

AGRIVIEW



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Second Round of USDA Resilient Food System Infrastructure Grant Supporting “Middle of the Supply Chain” Equipment

Vermont will distribute \$1 Million in Equipment Grants

By Julia Scheier, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has been rolling out a new initiative across all 50 states to build resilience in the food supply chain, provide more and better markets to farms and food businesses, increase product options, and support the development of value-added products. The Agency of Agriculture is administering the Resilient Food System Infrastructure (RFSI) program and awarding over



\$3.2M in grants, with the first round of grant applications completed earlier this summer.

The second round will be focused only on equipment purchases and will be available to Vermont

businesses and organizations that strengthen local and regional food systems. These awards will support projects that work in the “middle of the supply chain,” meaning everything between farm production and selling in stores. This includes aggregation, distribution, manufacturing, processing, storage, transportation, and wholesaling of Vermont food products. RFSI’s goal is to reduce bottlenecks and offer more infrastructure to get quality, regional products to more customers.

“Equipment and other

infrastructure tools are vital to the resiliency of Vermont’s food system and the small businesses that comprise it,” said Anson Tebbetts, Vermont’s Secretary of Agriculture. “Many now utilize outdated, under-sized and inefficient equipment, holding them back from growth, but these grants will help our state’s food system businesses thrive and compete. This was a recommendation of Governor Scott’s Future of Agriculture Commission, and it’s wonderful to see the grants happen.”

This grant program supports local and regional food products

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Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

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THE VIEW FROM 116 STATE STREET



It's no secret Vermont has great food and beverages. And it was on full display at the Vermont Pavilion at the June 2024 Summer Fancy Food Show in New York City. The Agency was proud to support nine businesses in this international food show.

The Summer Fancy Food Show is one of the premier business-to-business trade shows for specialty food products, attracting buyers,

distributors, and wholesalers from across the globe each year. Vermont's strong showing in New York allowed three days of engaging discussions with leading buyers and industry partners, offering great opportunities for growth and bigger exposure.

Those selling and telling their story this year were JK Adams, Cabot Creamery, von Trapp Farmstead, Vermont Farmstead Cheese, Freedom Foods, Grafton Village Cheese, Olivia's Croutons, Chi Chi Wellness and Sugar Bob's Finest Kind.

This food show is ideal for established businesses with prior trade show experience that are looking to expand market access and explore new retail and wholesale opportunities both regionally and internationally. Joining the Vermont Pavilion provided businesses with enhanced exposure. Vermont's reputation for high-quality products attracted special attention from

buyers throughout the show. You could see the attention as buyers made their way through the Vermont section.

Vermont was well represented at this year's show outside the Vermont pavilion with twelve other companies also exhibiting. It's an event that hosts hundreds of companies from around the world making it very competitive.

Vermont also stood tall on the award's stage. The Specialty Food Association only gives out a handful of awards each year and Vermont Creamery and Blake Hill Preserves were awarded "gold" awards for their products. Congratulations!

Also receiving a lifetime achievement recognition from the

Specialty Food Association were the co-founders of Vermont Creamery Bob Reece and Allison Hooper. To celebrate this honor Vermont Creamery is launching "Hooper". It is a new cheese that will be available soon in stores across the United States.

We are already planning for next year's show. We hope to grow the Vermont pavilion and add more businesses. Contact Trevor Lowell at trevor.lowell@vermont.gov for more information and to explore joining the Vermont Pavilion for future shows.

Thank you to all our farmers, producers and small companies that are producing world class products for all of us to enjoy.

Anson Tebbetts
Secretary, Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

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This Month's Recipe

Easy Refrigerator Pickles

Courtesy of the Vermont Foodbank

Ingredients

- 8 larger or 10 smaller firm, fresh pickling cukes (Kirby)
- 3 tsp kosher, coarse, or pickling salt (if using a featherweight brand such as Diamond, use a little more)
- 1 to 2 Tbsp chopped fresh dill, or 1/2 to 1 tsp dill seeds
- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- Optional: garlic cloves (lightly crushed, with skins on); 1 tsp pickling spice, white onion (sliced paper thin); or a bay leaf.

Directions

1. Slice cukes very thin. Place in a 1-liter lidded jar.
2. Add salt and dill and optional ingredients and pour in white vinegar. Don't worry if the liquid level in jar is low – soon the salt will draw moisture from the cukes and the liquid will balance out.
3. Close the jar and give it a few shakes to begin distributing ingredients.
4. Place jar in fridge and shake it once or twice more over next few



hours. Ideally, wait 6-8 hours before eating.

