and agriculturalists, I believe we have made great strides over the years, and have helped to solidify a path forward towards a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive ag industry in Vermont. While many challenges remain, I feel confident in the ability of this community to work together to overcome obstacles, pursue new opportunities, and continue to build upon our already

strong foundation of agricultural quality, integrity, innovation, and tradition.

According to Vermont Farm to Plate the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, 6,000 new jobs and almost 800 new establishments (farm & food businesses) have been added to Vermont's farm, food, and forest sectors since 2009. I could write for days about exciting ag growth metrics and the many unique attributes of Vermont's agricultural industry, but I believe the data presented below will do a far better job of demonstrating the true, remarkable nature of our agricultural state. Agriculture lives at the core of Vermont's culture, its heritage, and its economy. With an unwavering commitment to quality, integrity, and sustainability, Vermont is a national leader in many agricultural sectors, and world-renowned for its food and forestry products. As it has been for centuries, agriculture is an essential part of the Vermont way of life.

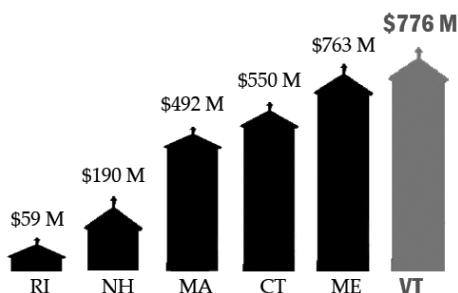
Here are just a few highlights from the Vermont agricultural landscape in 2016.

*Charles R. Ross*

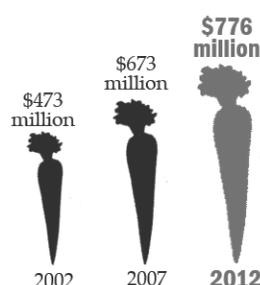
## Vermont's Agricultural Economy

The annual economic impact of Vermont agriculture is over **\$2.63 billion**

Vermont's agricultural sales are the highest in New England



Agricultural sales are increasing: The market value of Vermont agricultural products increased 64% between 2002 and 2012



## Vermont Is An Agricultural Leader

- 42% of all domestic maple syrup produced in 2013 came from VT

- 63% of all milk produced in New England comes from Vermont

- 94% of VT schools reported purchasing local food in 2014, serving over 80,000 students

- 8+ VT cheese makers, 150 VT cheese varieties 44 awards won at the 2015 American Cheese Society Conference, more than any other state per capita

- Over 90 farmers' markets (more than any other state per capita) provided access to fresh, local foods in 2015

- \$189 million spent on local food purchases in 2014 represented 6.9% of food spending statewide

- 17 manure digesters (more than any other state per capita and per COWpita) produce enough energy to power 3,000 households

- 583 certified organic farms<sup>9</sup> were operating in VT in 2011, more than any other state per capita

## People & Jobs

- In 2012, Vermont was home to over 12,000 farm operators representing ~3.6% of the workforce

- While the average age of farm operators was 55, 21% were under the age of 45

- 27% were "new" farmers (<10 years) and 39% of operators were women

## Dairy

- Vermont is home to 850+ dairy farms owned and operated by Vermont families

- And over 134,000 dairy cows

- Which produce over 321 million gallons of milk annually (enough to fill 16,000 swimming pools)

- Dairy contributes \$2.2 billion in economic activity to VT every year, the equivalent of \$3 million in circulating cash every day

- Dairy products bring in \$1.3 billion in sales annually

## Vegetables, Fruits, and Crops

- Roughly 800 farms and 4,000 acres are dedicated to vegetable farming in VT.

In 2012 the value of all veggies and fruits sold was \$34.8 million

- Apples, VT's largest fruit crop, are worth \$12-\$15 million every year. Apple products, like cider and sauce, bring in another \$10-\$12 million every year

- Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas comprise Vermont's top crop, valued at over \$26.3 million in 2012

- Corn, VT's second most valuable crop, was worth \$23.5 million in 2012

## Maple

- Vermont is the leading producer of maple syrup in the U.S., producing 1.48 million gallons of syrup in 2013, valued at \$49.4 million

## Forestry

- Forests cover more than 78% of Vermont (4.6 million acres)

- Economic output of the forest products industry was estimated to be \$1.4 billion in 2013, employing 10,555 people

- In 2012, Christmas trees alone brought in \$2.8 million

# AGRIVIEW

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# Barn Fires

By George Cook,  
UVM Extension

**W**hile we don't hear about barn fires often, they do happen, and when they do, they can cause heavy damage to attached buildings, livestock, tools and equipment stored in or near the barn, along with risks to human health and wellbeing. Taking a few simple steps can help you prevent tragic losses in the event of a fire.

Install a reflective E911 sign by the entrance to your farm/driveway, just like those bright green signs for road identification. Need info? Contact your town office, fire

department or rescue squad.

Developing a farm fire pre-plan with the help of your local fire department will make it easier for them to control a fire more quickly. You can download the University of Vermont Extension Farm Fire Pre-Plan datasheet at <http://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture>; sidebar on the right.

On the form there's a place to provide your E911 address and a map of all the buildings, utilities, access roads and water sources on your property. Keep one copy in your files and give the other to your local fire department. Update



## Be Part of the 2017 Vermont Farm Show Guide

*Highlight Your Company in the 85th Annual Vermont Farm Show Program*

- Thousands of copies handed out at the door to your prospective customers, guiding farmers to your booth at the show. They won't waste time looking for your company amongst all the other booths.
- After the show, these glossy programs will be used as reminders of everything seen at the Vermont Farm Show. How many sales are made after the show?
- If your company is not exhibiting at the show, how about an ad driving attendees to your business.

Full page (6" x 9.125"): \$785

Half-page (6" x 4.5" or 2.875" x 9.125"): \$420

Quarter Page (2.875" x 4.5"): \$240

Directory Ad (1.875" x 2.125"): \$105

Contact Barb Sweet at 802-745-1116, [bsweet@grandviewmedia.com](mailto:bsweet@grandviewmedia.com); or Annette Dauscher 802-751-1751, [adauscher@grandviewmedia.com](mailto:adauscher@grandviewmedia.com)

**Space reservation deadline: January 1**  
**Final materials due: January 6**

this annually or any time anything changes on the farm.

Fall is a busy time, transitioning from outdoor work to more indoor activities. When checking your barns, farm shop and other outbuildings to make sure that they are properly prepared for colder weather, pay special attention to any source of supplemental heat as heating equipment is one of the biggest fire dangers on the farm.

Heating equipment needs to be properly installed and

maintained to provide the warmth you want without increasing the fire risks. Old stoves may have cracks that can throw sparks, so be sure to go over that old piece and determine if is still safe to fire up. Maintain a safe space around heating units with no combustibles within at least three feet.

