



AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

Public Health & Agricultural Resource Management Division

www.agriculture.vermont.gov

116 State Street • Montpelier, Vermont 05620 -2901 • (802) 828-2431 • (802) 828-1410 FAX

To: Vermont Agricultural Innovation Board

From: Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Subject: Vermont Agricultural Innovation Board Survey Distribution Plan

Date: 1/20/23

I. Survey

The AIB is tasked with surveying farmers from every county in the State to help better understand:

1. how agricultural inputs, such as pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, and plastics are currently being used; and
2. the challenges farmers face in reducing these agricultural inputs.

Accordingly, VAAFAM staff drafted a survey to assist in developing or exploring recommendations to reduce the use of and exposure to pesticides, and innovative or alternative practices, and to make future budget recommendations and ideas for funding sources for new programs. During the December 19, 2022, meeting, AIB members reviewed, and approved, the survey. The results will be reported in aggregate to the General Assembly with no answers being attributed to any one person or entity.

II. Distribution plan

AIB members also discussed a distribution plan and strategy during the December 19, 2022, meeting. As part of this discussion, the AIB members agreed to create an AGR.AIB@vermont.gov email address to share information on behalf of AIB members. VAAFAM staff drafted an email as the primary means of disseminating information about the survey.

Based on discussion the survey will be disseminated to a combination of VAAFAM networks and non-governmental member networks. More specifically, AIB directly send to Agency network lists within the Produce Safety and Water Quality Programs and will encourage non-governmental board members to utilize their respective connections in the agricultural communities including:

- Vermont Tree Fruit Growers Association, Dr. Terence Bradshaw, *ex officio advisor to VTFG*, tbradsha@uvm.edu





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- Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association, Dr. Vern Grubinger, *UVM Vegetable and Berry Specialist*, vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu
- Northeast Organic Farmers Association of Vermont, Lindsay Brand, *Marketing and Communications Coordinator*, lindsey@nofavt.org
- Vermont Sugar Makers Association, Allison Hope, *Executive Director*, allison@vermontmaple.org
- Northern Grain Growers Association, Todd Hardie, *President*, todd@thornhillfarmvermont.com
- Vermont Horse Council, Mikayla Pick, *President*, thesaddlegal@gmail.com
- Vermont Sheep and Goat Association, Dave Martin, *President*, settlementfarm@comcast.net
- Young Farmers Coalition of Vermont, vtyoungfarmers@gmail.com
- Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition, Vijay Nazareth, *Executive Director*, info@cvfc-vt.com
- Vermont Farm Agriculture Health and Safety Alliance? info@aghealthandsafety.com
- Vermont Association of Conservation Districts, Jill Arace, *Executive Director*, jill.arace@vacd.org
- New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Growers Association, info@nh-vtchristmastree.org
- Vermont Grass Farmers Association, Meghan Sheradin, *Executive Director*, meghan@vtgrassfarmers.org

The introductory email, includes a disclaimer to excuse duplicates. The sample email is attached for review, as well.



The Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets facilitates, supports and encourages the growth and viability of agriculture in Vermont while protecting the working landscape, human health, animal health, plant health, consumers and the environment.

Good afternoon

The Agricultural Innovation Board (AIB) encourages producers to complete a survey addressing agricultural inputs, including pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, and plastics. The results of the survey will help the AIB understand how Vermont's farmers use and manage various agricultural inputs, and the current challenges farmers face to being able to reduce their use in their operations, or to reuse or recycle these inputs.

Please share this engagement opportunity through your networks by forwarding this email to farmers, including producers of vegetables, fruit, forage, orchard crops, maple, Christmas trees, dairy, livestock, and those that raise horses, and those in the nursery and landscape industry.

To access the Agricultural Innovation Board's survey, click here: [Understanding Agricultural Inputs](#).

Deadline to complete the survey is [redacted].

The AIB is tasked with developing recommendations to reduce the use of or exposure to pesticides, to explore innovative products or alternative practices, and propose an annual budget report that provides ideas for funding sources for any identified new programs.

Please visit the [Agricultural Innovation Board's website](#) to learn more about its work, how to participate in meetings, and to read the results of the survey.

The AIB and its charge were created by the legislature in 2021 under [Act 49](#). AIB has a diverse membership including individuals representing the organic, vegetable, livestock and dairy farming communities, a soil biologist, an environmental organization, the Vermont Dept. of Health, and the Natural Resources and Agriculture agencies.

You may receive this request multiple times, but know you only need to complete the voluntary survey once. The AIB is leveraging partners to make sure this survey reaches a wide audience.