Note: Pickles will keep in fridge, submerged in brine, for 3 weeks.

FAP Applications for Fall Conservation Practices Due August 1

By Sonia Howlett, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The Farm Agronomic Practices (FAP) program from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets supports hundreds of Vermont farmers every year to install conservation practices like cover cropping and manure injection.

If you are thinking about installing conservation practices, you have lots of options for grants to help you pay for the seed or trucking. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) pays the highest rate per acre, so as a first step we recommend working with your local NRCS office to try to get a grant from them. If not, the state FAP program is here for you! Note that



the state FAP program cannot pay for the same practice on the same field that will be paid for by NRCS in the same year.

FAP is relatively flexible, easy to access, and provides flat per-acre payments up to \$10,000 per year to help support the cost of conservation practices. Broadcast or

inter-seeded cover crops is paid at \$30/acre and seeding is expected to be completed by October 1st. Drilled and otherwise incorporated cover crops is paid at \$45/acre and seeding is expected to be completed by October 10th. Manure injection is paid at \$30/acre and is expected to comply with Required Agricultural

Practice requirements.

For more information on the FAP program requirements and to apply go to agriculture.vermont.gov/fap. If you have specific questions about practice eligibility, or how the FAP program works, contact Sonia Howlett at Sonia.Howlett@vermont.gov or 802-522-4655.

Equipment Grants

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such as specialty crops, dairy, grains for human consumption, and value-added products. Per USDA requirements, meat and poultry are excluded from this opportunity.

This second and final round of RFSI grants will be for equipment purchases that increase processing, aggregation, storage, and transport in order to get more local products to consumers. Details for this grant

will be announced in August, with full application information online. There is approximately \$1 million available for this track. Grants will range from \$30,000 - \$100,000 with no match requirement. Projects will begin in early spring of 2025.

Contact Julia Scheier with any questions at Julia.Scheier@vermont.gov or 802-522-7042. Full grant details can be found here: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/resilient-food-systems-infrastructure>

H.706 — What It Is and How It Will Affect the Regulated Community

By Zach Szczukowski, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Following on the heels of similar legislation in New York, H.706, An act relating to banning the use of neonicotinoid pesticides, was passed by the Vermont Legislature during the 2024 session as Act 182.

As enacted, Act 182 contains two notable prohibitions. First, the Act prohibits the sale, distribution, and use of neonicotinoid treated article seeds for soybeans and the cereal grain crop groups 15,



15-22, 16, and 16-22. Second, Act 182 prohibits the following applications of neonicotinoid pesticides beginning July 1, 2025: (a) outdoor

applications to any plant during bloom, (b) outdoor applications to soybeans and the cereal grain crop groups 15, 15-22, 16, and 16-22, (c) outdoor applications to crops in the leafy vegetables; brassica; bulb vegetables; herbs and spices; and stalk, stem, and leaf petiole vegetables crop groups (crop groups 3, 3-07, 4, 4-16, 5, 5-16, 19, 22, 25, and 26) harvested after bloom, and (d) applications to ornamental plants. For more information regarding the specific crops within each of the crop groups, please see 40 CFR 180.41.

Act 182 does enable the Secretary, however, to suspend provisions

related to both prohibitions provided certain conditions are met. For example, the Secretary may issue exemption orders for the use of treated article seeds provided (1) the applicant completes IPM training, (b) the applicant submits a pest risk assessment to VAAF, and (3) the authorized seeds are only planted on property or properties described in the pest risk assessment. Similarly, the Secretary may issue an exemption order the use of neonicotinoid pesticides upon a determination that (1) an environmental emergency or agricultural emergency exists, (2)

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DAIRY BUSINESS INNOVATION CENTER

On-Farm Milk Storage and Handling Grant Awards

By Katie Spring, Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center

The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center is pleased to announce recipients of the 2024 On-Farm Milk Storage & Handling Grant.

Projects from this grant help streamline milk pickup, create efficiencies around milk storage, and improve handling for both farmers and their processors.

In this grant round, 20 farms were selected for awards out of 103 applicants. Awards span eight states across the region, including: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York,



Pennsylvania, and Vermont.

Many of those selected for awards will be investing in larger bulk tanks to move from daily to every-other-day milk pickup. This leads to savings on hauling costs, decreased fuel usage, and increased energy efficiency as older units are replaced with more efficient ones. Many projects also include

plate coolers and variable speed pumps to improve milk cooling.

Awards ranged from \$15,000 to \$50,000, with a total of \$847,414 in overall funding. Vermont farms selected for awards include:

Champlainside Farm of Vermont: \$50,000 to replace their water-based plate cooler with

a new glycol chiller to improve milk cooling regardless of fluctuations in Lake Champlain's water temperature. This will lead to cost savings and improved milk quality, in addition to decreasing total water use.