Stovepipes and chimneys are another common source of problems. When was that chimney cleaned last? Is it sound, free of crumbling bricks, with a safe liner? If you are unsure of any of

these questions, it would be wise to contact a certified chimney sweep or mason and have it inspected. And do it now before the heating season really hits us.

Hot embers blown from burning brush, leaves or other refuse, often too near buildings are a fairly common source of trouble. Watch the weather and wind direction and never burn upwind of buildings.

Visit <http://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture> for more information and stay safe this winter.

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*"Working with VACC was a great experience and their friendly staff were very involved in the loan process..."*

- Karen LaBree

# Find the Most Affordable Health Insurance During Vermont Health Connect's Open Enrollment Period

*Free Online Tool Helps Vermonters Compare Options and Save Money*

By Seán Sheehan, Director of Outreach and Education, Health Access Eligibility & Enrollment Unit

It's no secret that health insurance can be expensive. Full-cost premiums are more than many farm families can afford. But not having health insurance can be expensive too. It only takes one slip on the ice, one broken arm, or one hospitalization to cost an uninsured family thousands of dollars. The dilemma is not new. What is new, however, are two components of the Affordable Care Act that have completely changed the math for farm families trying to decide whether to buy health coverage.

**1) Financial help is now based on Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) with no asset test.** Eligibility for state health programs used to consider property and other assets, so many farm families – even those with low cash flow – were excluded. The fact that eligibility now focuses solely on MAGI means that many more farm families qualify for free or low-cost health coverage.

**2) For many Vermonters, it costs less to buy a health plan on Vermont Health Connect than to pay the federal fee for not having insurance.** The typical uninsured Vermonter can buy a Bronze plan for



*It only takes one slip on the ice, one broken arm, or one hospitalization to cost an uninsured family thousands of dollars.*

about the same amount that they'd pay in fees on their federal taxes if they don't have insurance. Of course, Bronze plans aren't the best health plans – subscribers could find themselves with significant out-of-pocket costs – but they do come with free preventive care and, most importantly, they limit the amount you must pay if you get sick or have an accident. Protection against bankruptcy is just one of the benefits that uninsured people miss out on when they opt to stay uninsured and pay the federal fee.

Now is the perfect time to sign up for health insurance. Vermont Health Connect is currently in its Open Enrollment period, which continues through January 31, 2017. This is the time when new customers can sign up for coverage and current customers can change to a different plan for the coming year.

Customers who are

overwhelmed by choice and unsure where to start can check out the 2017 Plan Comparison Tool, a simple interactive program for estimating available financial help and weighing health plan options. The tool allows customers to compare plans not just by monthly premiums and deductible amounts, but also by estimated total annual costs. Vermonters can try it out by clicking on "Decision Tools" at <https://VermontHealthConnect.gov>.

After taking a couple minutes to enter age, income, health status, and expected use of medical services for all family members, the free tool presents the 20+ qualified health plans in order of estimated total costs, lowest to highest. The user then has several options for how to sort and screen the results, or to dive into plan details and links to the insurance carrier websites.

"We want Vermonters to have the information they need to find the right

health plan for their needs and budget," said Steven Costantino, Commissioner of the Department of Vermont Health Access. "We have the Customer Support Center to help those who want to talk to someone on the phone. We have an Assister Program to help those who want to meet face-to-face with a trained professional in their community. And we have a robust online tool for those who want to understand financial help and possible out-of-pocket costs from the comfort of their own living room or local library."

After the user answers a few short questions, the Plan Comparison Tool immediately displays two key pieces of information for each health plan:

- **An estimate of average total annual cost:** this single-dollar figure takes into account the monthly premium, any available financial help to lower costs, and an out-of-pocket estimate for someone with the same family size, ages, health status, and other characteristics as the user's household;
- **Risk in the plan:** the cost if the user's health care usage in a year turns out to be very high and the chances of having such a year.

These two pieces of information address what customers care most about. With the Plan Comparison Tool, consumers can quickly see and sort essential information on all available

plans within minutes—and they can drill down for much more extensive information if they wish.

The online tool was developed by the non-profit Consumers' Checkbook and has won the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's award for best plan choice tool.

This kind of resource is very important because "a consumer just can't figure out: is a plan with the \$200 deductible and a \$10,000 out-of-pocket limit better for me than a plan with a \$2,000 deductible and \$4,000 out-of-pocket limit—and how about differences in co-pays, co-insurance, etc.?" said Robert Krughoff, president of Consumers' Checkbook. "People don't know how much various health services cost or their likelihood of needing different services – and even health insurance experts can be hard-pressed to figure out which plan is best without a helpful tool. Vermont Health Connect is a leader in making this help available."

Vermont Health Connect's 2017 Open Enrollment began November 1 and runs until January 31. New customers can sign up online, by phone, or in person with an Assister. Current customers are automatically being renewed into 2017 coverage; they will also be able to call 855-899-9600 or click on the Renewals link in their VermontHealthConnect.gov account to report changes for the 2017 coverage year.

# Can Vermont Wool Make Houses Warmer, and Sheep Farming Profitable?

By Cheryl Herrick, UVM

On Monday, November 28th, the UVM Extension Center for Sustainable Agriculture celebrated the launch of a new research project to assess the feasibility of using wool from Vermont sheep as an insulation material, and for other building and household products. The launch event was hosted by collaborator Open View Farm located in New Haven, Vermont and home to a flock of Tunis Dorset ewes. This exploration of a value-added product hopes to provide sheep farmers with new sources of revenue, and to add to the availability of environmentally friendly products for the building trade. The project has been made possible by a Value-Added Producer Grant from USDA Rural Development and support from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

From 2007 to 2012 the number of sheep farms in Vermont increased 27%, and the number of sheep increased by 35%. However, for a variety of reasons, many sheep farmers have struggled to turn a profit. At the same time, growing interest in natural non-toxic materials as insulation for buildings could provide a market for raw wool. Insulation made from wool is already produced in Europe and in locations in the western United States.



Anna Freund of Open View Farm in New Haven gives one of her ewes a treat within the solar array. They have worked the solar array into their grazing plan as one of their paddocks.

“The plan is to identify possible wins all around – for consumers interested in using a locally produced item to make their houses more comfortable and energy-efficient, for environmentally conscious builders, and especially, for sheep farmers in Vermont and the region. This could be an answer to the wool collected from Vermont’s sheep which is currently lacking such a value-added market channel,” says Suzy Hodgson of the Center for Sustainable Agriculture.

Kimberly Hagen, grazing specialist at the Center for Sustainable Agriculture, says that shearing sheep regularly is part of maintaining a healthy flock but much of the wool collected does not have a ready market. This additional revenue stream for sheep farmers could provide a more viable business for them.

“Anytime the Agency of

Agriculture can help farmers find a market for a low-value product, it’s a good day,” said Alex DePillis of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. “In this case, the minimally processed wool would become insulation that keeps Vermonters warm in their homes. We look forward to working collaboratively with farmers, builders, and organizations that serve the building industry, such as Efficiency Vermont and the Vermont Technical College, to create strategies for getting wool-based insulation to market.”