JASA Family Farm of Vermont: \$50,000 to consolidate milking operations onto one site and purchase and install a 1600-gallon bulk milk storage tank and new plate cooler to increase production and switch to every-other-day milk pickup.

Longway Farms of Vermont: \$42,714.93 to replace a 1500-gallon bulk tank with a currently owned 4000-gallon bulk tank and purchase and install new

condenser units and a high-speed pump to address inefficiencies in milk hauling and storage. This will reduce hauling trips to one per day and improve cost savings and efficiency.

Thibeault Farm of Vermont: \$50,000 to increase milk storage capacity to support the recent 30-cow expansion by installing a 1600-gallon bulk tank with a new compressor, a plate cooler, and an additional 30 stalls into their barn, enabling them to switch to every-other-day milk pickup.

A full list of awardees is at nedairyinnovation.com/2024-milk-storage-handling-awards. This grant will open again this coming winter.

2024 Food Safety and Certification Grant Awards

By Katie Spring, Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center

The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center is pleased to announce recipients of the Dairy Food Safety & Certification Grant.

Twelve dairy businesses across five states were selected for awards. Individual award amounts range from \$11,056 to \$50,000, with a total of \$518,255 in overall funding.



Projects from this grant will allow dairy farmers and processors to take actionable steps to increase their food safety protocols and improve

marketability. These projects include installing specialized equipment to reduce barriers to food safety, developing

enhanced food safety plans, and expanding staff food safety training.

In Vermont, Rolling Bale Farm was selected for an award of \$44,022 to make upgrades to their farmstead butter-making infrastructure. This includes converting their bucket milking system to a closed pipeline system with a plate cooler and clean-in-place system, installing a new bulk tank for raw milk storage, upgrading their cream storage from plastic totes to

a bulk tank, and replacing two pasteurizers with one new vat-pasteurizer. These improvements will reduce food safety risks and increase effectiveness and efficiency of sanitation, supporting an increase in production.

This grant is expected to open again in winter 2025. See the full list of awardees and learn more about the Dairy Food Safety & Certification Grant on our website: nedairyinnovation.com.

Current and Upcoming Dairy Grants

By Ali Boochever, Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center

At NE-DBIC, our goal is to help dairy farms and processors innovate to become more sustainable and resilient. Whether you're looking for funding to purchase specialized equipment, to implement an innovative practice, or to receive technical assistance, consider applying for an NE-DBIC grant. Access full details and Requests for Applications online at nedairyinnovation.com/grants

Open Funding Opportunities

Dairy Processor Modernization Grant

This grant program will provide funds to support dairy processors in modernizing their processing facilities for long term business viability. Projects funded through this grant will focus primarily on upgrading or adding specialized dairy processing or packaging equipment essential for business growth. Projects must address at least one of the following areas:

- 1. Expanded processing capacity:** Adding or replacing equipment to scale growth, increase production capacity, utilize more regionally sourced milk, and meet market demand.
- 2. Increased facility efficiencies:** Replacing outdated equipment to improve labor efficiency,



- reduce production costs, lower resource/energy usage, and enhance food safety.

- 3. Implementation of packaging improvements:** Adding or replacing equipment to reduce packaging waste, minimize use of virgin plastics, reduce supply chain waste, or extend/improve product shelf life.

Applicants will qualify into tiers based on milk utilized on an average production day, regardless of the number of days per week they process. Volume may differ based on the product made and processors should reference the volume measurement for their specific product. Volume is a measurement of inputs and not finished products.

- **Tier 1:** 10,000+ units of volume per average production day
- **Tier 2:** 1 – 9,999 units of volume per average production day

Awards will range from \$75,000 to \$350,000 for Tier 1 and \$15,000 to \$150,000 for Tier 2, with a 25% match commitment. Approximately \$1,200,000 total funds are available for this round. The

application deadline is August 8, 2024, at 2 PM ET.

New Dairy Processor Start-up Grant

Grant funds will support new dairy processing projects throughout the Northeast. The goal of this program is to help develop competitive dairy processing businesses with long-term viability, supporting operations of all sizes in successfully launching and sustaining their products in the marketplace. This program is for:

1. Dairy farmers ready to begin processing,
2. Value-added entrepreneurs with proven experience in dairy processing or value-added business startups, or
3. Dairy processors established after January 1, 2023, who are in the start-up phase of business development.

Applicants are required to allocate at least 15% of their funding towards obtaining technical assistance or training relevant to starting up value-added production. Funds can also cover the purchase of specialized dairy processing equipment and supplies, enhancement of food safety measures,

professional marketing and branding efforts, market access strategies, and product development.

Evidence of prior or current technical assistance from a service provider or business planner supporting the development of the project will make applications more competitive.

Awards will range from \$15,000 to \$75,000, with a 25% match commitment. Approximately \$500,000 in total funds are available this round. The application deadline is September 5, 2024, at 2 PM ET.

Innovation in Dairy Processor and Packaging Grant

This grant will provide funds for dairy processors, dairy producer associations, and educational research institutions to conduct research and development projects that support innovation for Northeast dairy processors of various scales. Projects funded through this program will help dairy processors gain knowledge that will allow them to make informed, long-term business

investments with positive environmental and/or economic impacts.

Funded projects will focus on developing alternatives to current industry standards through initiatives that are applicable, scalable, and replicable to other Northeast dairy processors. Each project must include an educational or information-sharing component for other regional dairy processors. Projects should increase collaboration across the dairy sector to ensure the greatest number of businesses benefit.

All projects must:

- Demonstrate sustainability, scalability, and marketability at the forefront.
- Demonstrate accessibility of packaging innovation, particularly for the scale of processors in the Northeast.
- Include an educational/knowledge sharing component for the industry. This does not exclude the ability for the grantee to acquire patent protections for technologies developed within this grant project.
- Incorporate partnership across sectors (minimum of one dairy processor as a key partner, if applicant is not a dairy processor).

Priority will go to:

- Projects that support modernized packaging initiatives prioritizing sustainability, scalability, and marketability for small and mid-sized processors
- Projects that partner across the dairy and packaging manufacturing sectors and

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State Incentive Payment for Participation in the NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program

By Noah Gilbert-Fuller, VT
Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has announced that they will be moving the deadline for Fiscal Year 2025 applications to August 23rd, 2024. This change affects all programs that the NRCS offers, including the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (Agency) still has funding available through the Vermont Farmers Ecosystem Stewardship Program (VFESP) to provide incentive funding to farmers who apply for the CSP program, receive an assessment on their

agricultural land, and enroll their agricultural land into CSP contracts.

The largest conservation program in the United States, CSP is a federal program that helps land managers enhance natural resources and improve their business operations. CSP requires active producers to meet certain environmental objectives and commit to 5 years of enhanced conservation on their land. In return, producers receive an annual conservation payment. NRCS CSP contract conservation payments range from \$4,000-\$40,000 per year for five years.

The Vermont Farmers Ecosystem Stewardship Program is meant to introduce more producers to the CSP program and increase the number of enrollees

who seek to improve their environmental stewardship. Under this program, agricultural producers of all sizes who successfully engage in the development of an NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program Assessment will receive a one-time payment from the state of \$2,000, followed by an additional state payment of \$7,500 if they successfully sign a CSP contract.

These funds are additional to payments farms would receive from NRCS over the course of their federal contract. Remaining funds for this State incentive program are limited, so interested farmers are encouraged to submit their applications to both the Agency and the NRCS at their earliest convenience to be eligible for funding.

To apply to CSP, interested farmers should ensure that their Farm Service Agency (FSA) records are up to date, and submit a CSP application to the NRCS by August 23rd, 2024.

Your local FSA and NRCS offices can be found using the locator at: <https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

To apply to the VFESP

program, after applying to NRCS please complete and submit the application and waiver form found at this webpage: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/CSP-Assist>

If you have questions about the incentive program, you may contact Noah Gilbert-Fuller at Noah.Gilbert-Fuller@vermont.gov or at (802) 505-3407.

Current Dairy Grants

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can demonstrate positive impact on multiple dairy businesses and supply chain partners.

The RFA for this grant is expected to be released in August. Awards will range from \$75,000 to \$350,000, with a 25% match commitment. Approximately \$1,500,000 in total funds are available in this round.