The research project team includes Kimberly Hagen and Suzy Hodgson, UVM Extension Center for Sustainable Agriculture; Anna Freund of Open View Farm; Alex DePillis, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets; Deb and Ed Bratton, Vermont Fiber Mill; David Ritchie, Green Mountain Spinnery; Alex

Wilson, Building Green; Andrea Murray, Vermont Integrated Architecture; Ben Graham, New Frameworks; and Dave Martin, Settlement Farm.

The work will culminate in a feasibility report, which will be made available to the public on the UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture site at [http://www.uvm.edu/~susagctr/?Page=whatwedo/projectsresearch/wool\\_project.html](http://www.uvm.edu/~susagctr/?Page=whatwedo/projectsresearch/wool_project.html).

For more information about this wool research project, contact Kimberly Hagen, 802-522-6729, [kimberly.hagen@uvm.edu](mailto:kimberly.hagen@uvm.edu).

## About UVM Extension Center for Sustainable Agriculture

Established in 1994, the UVM Extension Center for Sustainable Agriculture provides timely information to Vermont communities and the UVM campus. Center staff conduct innovative research, support the development of promising practices, cultivates partnership, and inform policy to advance sustainable food and farming systems.

University of Vermont Extension, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating, offer education and employment to everyone without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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# Christmas Trees in Vermont

By Hannah Reid, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

It's that time of year again when many Vermonters will participate in a different kind of hunting – hunting for the perfect Christmas tree. Whether you're looking for a 40-foot Balsam like the beauty in front of the State House in Montpelier, or a small, but character-rich Charlie Brown-style Fraser Fir for your apartment, you're sure to find the perfect tree somewhere among Vermont's 2,000 acres of cultivated Christmas trees. (How many of those 2,000 acres you need trek in order to find the right tree, is entirely up to you.)

The last agricultural census published in 2012 reported that Vermont's Christmas tree industry – comprised of 67 operators with over 2,000 acres in production – harvested 121,000 trees in 2009 and did \$2.8 million in sales. Vermont Christmas tree farmers supply high quality trees to Vermonters and customers throughout New England and as far away as Bermuda.

"The Christmas tree industry is an essential element of our thriving Working Landscape and economy" said Chuck Ross, Secretary of Agriculture. "Tree growers not only promote and preserve Vermont's cultural heritage, they help ensure our state's Working Landscape endures for future generations of

Vermonters to enjoy."

Tim Schmalz and the Plant Industry team at the Agency of Agriculture provide a range of services

to the Christmas tree industry, including domestic and international export inspection and certification, as well as technical assistance

around pest identification and management.

For more information about Vermont Christmas Trees, please contact the

Vermont Christmas Tree Association or the NH-VT Christmas Tree Association, or contact Tim Schmalz at [Tim.Schmalz@vermont.gov](mailto:Tim.Schmalz@vermont.gov).



Lew Stowell of L.H. Stowell's tree farm in Brookfield, Vermont. Photos by Ben DeFlorio



## Farm & Forest Viability Program

*continued from page 1*

“We now know what it costs to grow an animal, produce an animal and get it to market. I think we would still be floundering and guessing if we hadn’t done the Farm Viability Program,” says Ben Nottermann, who raises beef and pork with his parents at Snug Valley Farm in East Hardwick. Emily Donegan, who milks 30 organic cows with her husband at Donegan Family Dairy, a nine-year-old business in Charlotte, believes “the best part of the program was to have a time and a place to flesh out ideas and have the support to do that.”

The Viability Program can be designed to meet any business’ needs, including businesses of any scale or production type. Farms that have used the program to expand and grow operations or plan for ownership transitions include fruit and vegetable growers like Jericho Settlers Farm, Flack Family Farm, Champlain Orchards and Harlow Farm, dairy farms including Rainville Dairy in Highgate and Centerview Farm in Enosburg, and organic dairies and on-farm dairy processors including Elysian Fields, Kimball Brook Farm, Jasper Hill Farm, Bonnieview Farm and Orb Weaver Farm.

Year after year,



*Harvesting Carrots at Elmer Farm in East Middlebury, Vermont.*

business owners report significant increases in their management skills as a direct result from working with their Viability business advisor. These include financial analysis and bookkeeping skills, greater abilities to plan for business investments, improved success in accessing capital, and strategic planning. For example, 66% of 2015 participants report being highly skilled in strategic planning after program completion, up from 6% before the program.

The services offered by

the Viability Program have had tremendous impact on Vermont’s economy: Viability participants report an average increase in gross income of 15% and an average increase of net income of 35% in the year following the completion of their business plan. While all enrollees receive at least one year of business planning services, about 53% go on to receive a second year of services; those who do report an average increase in gross income of 30%.

“The Viability Program is a model looked to from around the country for how to provide assistance to the businesses that support the landscape, and we’re lucky to have it here in Vermont,” says Vermont Secretary of Agriculture Chuck Ross. In 2008 and 2013, the Viability Program hosted the National Farm Viability Conference in Middlebury, Vermont,

each time bringing together over 200 professionals who work to improve the viability of farm and food businesses across the US. A third conference is planned for May 2017 in Albany, New York.

The Vermont Farm &

Forest Viability Program provides business planning, technical assistance, and ownership transfer planning to farm, food, forestry, and forest products businesses. For more information please visit [www.vhcb.org/viability](http://www.vhcb.org/viability).



## Brighten Up the Barn this Fall



Offer available through December 31, 2016

Efficiency Vermont

Get up to \$150 cash back per fixture on LED lighting, and save up to 75% on lighting costs compared to incandescent bulbs.

Download a rebate form: [www.encyvermont.com/rebates](http://www.encyvermont.com/rebates)

# Vermont Cheesemakers Take Home International Gold At The World Cheese Awards

*Winners Announced on November 16 from San Sebastian, Spain*

By Tom Bivins, Vermont Cheese Council

The Vermont Cheese Council (VCC), an organization dedicated to the production and advancement of Vermont Cheese, announced that Vermont took home 16 medals from the 28th annual World Cheese Awards, which were held in San Sebastian, Spain, November 14-16. The standout among the impressive list of Vermont awards was Cellars at Jasper Hill's Super-Gold trophy for Harbison, a soft-ripened, bloomy rind cheese wrapped with spruce cambium, harvested on the woodlands of Jasper Hill Farm.

The World Cheese Awards is the leading and most diverse cheese competition in the world. At this year's event, more than 250 cheese experts from 26 nations travelled to San Sebastian to evaluate more than 2,600 cheeses from 33 countries. Judges ranked cheeses into Gold, Silver, Bronze and "no award." From those medaled cheeses, an intimate group of 62 were chosen for Super Gold Awards and then judged again to carve the



*Kashar cheese, a Balkan style pasta filata cheese, made by Parish Hill Creamery in southern Vermont.*

final list to 16 cheeses.

Along with the Super-Gold for Jasper Hill Farm, two Vermont cheeses were awarded Gold Trophies: Grafton Village Cheese Company for its Shepsog, a sheep's milk cheese, and Farms for City Kids/Spring Brook Farm for its Tarentaise. Grafton Village Cheese Company was also the recipient of a Silver for its Bear Hill, another sheep's milk cheese. Known primarily for its cheddars, Grafton Village Cheese Company has

been winning international accolades for its sheep's milk cheeses.

Vermont Creamery took home eight medals from the event, including a gold for its Bijou. The event brought the company's season award total to a fitting 30, as it celebrates its 30th anniversary this year.

## Winning Vermont Cheeses

- **Cellars at Jasper Hill**, Greensboro: Harbison, Super Gold; Landaff, Moses Sleeper, Willoughby and Bayley Hazen Blue were also recognized for their exceptional quality.
- **Grafton Village Cheese Company**, Grafton: Shepsog, Gold; Bear Hill, Silver.
- **Farms for City Kids Foundation/Spring Brook Farm**, Reading: Tarentaise,

Gold

- **Vermont Creamery**, Websterville: Quark, Feta, Bijou, St. Albans, Fresh Crottin, Bonne Bouche, Cremont, Coupole, Crumble Goat Cheese/Cranberry & Tarragon were all singled out for exceptional quality.

For a comprehensive list of the 2017 World Cheese Award winners, visit For a comprehensive list of the 2017 World Cheese Award Winners, visit: <https://gff.co.uk/awards/world-cheese-awards/>

The state of Vermont, celebrated for its focus on farm-to-table lifestyle and Vermont-made products, including cheese, boasts more cheese companies per

capita than any other state in the nation.

The Vermont Cheese Council is a statewide membership based organization with 43 principal cheese producing members and over 100 associate members. The VCC is committed to promoting the advancement and quality of Vermont cheese through promotion, education and strong peer to peer support. The organization has been in existence since 1992. For more information, please contact: Tom Bivins, Executive Director at [tom@vtcheese.com](mailto:tom@vtcheese.com) or call 802-451-8564 or visit the Vermont Cheese Council website at [www.vtcheese.com](http://www.vtcheese.com).

## For Immediate Release

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets have received an application for a Milk Handlers license from the following entity: Jet.com, Inc. of Hoboken, New Jersey to sell / distribute dairy products in the State of Vermont. If anyone has germane information as to why or why not this company should or should not be licensed those comments are to be sent to:

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets  
Dairy Section Office  
116 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05620-2901

All written comments must be received by January 15th, 2017.

At that time the Agency will make a determination as to whether a hearing will be held. If we determine that a hearing is necessary and you wish to attend please write to the above address attention Dairy Section.

## FUNDAMENTALS OF ARTISAN CHEESE

January 9 to 18, 2017, Craftsbury Common, VT

The School of the New American Farmstead at Sterling College offers "Fundamentals of Artisan Cheese," an intensive course taught by world-renowned, master cheesemaker, Ivan Larcher at Sterling College in Craftsbury, VT, in conjunction with Jasper Hill, an American Cheese Society-Certified Professional Educator. Visit [www.sterlingcollege.edu/cheese](http://www.sterlingcollege.edu/cheese) for details; register early, space is limited.

**Sterling College**  
Working Hands. Working Minds.

## Pesticide Disposal Program

By Anne Macmillan, VAAFM

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture's Pesticide Disposal Program funds the disposal of unusable, unwanted, or cancelled agricultural and commercial grade pesticides collected from residents, farmers, small businesses and public agencies free of charge. The Agency partners with Vermont's Solid Waste Districts and several municipalities during their Household Hazardous Waste Days to allow all residents and businesses to dispose of pesticides free of charge.

Pesticides are chemicals that kill pests, including animals, plants, molds and insects. These are examples of household pesticides: insect sprays, flea products, mothballs, rodent poisons, weed killers, wood preservatives. The goal of this program is to properly dispose of unused or unusable pesticides to prevent human and animal exposure, prevent use of cancelled pesticides on crops and to eliminate a potential source of contamination to the environment.

Since 1996, close to 1 million pounds of waste pesticides have been collected and disposed of through the VAAFM funded program. Waste pesticides collected in Vermont are destroyed at an out of state EPA approved incinerator specifically designed to destroy these waste materials.

Find your Solid Waste District or municipality and household hazardous waste collection event times and locations here: <http://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/solid/local-districts>.



## Farmers To Gather For 18th Annual Dairy Producers Conference In Burlington Feb. 21

*Topics Include Connecting with Consumers, Applied Genomics, Heat Stress and Mastitis Management*

By Laura Hardie, New England Dairy Promotion Board

Farmers and agricultural leaders from New England and New York are invited to the Vermont Dairy Producers Conference on February 21 from 8:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. to hear from industry experts about timely topics in the dairy industry and to share best management practices. Leading experts will provide practical, actionable ideas to increase the long-term viability of dairy farming in the region.

### 2017 Speakers:

**Damien Mason** – Humor for the Heart of Agriculture

**Dr. James Maas** – Sleep for Success: Everything You Must Know About Sleep but are Too Tired to Ask



**Dr. Lance Baumgard** – Effects of Heat Stress on Dairy Productivity

**Dr. Pamela Ruegg** – Five Keys to Maximizing Success of Mastitis Treatment

**Carrie Mess** – Connecting with Consumers

**Jonathan Lamb** – Applied Genomics

Registration begins January 10. Visit: [www.vermontdairyproducers.com](http://www.vermontdairyproducers.com)

The conference will be held at the Sheraton

Burlington Hotel & Conference Center, 870 Williston Road, Burlington, VT.

Founded in 1999 and organized by farmers, for farmers, The Vermont Dairy Producers Conference brings industry experts together each year to share information, strategies, and best-practice sharing. The conference is the premier event for New England and New York dairy farmers seeking cutting-edge information to improve their business practices.



**TUESDAY  
FEBRUARY  
21, 2017**

Sheraton Burlington Conference Center - Burlington, VT

## VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY NEWS

# Two Exciting Conferences Coming Up in January for Vermont Vegetable And Berry Growers

Hosted by Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, Vermont

Sponsored by: USDA, Risk Management Agency and Farm Service Agency; Frazer Insurance Group; Vermont Compost Company; Vermont Agricultural Credit Corporation; University of Vermont Extension; Vitalis Seeds; and the VVBGA.