Upcoming Funding Opportunities

Dairy Co-packing Grant

This grant will provide funds for existing Northeast

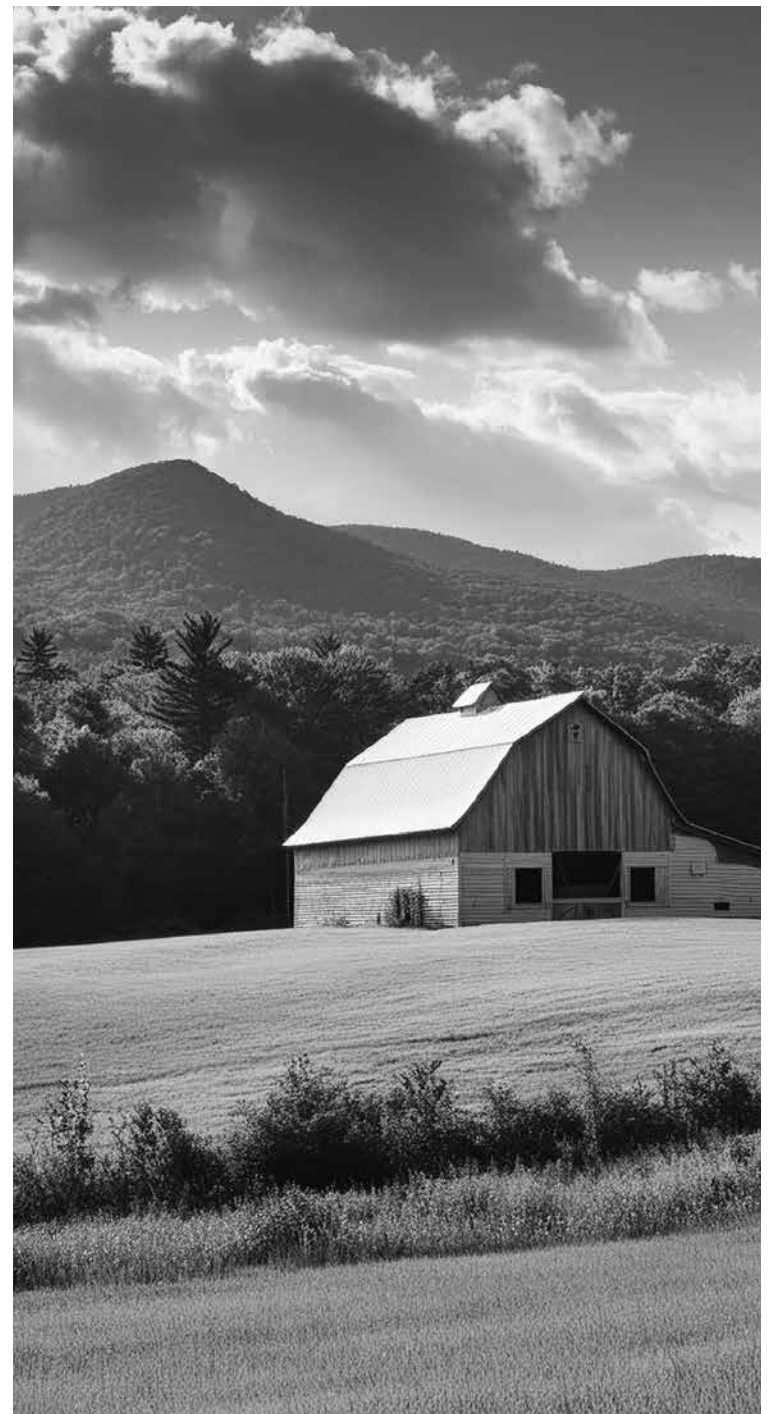
dairy processors to initiate new co-packing arrangements or expand existing co-packing capabilities. Processors who have not previously co-packed will be eligible for funds to add co-packing capabilities to their current business. Processors that currently co-pack will be eligible for funds to add new co-packing partnerships, scale up existing co-packing relationships, or add additional co-packed product lines.

Applicants will be required to utilize technical assistance or training as part of their projects. Applicants are strongly encouraged to engage in technical

assistance such as business planning, market research, or other relevant pre-work ahead of applying for this grant. Funds may be used to purchase specialized dairy processing equipment and/or supplies, increase food safety, marketing and branding, market access, and/or product development.

The RFA is expected to be released in late 2024. Awards will range from \$15,000 to \$150,000 with a 25% match contribution.

Find out more about these current and upcoming funding opportunities on our full funding calendar on our website at: nedairyinnovation.com/grants



Agency Receives Record Demand for Meat and Produce Grants

Sarah McIlvennie, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets has awarded over \$1,600,000 in grants to producers and processors in two industries through the Meat and Produce Agriculture Development Grants (ADG) program. Thirteen operations across ten Vermont counties received funds for projects investing in infrastructural upgrades, increasing operational efficiency, enhancing food and worker safety, and improving climate resilience.

“Supporting our farmers who feed us is good for rural Vermont and consumers. This strategy was a recommendation of my “Future of Agriculture Commission,” said Vermont Governor Phil Scott. “These dollars will strengthen our food system while making it more affordable for our farmers and producers.”