## Association Annual Meeting

Monday, January 23, 2017

- 8:00 Registration, Refreshments, Visit Trade Show.
- 9:30 **President's Remarks.** Christa Alexander, Jericho Settlers' Farm
- 9:45 **A Tour of Growers in their Fields, 2016.** Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension
- 10:00 **Nutrient Management at Cedar Circle Farm.** Nic Cook and Luke Joanis
- 10:15 **Record Keeping and Tracking Tools.** Chris Callahan, UVM Extension
- 10:30 **Strawberry Production at Joe's Brook Farm.** Eric Skovsted
- 10:45 **Pollinators in Vermont Blueberries.** Taylor Ricketts, UVM Gund Institute
- 11:00 **'Three-Season' Tunnels at Lewis Creek Farm.** Hank Bissell
- 11:15 **The Vermont Produce Safety Continuum: Where Does Your Farm Fit?** Hans Estrin, UVM Extension; Kristina Sweet, Vermont Agency of Agriculture
- 11:35 **1-Minute Pitches from Trade Show Folks on their Products and Services.**
- 12:00 Luncheon and Visit Trade Show.
- 1:30 Business Meeting: Election of Officers, etc.
- 1:45 **Reflections on My 42 Years of Farming.** Jake Guest, Killdeer Farm
- 2:00 **Swede Midge Management at Intervale Community Farm.** Andy Jones
- 2:15 **Alternatives to Insecticides for Swede Midge Management.** Yolanda Chen, UVM
- 2:30 **Powdery Mildew Biocontrol Research.** Abha Gupta, UVM Extension
- 2:45 **Pest Problems to Watch for in 2017.** Ann Hazelrigg, UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic
- 3:00 **Release of Nitrogen from Organic Fertilizers.** Heather Darby, UVM Extension
- 3:15 **The Illula Orphan Program's Farm in Tanzania.** Ginger Nickerson, Agro-Ecologist
- 3:30 Adjourn.

## Cover Crop Conference

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

- 8:00 Registration and refreshments.
- 9:00 **Seeding Mixes for Late Fall Plantings of Cover Crops.** Kirsten Workman, UVM Extension
- 9:20 **Five-way Mixes of Cover Crops for August Plantings.** Justin Rich, Burnt Rock Farm
- 9:40 Discussion.
- 10:00 **Sun Hemp as a Cover Crop at Roxbury Farm.** Jody Bolluyt
- 10:20 **Forage Radish as a Cover Crop.** Becky Sideman, UNH Extension
- 10:40 Discussion.
- 11:00 **Growing Mustard as a Bio-fumigant.** Katie Campbell-Nelson, UMass Extension
- 11:20 **Using Different Grass Covers Between Rows.** Lisa McDougall, Mighty Food Farm
- 11:40 Discussion.
- 12:00 Lunch.
- 1:00 **Hairy Vetch: Growing It and Saving Seed at River Berry Farm.** David Marchant
- 1:20 **Soil Nitrate Levels after Legume Cover Crops.** Becky Maden, UVM Extension
- 1:40 Discussion.
- 2:00 **Baling and Chopping Cover Crops for Strawberry Mulch.** Jon Satz, Woods' Market Garden
- 2:20 **Baling and Chopping Cover Crops for Vegetable Mulch.** Pete Johnson, Pete's Greens
- 2:40 Discussion.
- 3:00 **Cover Cropping Through the Years at Edgewater Farm.** Pooh Sprague
- 3:20 **Estimating Costs and Returns from Cover Crops.** Richard Wiswall, Cate Farm
- 3:40 Discussion.
- 4:00 Adjourn.

Burlington, VT 05407. <http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/VV&BGA/2017/MembershipPlusMeetings.pdf>

Lodging is \$95 per room at the Lake Morey Resort; please make your own arrangements. (800) 423-1211 or [info@lakemoreyresort.com](mailto:info@lakemoreyresort.com).

Attendance at either of these events will be worth pesticide re-certification credit for applicators certified in categories 1A, 2, 3, 6 and 10.

Questions? Contact Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension, 802-257-7967 ext. 303, or [vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu](mailto:vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu). To request a disability-related accommodation to participate in these events, contact Vern by January 4, 2017 so we may assist you.

Pre-registration is \$40 per day, per person for VVBGA Members; \$50 per day for Non-Members. Add \$10 per day, per person, for walk-in registrations. Pre-registration ends Jan. 20.

2017 VVBGA member dues for 2017 are \$35 per farm (\$45 if received after January 31.) Register and/or join on-line at <https://2017vvbga.eventbrite.com>. Or print, fill out, and mail the membership and meeting registration form with your check to: VVBGA, PO Box 2091, South

## MARKET REPORT

**Wholesale Prices**

October 2016

Wholesale prices paid per dozen for Vermont Grade A brown eggs delivered to retail stores.

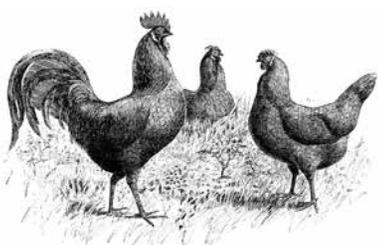
**Vermont Egg Prices:**

Jumbo . . . . .	\$1.57
X-Large . . . . .	\$1.09
Large . . . . .	\$0.99
Medium . . . . .	\$0.61

You can find more reports online at

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/marketnews.htm>

This is the web source for **USDA Market News**

**Vermont Agency of Agriculture - USDA Market News**

Addison County Commission Sales — East Middlebury, VT

Livestock Auction Report for November 21, 2016

	<b>Cattle</b>	<b>Calves</b>
This Week:	123	212
Last Week:	188	246

Compared to last sale, slaughter cows sold 3.00-5.00 lower with good demand. Slaughter cattle supply included 122 cows and 1 bull. All prices quoted per cwt.

**SLAUGHTER COWS:**

	% Lean	Avg. Dressing	High Dressing	Low Dressing	Very Low
Premium White	65-75	—	—	—	—
Breakers	75-80	54.00-57.00	58.00-62.00	—	—
Boners	80-85	52.00-56.00	58.00	47.50-52.00	—
Lean	85-90	50.00-54.00	55.00-56.00	42.00-50.00	—

**SLAUGHTER BULLS:** 2120lbs: 71.00

**CALVES:** When compared to last sale holstein bull calves sold steady with moderate demand. All prices per cwt.

**HOLSTEIN BULL CALVES:**

**Number 1:** 100-120lbs: 80.00-82.00; 90-100 lbs 75.00-89.00; 80-90 lb not tested; 70-80lbs not tested.

**Number 2:** 100-120lbs: 70.00-75.00; 90-100 lbs 67.00-75.00; 80-90 lbs 60.00-66.00; 70-80lbs not tested.

**Number 3:** 100-120lbs: 60.00-70.00; 90-100lbs 60.00-70.00; 80-90lbs 61.00-63.00; 70-80lbs 58.00.

**Utility:** 100-120lbs: 45.00-55.00; 90-100lbs 45.00-55.00; 80-90lbs 40.00-55.00; 70-80 lbs 37.00-52.00.

**HOLSTEIN HEIFER CALVES:** 73-87lbs.: 40.00-115.00

Price and grade information is reported by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture-USDA Market News Service. While market reports reflect the majority of livestock sold at each sale, there are instances where animals do not fit reporting categories and are not included in this report.

**SOURCE:**

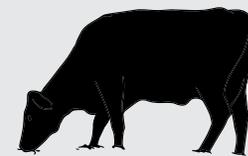
VT Agency of Ag-USDA  
New Holland-Lancaster County, PA

Darryl Kuehne  
Market Reporter  
Cell: 802-793-5348

Levi Geyer, OIC  
Cell 717-406-7350 / Office 717-354-2391

[http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/MP\\_LS141.txt](http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/MP_LS141.txt)

For all USDA Livestock and Grain market reports:  
<http://www.ams.usda.gov/LSMNPubs/index.htm>



## CLASSIFIEDS

**Advertising in Agriview**

**Classified Ads:** *Free to subscribers only.* Limited to two ads per issue, ads will run for two issues. **Must include subscriber number with ad request** (number appears at the top of the mailing label)

**Deadline For Ads:** 10 days prior to the publication date.

**Display Ads:** Information available upon request

**Classified advertisements must be sent:**

- *By mail:* (see address on page 2)
- *By e-mail:* (to [Ag-agriview@state.vt.us](mailto:Ag-agriview@state.vt.us))
- *Online at:* <http://www.vermontagriculture.com/Agriview/agriviewclassified.html>
- **We do not accept ads over the phone.**

Only items of an agricultural nature will be listed. The only real estate which will be listed are tracts of Vermont land two to five acres or more which are being used or can be used for agricultural purposes. All Feed, Hay and Forage ads must have county, town, and phone number, **and must be renewed each month.**

The Secretary reserves the right to make a final decision on the eligibility of items listed. The editor reserves the right to censor and edit ads. **The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets assumes no responsibility for transactions resulting through advertising in Agriview.** Advertisers are cautioned that it is **against the law** to misrepresent any product or service offered in a public notice or an advertisement carried in any publication delivered by the U.S. Mail.

**Ads must be limited to 40 words or less.**

**Agriview Subscribers can Now Submit Classifieds Online**

*Agriview* subscribers now have the ability to submit their classified ads online.

Subscribers can log on to [http://agriculture.vermont.gov/news\\_media/agriview](http://agriculture.vermont.gov/news_media/agriview) and submit their ad using the online form.

Classified ads are free to all subscribers — limit two ads per issue. Ads must be 40 words or less. You must include your subscriber number when submitting your ad.

Please take advantage of this service, which will help streamline the classifieds process. For those who are unable to access the Internet, we will still accept classifieds by mail.

If you have questions about classified ads, please contact Faith Raymond at 802-828-1619 or [Faith.Raymond@state.vt.us](mailto:Faith.Raymond@state.vt.us).

**Cattle**

Registered Jersey Bull, Breeding Age \$600. Brookfield Call 802-276-3385 (12/16)

Irish Dexter Cattle-Registered Foundation breeding stock for sale because of retirement. Yearling heifers, cows and 2 steers. 100% grass fed, grass finished. Excellent blood lines. Colors Black, Red and Dun. Call Spotted Dog Family Farm @802-247-6076 or email at [cswhtng@aol.com](mailto:cswhtng@aol.com) (12/16)

2016 Beef heifers Pantan 802-

349-0286 (12/16)

Holstien Dairy herd reduction sale, milk cows, breed heifers, calves, make an offer 802-579-4861. (1/16)

**Deer/Cervid**

Registered Purebred Nubian Buck. Sweet, w horns, tan w black ridge. From small organic, never-sick herd. For stud service to clean does. \$50. For extra fee can rent buck or board your doe. Penelope, East Charleston. (802) 723-4014. [poneggfarm@hotmail.com](mailto:poneggfarm@hotmail.com). (12/16)

Alpine X Nubian doelings from small organic never-sick herd of great milkers. 2 fawn / white, one black/white, with horns, bred to registered Nubian buck. For sale to family - not commercial. \$150 each. Penelope (802) 723-4014. [poneggfarm@hotmail.com](mailto:poneggfarm@hotmail.com) (12/16)

Angus Bulls 18 mo's old. Good dispositions. From registered herd. \$1,800. Greensboro, VT. 802 533 9804 (1/17)

Angus cows bred and registered.

## CLASSIFIEDS

Due April 2017 several to choose from. Greensboro, VT. 802 533 9804 (1/17)

**Employment**

Manager, Hardwick Farmers' Market. For full job description, please see our website: [www.hardwickfarmersmarketvt.com](http://www.hardwickfarmersmarketvt.com)

E-mail letter of interest & resume with two references to [hardwickfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:hardwickfarmersmarket@gmail.com), or mail to Hardwick Farmers' Market, PO Box 162, Hardwick, VT 05843. (1/17)

**Equipment**

Dion forage wagon with roof, in good condition with rebuilt auger and good running gear. Reason for sale - retired from dairying. \$2000. Call 802-848-3885 or email [fleury-maple@hughes.net](mailto:fleury-maple@hughes.net). Fleury's

Maple Hill Farm, Richford, VT. (12/16)

Tire chains, fit 16x30 tires. Brookfield Call 802-276-3385 (12/16)

Khun gmd 500 disc mower good condition \$5300 fairlee vt 802-333-9936 (12/16)

1949 Ford Tractor \$700. 603-256-3202 (12/16)

Knight Model 3300 reel auger, scales, works great \$3950. 3 Gehl running gears, good tires and rims \$750 each. 2 150 gal. Plastic water tanks \$100 each. 1 12,500 gal plus 1 17,000 gal steel tanks, never been in ground \$.30 per gal. Howard rotovator, 5 ft, 3pt, heavy duty \$3500. 3 Hay racks with loft, plastic trough, new condition \$500 each. Econoline 26 ft flatbed trailer, 3 axles, G/N ramps, extra

tires, great for hay \$2950. Farmall C, w/f with mower, good tires \$2950. 802-483-2870 (12/16)

John Deere MX-8 rotary cutter, 96-in. cutting width, 1-12" cutting height, semi-mount offset up to 13" left or right, 2" brush cutting capacity, like-new, \$4,500, 802-895-4551 (1/17)

John Deere 115 rear blade, 8 ft wide, hydraulic offset from 0-45 degrees left or right, hydraulic tilt from 0-18 degrees left or right, \$2,150, 802-895-4551 (1/17)

**Farm & Farmland**

Three farm parcels for sale in Morgan totaling 571 acres: 471 acres, 49 acres and 50 acres. Farm infrastructure. Owner will consider a lease to purchase arrangement. Land protected by conserva-



tion easement. Call 802 533 7705 or [www.vlt.org/lakeseymourfarm](http://www.vlt.org/lakeseymourfarm) (12/16)