The Meat and Produce ADG program represent a portion of the larger Agriculture Development Grant program, which includes Maple ADG, offered in 2023. The larger ADG program was created by the Vermont legislature and included over \$2.1 million to be awarded to the maple, meat and produce industries. As previously shared, the Maple ADG program received 350 applications with requests exceeding \$18 million. The

Meat and Produce ADG program received 172 applications with requests exceeding \$25.6 million. The ADG programs represent the single highest requests for number of applications (Maple ADG) and requested funds (Meat and Produce ADG) in Agency history; together they represented 522 applications requesting \$43.6 million from the maple, meat and produce industries.

“Our farmers and producers continue to innovate, and these projects are impressive,” said Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts. “These investments in meat and produce will allow these businesses to produce more local and regional food for all of us to enjoy.”

For the Meat and Produce ADG program, feedback from both produce and meat industry stakeholders—including representatives from producer associations, service providers, research institutions, and business viability programs— informed the Agency in the development of the grant program.

Eligible projects were required to address one of three funding priorities: 1) Climate Resiliency, 2) Infrastructure, Efficiency & Capacity, and 3) Worker and Food Safety & Product Quality. Selected projects support operations across a diversity of the two eligible industries: Produce production (mushroom, fruit and vegetable), produce processing, poultry

production, livestock production (beef and sheep), poultry processing, and livestock processing (sheep, pork, beef, goat). Projects will run through mid-2026.

A list of final awards and project summaries is below:

- **5th Quarter** (Washington) – \$158,876 for construction of a second processing room, increasing capacity for processing and co-packing for Vermont farms.
- **Adam’s Berry Farm** (Chittenden) – \$245,123 for construction of an upgraded packing and processing facility to support food safe practices and expanded production and value-added processing.
- **Blue House Mushroom** (Chittenden) – \$36,544 for completion of a production facility that will support doubling of production volumes to meet current market demand and expand into new markets.
- **Brault’s Market** (Orleans) – \$52,364 for infrastructure upgrades to three coolers, supporting food safe practices and expanding processing capacity.
- **Clearfield Farm** (Addison) – \$93,415 for purchase of specialized root harvesting equipment to increase operational efficiency, soil conservation and expanded crop production.
- **Crossroad Farm** (Orange) – \$216,650 for construction of a new washing, packing and storage facility to meet efficiency, food safety and worker protection needs for current production volumes.
- **Dubs Farms** (Franklin) – \$44,032 for construction and furnishing of an on-farm processing facility that will allow poultry slaughter under Vermont State inspection for the grantee and other Vermont farms.
- **Dutton Berry Farm** (Windham) – \$269,500 for critical upgrades to their cider production facility, to increase food safe infrastructure and practices and support expanded production.
- **Grass Cattle Company** (Chittenden) - \$31,249 for construction of a fulfilment building and purchase of mobile infrastructure to support expanded direct-to-consumer market access.
- **Honey Field Farm** (Windsor) – \$118,650 for critical upgrades to their washing, packing and storage facilities to increase food safe infrastructure, to improve operational efficiency and to support season extension to meet current market demand.
- **Maplemont** (Caledonia) – \$43,510 for critical infrastructure upgrades to their barn to increase animal and human safety and wellbeing, operational efficiency and support

expansion of their flock.

- **Mighty Food Farm** (Bennington) – \$75,213 for climate-resilient improvements to their propagation and production greenhouses to support greater capacity to regulate greenhouse conditions and reduce crop loss in a changing climate.
- **Roma’s Butchery** (Windsor) - \$247,519 for infrastructural and equipment upgrades to support coming under Vermont State inspection, improve worker safety and wellbeing, and expand capacity for processing.

The Agency received a wide array of eligible applications from businesses in all 14 of Vermont’s counties. Applicant businesses ranged from start-up stage producers to established commercial processors, with businesses of all sizes submitting applications.

Agricultural businesses interested in future funding opportunities are encouraged to stay engaged through the Agricultural Development Division’s webpage at www.agriculture.vermont.gov/development.

Questions related to Meat and Produce Agriculture Development Grants should be directed to program coordinator Sarah McIlvennie at 802-261-5866 or Sarah.McIlvennie@vermont.gov.

Maplebrook Farm Expands Production and Sustainability with Major Grant

By Katie Spring, Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center

Maplebrook Farm of Bennington, Vermont, is well known for its mozzarella. While they have a wide range of offerings – including feta, burrata, stracciatella, ricotta, and cheddar bites – it was co-founder Mike Schepp's mozzarella that started it all. In 2003, when Johann Englert started selling Mike's Vermont-made cheese to specialty shops in Boston, demand grew so fast that the two quickly went into business together.

Today, over 20 years later, Maplebrook Farm has grown to 65 employees, including Johann's grandson Alex Englert, who is now a co-owner. In 2022, the business grew again when it

partnered with Ploughgate Creamery, taking on production of the artisanal, small-batch cultured butter.

Now, with support from the Existing Dairy Processor Expansion Grant, Maplebrook is transforming its operations.

The \$504,132 of grant funding is allowing Maplebrook to purchase specialized equipment that increases efficiency, sustainability, and volume of locally sourced milk and cream. One of the key pieces of equipment is a milk separator, which will nearly double Maplebrook's cream production from 10,000 to 18,000 gallons annually. This will not only increase butter production but also enable the creation of new products like mascarpone, helping to balance seasonal fluctuations in demand.

The addition of a water-cooling system will dramatically cut water usage by 66%, saving 2.2 million gallons annually. This system will also reduce energy costs and improve the quality and shelf life of Maplebrook's products by ensuring consistent cooling temperatures year-round. A rotary filler will automate packaging, eliminating current bottlenecks and extending product shelf life. Bringing the expansion full circle to their original cheese, a new steam cooker/stretcher will increase mozzarella yield by 7%.

Alongside their new equipment, Maplebrook is working with a consultant to achieve Safe Quality Foods (SQF) Level 2 certification. This will open up new co-manufacturing opportunities, which, thanks



Alex Englert and Mike Schepps of Maplebrook Farm.



Making mozzarella at Maplebrook Farm.

to the new equipment, they will be well situated for. By 2026, Maplebrook aims to double its production and milk use, processing 14 million pounds of milk into cheese and butter.

"Receiving the grant allows us to finally take the first step in a robust expansion plan to double capacity and bring new innovative products to market," said Alex Englert. "What had been an overwhelming and daunting expansion project is now underway because of this grant. We feel very grateful for the opportunity to share our cheese with more people and continue to highlight

Vermont's unparalleled milk quality."

This expansion will allow Maplebrook to increase the use of local milk and cream, reach new markets, and consolidate its processing spaces, setting the stage for continued growth and success.

Dairy processors looking to make investments can explore NE-DBIC programs, including the Dairy Processor Modernization Grant, which is open from June 27 through August 8, 2024.

To see a full list of dairy innovation grants, visit our [funding calendar](#).

Pasteurized Milk Ordinance: 100 Years of Ensuring Food Safety

By E.B. Flory, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

We celebrated dairy month in June and whether in Vermont or across the United States, consumers should know that when they purchase dairy products made in the United States, they will be safe for consumption.

While Vermont dairy is known for being leaders in quality milk and amazing dairy products being made from that milk (in 2023 VT cheeses received 142 domestic and international awards) there is a foundation of food safety requirements that have been behind the scenes for 100 years. The U.S. Public Health Service began the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) which was originally called the Standard Milk Ordinance in 1924 to respond to one out of every four foodborne illnesses was directly related to dairy consumption.

What has evolved over the years is the longest active food safety regulation in the United States. These regulations are science-based and have been evolving with technology for a hundred years and counting. The PMO represents not only dairy food safety but a partnership with farmers

and milk cooperatives, milk haulers, processors, scientists, engineers, and regulators. Today, for every two billion servings of pasteurized milk or milk products consumed in the U.S., less than one person gets sick.

The high-quality dairy products we have access to

in Vermont are made from milk collected to PMO standards on our dairy farms. These standards allow our farmers to have their milk shipped for processing locally, out

of state or internationally! What do some of these food safety standards look like?

Standards are set across the entire process for collecting milk and getting it to the facility for processing. Milk quality and antibiotic screening testing is done with every load of milk shipped from the farm, animal cleanliness, potable water sources, clean milking equipment and clean milk storage equipment all have standards to meet. In addition, there are regulations regarding proper lighting, ventilation, and storage of items that come in contact with the milk during the milking process. Whether it's a door that is self-closing to keep pests and insects out of the room milk is stored in to documenting proper cooling of milk after each milking, the PMO and

its requirements are implemented each day on our dairy farms.