Farm for sale in Monkton - 108 acres - 94 acres cropland, house, greenhouse, barns. Lease to purchase arrangement. Protected by conservation easement with OPAV. Vermont Land trust seeks buyers who will farm commercially. \$415,000. Call (802) 533-7705 or [www.vlt.org/norrisfarm](http://www.vlt.org/norrisfarm) (12/16)

available. Brownsville. 802-484-3015. [Chuck802219@gmail.com](mailto:Chuck802219@gmail.com) (1/17)

Overhead Door 10' x 10'. Metal, white, rigid insulated thermacore, good condition. Dismantled, stored inside. Have two. \$100 each. No longer needed. Photos available. Brownsville. 802-484-3015. [Chuck802219@gmail.com](mailto:Chuck802219@gmail.com) (1/17)

**Hay, Feed & Forage**

For sale- certified organic first and second cut, round and square bales. 802-433-5837 (12/16)

Large square bales for sale. First cutting dry. First alfalfa wrapped, second cut alfalfa wrapped, barley straw and dry mulch bales. Delivery available. Bales 3'x3'x7.5'. Call for prices 802-236-7741 (12/16)

Certified organic small square bales in Monkton. First cut, \$4.75; second cut, \$5.75. Call Sam Burr, 453-2847, [localfood@lastresortfarm.com](mailto:localfood@lastresortfarm.com) (1/17)

1st cut, 3rd cut and corn silage layered in the bunk. Excellent feed. We can load your truck. Selling at \$50/ton. Call 802-533-2984 after 4 pm. (1/17)

Hay for sale, 4 x4 round bales, early 1st cut. Call for info/802-438-5720 (1/17)

**ADDISON COUNTY**  
Organic hay for sale in Monkton. 1st cut small square bales, \$4.75; 2nd cut, \$5.75. Call 453-2847. (12/16)

Hay for sale Addison VT. Large square bales, 1st

Certified Organic Tillable Cropland Acreage Available in Charlotte, VT 50 acres, 30 are prime agricultural loam soils. Details at Vermont Land Link. Please email [mike@landforgood.org](mailto:mike@landforgood.org) for further details and to express interest. Please no initial phone calls if possible. (1/17)

**General**

Australian Cattle Dog Puppies - (Blue or Red Healers) Born September 11th. Ready to go November 6th. Three Males are blue merle, female is red merle. Deposit will hold your choice. Raised on the farm. Call Tim 802-393-9999 or 802-827-3913. (12/16)

For Sale Border Collie puppies. We have 3 black and white males that are 8 weeks old. They have had their first shots, wormed and vet checked. We have both parents at our farm. \$500.00 each Please contact 802-342-0612 or email [tbruce@rrmc.org](mailto:tbruce@rrmc.org) (12/16)

Fuel Oil Storage Tank, 275 Gallon. Steel, vertical, outdoor, above ground, painted, empty, good condition. \$100. No longer needed. Photos



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**"FARMER TO FARMER" SALES**

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**Poly & Sisal Twine**

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4,000 \$27/roll	9,000 \$42/bundle
7,200 \$22/roll	16,000 \$44/bundle
9,000 \$22/bundle	unooled
9,600 \$27/bundle	
20,000 \$20/ single roll or dbl. bundle	

ALL SIZES available in Poly, Twine, & Net!  
(please call if you don't see what you need)

**Bale Wrap Plastic**

Standard Rolls	5 Layer
20" \$60/roll	20" \$66/roll
30" \$74/roll	30" \$80/roll

**Net Wrap**

48" x 9,840'	\$180/roll
51" x 9,840'	\$190/roll

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**Prices good thru 1/15/17 only, order now!**  
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and 2nd cut. Under cover in Addison. Contact S.L.Moore@802-463-3875 or Alden@802-989-0479. (12/16)



7836 (1/17)

Merino sheep – flock of 26 includes 4 rams all with excellent wool \$3,725.00 for all – will not separate. Call 802-537-3167 (1/17)

18 good quality, healthy North Country Cheviot/Dorset cross ewes for sale \$2000. Located in Andover VT (1/17)

**Swine**

For sale: 8-week old piglets, shoats born this summer and butcher hogs. All are corn and grain fed. Call for more details, 802-342-0612 or email tbruce@rrmc.org (12/16)

**Wanted**

20 to 30 HP tractor with equipment, 4x4, good working condition fair price. 802-483-2870 (12/16)

John Deere 261 grooming mower in at least fair condition. Please call Steve at 802-483-9446 (12/16)

**ORLEANS COUNTY**

Conventional and organic good quality dry or wrapped round bales, small square bales and haylage stored in Ag bags. 802-988-2959 or 802-274-2832. (1/16)

**Goats**

Goats for Sale \$50 each OBRO for (2) 1 yr. old wethers. Both are very friendly and healthy, they do have horns. Would work well for mowing brush or to have as pets Contact Lisa at lisawg@aol.com or (802) 558-2770 (12/16)

at lisawg@aol.com or (802) 558-2770 (12/16)

Travis sled seats 15 average size adults, been under cover good condition. Have a new runner and a plate to make another. \$800 firm. Wool blankets and some army, some navy \$3-\$8 each. 2 pair shafts \$100 each. 802-295-2910 (12/16)

**Sheep**

Registered Romney Ram for sale. Excellent conformation and bloodline, we have papers for him. We are selling because we are swapping for a new ram. We have progeny on the ground that you can see. \$275 Rupert 802-394-

**Horses & Other Equine**

Registered Paint Horse for Sale. 15.3 hand tobiano gelding, 14 yrs. Old. \$500 OBO to good home only suitable for light trail riding only submissive with other horses, good companion. Contact Lisa

**Happy Holidays**

From  
The Vermont Agency of Agriculture Team



With thanks to all who support and sustain Vermont agriculture and our working landscape.

May we all find peace and joy in 2017.

Sincerely,

*Charles R. Ross*

Vermont Secretary of Agriculture



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AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

in Partnership with Vermont Dairy Promotion Council



# Gardening Review For 2016

By Dr. Leonard Perry,  
Horticulture Professor Emeritus  
University of Vermont

At the end of the year and another gardening season, make notes (before they become distant memories) of this past year's successes and failures. As you reflect on this past year and plan for next year's gardens and landscaping, review some of these topics from our 60 Green Mountain Gardener articles during 2016. These included ones on plants, from perennials and annuals to food crops and indoor plants; animal pests; pollinators; garden trends, and more.

Garden trends for this past year included syncing gardening with technology, engaging hands-on with the local environment and nature, night lighting, garden whimsy, and layered landscapes incorporating various types of plants. There are two excellent books relating to the latter. *The Layered Garden: Design Lessons for Year-Round Beauty* from Brandywine Cottage by David Culp and Adam Levine offers many design tips and inspiring photos.

*Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes* by Thomas Rainer and Claudia West illustrates an alternative to traditional design—creating plant communities that function as in nature. Claudia is the keynote speaker on this topic at the 2017 Vermont



Harvest Season at Full Plate Farm in East Dummerston, Vermont

Flower Show ([greenworks-vermont.org](http://greenworks-vermont.org)).

Indoor houseplants, cut flowers and flowering plants covered in depth in articles this past year included the carnation, peace lily, Easter lily, anthurium, palms, grape ivy, African violet, and spider plants. Outdoor flowers covered in depth included columbines, alliums (the bulb of the year for 2016—the first of this award), and pollinator perennials.

Each year, the All-America Selections program recognizes the best of the new annual and vegetable varieties ([all-americanselections.org/](http://all-americanselections.org/)). To be an AAS winner, plants must show improvements over any similar existing cultivars (cultivated varieties). This year's vegetable winners include a mustard, onion, two sweet peppers, a pumpkin, radish, two tomatoes, and even a strawberry.

This year's flower winners included two annual geraniums, and a salvia.

Pollinators, and how to help them, currently is one of the top gardening topics. The size, shape, color, and bloom time of flowering plants all influence what types of pollinating insects will visit, so planting a diversity of flowers is the best way to attract a diversity of pollinators. To help support more beneficial pollinators in your gardens and landscape, ten native perennials were recommended including wild bee balm, coneflowers (the single purple species), asters, Joe-pye weed and others.

Monarch butterflies and honeybees get a lot of attention but, in fact, they are just two of the thousands of species of pollinators in the U.S. that benefit from pollinator-friendly landscapes. Here, in North America, we have

about 4,000 species of wild bees. They don't make honey like the honeybee, but they are extremely important for the pollination of food crops and wild plants. Among the most recognizable of our wild bees and the most proficient pollinator is the bumblebee.

Edible crops remain popular, and ones covered this past year included carrots, basil, blueberries, and garlic. Whether you grow, or just eat, garlic, it is more than just a flavoring for foods. Studies have shown that garlic has antioxidant properties, promoting the health of the heart and immune systems. "Allicin"—the chemical produced when garlic is chopped, chewed, or bruised—is a powerful antibiotic. Garlic even has been shown to reduce cholesterol.

Blueberries, too, are healthful and are one of the

most popular and easy-to-grow fruits. Grown as an ornamental shrub, many have colorful red fall leaves. The most important aspects for growing blueberries successfully are choosing hardy varieties and having the right soil.

Other articles this past year included ones on lawn care, bird feeding, making maple syrup, pruning evergreens, facts about color, hydrangeas, and more. These articles, as well as ones on many other gardening topics, can be found online ([perysperennials.info](http://perysperennials.info) under the Home Gardener section) and searched by season or by topic. Combine these with your own notes, and you should have new plants to try, a healthier body, a more sustainable landscape, and more gardening successes in this coming year.

# Visiting Greenhouses and Other December Gardening Tips

By Leonard Perry, UVM Horticulturist and Charlie Nardozzi, Garden Consultant

Visiting local greenhouses and transporting holiday plants home safely, cleaning and storing hand tools, and removing snow from shrubs are some of the garden-related activities for this month.

Try to visit a local greenhouse, as the sight of so many plants all in bloom is sure to lift the spirits on a cloudy and cold day. If you're buying holiday plants anywhere, make sure to protect them on the way home with a paper "sleeve" or bag, especially poinsettias which are quite sensitive to cold. Once home, keep plants away from drafts and heat sources, and don't overwater. Make sure if foil is around the pot that there is a hole for water to drain, and that the pot is in a saucer if on furniture.

In addition to the popular poinsettias, other holiday plants you might look for are cyclamen, azaleas, and kalanchoe (best said as "cal-AN-cho). None of these plants, including poinsettias, like to be too wet. Cyclamen and azaleas last better slightly cooler, while kalanchoe and poinsettias prefer slightly warmer (65 to 70 degrees F). Amaryllis is a bulb you can buy potted, in bloom, or just as a bulb or bulb kit to give as a gift. They are easy to grow, and should bloom within a couple months from planting, depending on vari-



Green House at High Meadows Farm in Putney, Vermont.

ety.

Wipe hand tools clean after use and before storing them for winter. Any moist soil left on the blades can encourage rust, and dirt can dull pruner blades. Also wipe wooden handles with linseed oil to keep them from splitting due to dryness. Before putting tools away or forgetting them for winter, sharpen the blades. You can find files for this online and in garden stores.

Don't walk on frozen grass, especially if you don't have snow cover on your lawn. Without the protection of snow, grass blades are easily broken, causing dieback in your lawn that will show up next spring. Similarly, try not to drive or park on

lawns, otherwise you'll be looking at the tire tracks long into next season.

Snowfalls can be tough on trees and shrubs by weighing down the branches, as many in northern areas find each year with heavy snowfalls. Gently brush off most of the snow with a broom or by hand. Don't use a shovel, which can injure the branches. If there is ice buildup, it's best to let it melt because it's easy to break off the brittle branches if you try to remove it. If plants are under roof eaves, protect them from falling ice and snow with tee-pee shelters.

If you have friends or family that like to garden, think of gardening gifts for holiday presents. Books, gloves, hand

tools, weather instruments, and fancy pots are some ideas to consider. This year, instead of giving baskets with local and homemade food items, we'll be giving decorative colorful pots filled with these. If you can't decide, how about a coupon for so many hours of help in the garden, or even a gift certificate to a local garden or book store?

Other garden-related activities for this month include visiting a local farm to cut a Christmas tree or to buy greens for decorating, checking holiday indoor trees daily for water needs to keep them long-lasting and safe, mulching tender perennials (if you haven't already) once the ground is frozen, keeping

bird feeders filled and heated birdbaths cleaned regularly, and checking houseplants weekly for pests. Making holiday decorations from natural materials can be as simple as adding your favorite decorations from craft stores to undecorated wreaths, roping, kissing balls, or door swags.

*Charlie Nardozzi is a nationally known horticulturist, author, gardening consultant, and garden coach (CharlieNardozzi.com). Distribution of this release is made possible by University of Vermont and Green Works—the Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association.*

**Don't miss consumer nights  
on Wednesday, February 1st  
from 4:00–7:00 PM**

Celebrate the diversity of Vermont agriculture on Wednesday, February 1 at the 6th annual Vermont Farm Show "Consumer Night" at the Champlain Valley Exposition in Essex Junction. Local food and crafts will take center stage in the Blue Ribbon Pavilion at the 2017 Winter Buy Local Market and Capital Cook-Off, free events hosted by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets. Attendees may also enter into a raffle for a special prize package with every purchase made at the market.

**Come Join Us at the**

# 2017 Vermont Farm Show

**Champlain Valley Exposition**

**Tuesday, January 31**

**9AM – 5PM**

**Wednesday, February 1**

**8:30AM – 7:30PM**

**Thursday, February 2**

**9AM – 4PM**



**Free Admission! • Free Parking!**