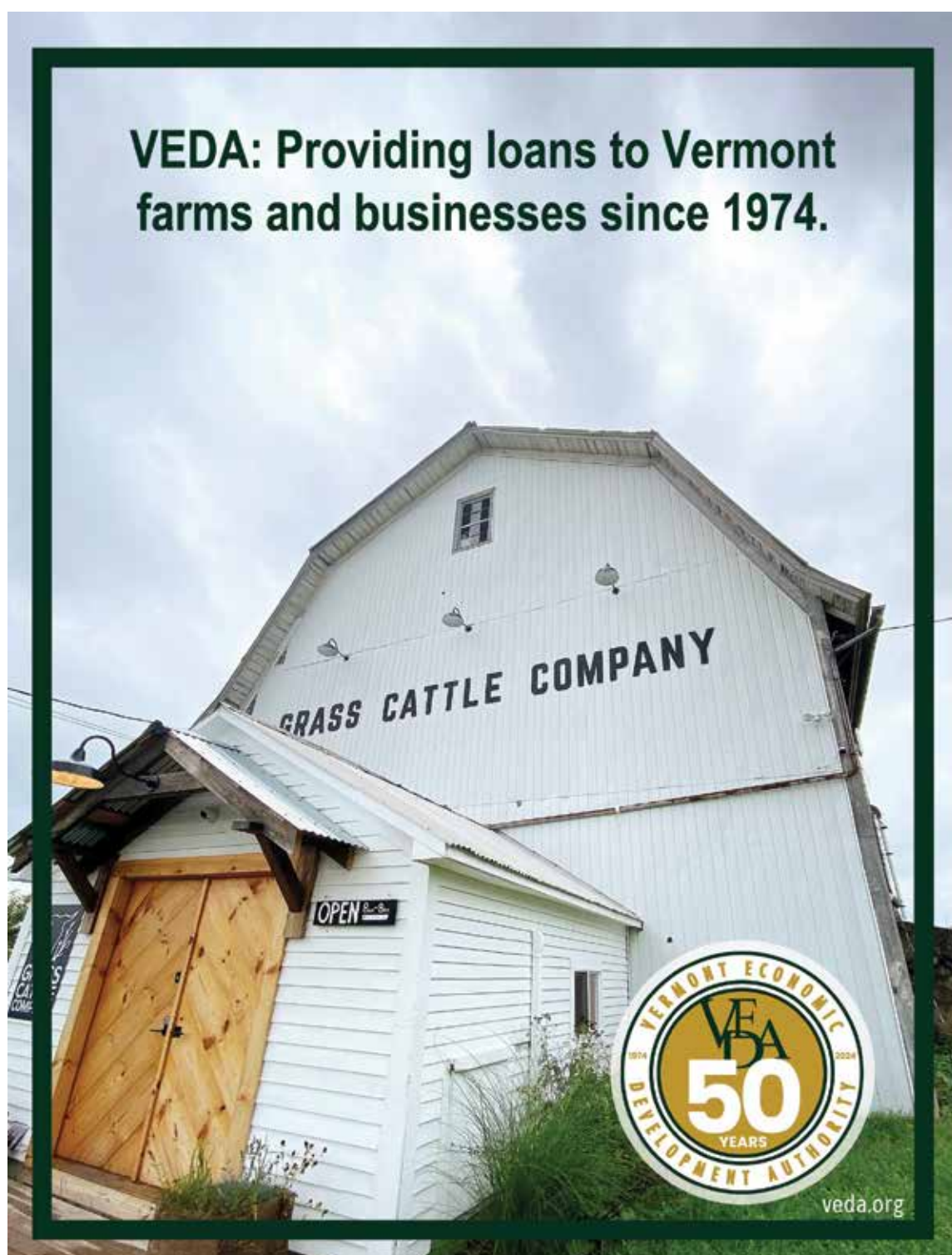
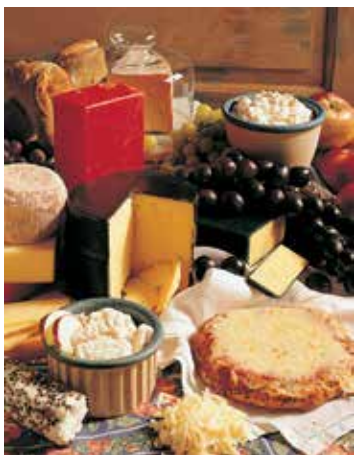
At our dairy plants, they receive the benefit of Vermont's exceptional milk quality. The milk produced by farmers to PMO standards have their milk turned into family staples

like milk, butter, and yogurt. And don't forget the cheeses; sliced cheese to aged cheeses that are a work of art to the eyes and our taste buds. Let's not forget all the delicious ice cream being created in flavors old and new.

While consumers delight in the bounty of Vermont

dairy products for flavor, textures and consistency, our dairy processors are hard at work maintaining quality and food safety standards. Regulations ranging from temperatures milk and milk products must be stored at, to how frequently processing

continued on page 13



VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY NEWS



Compiled by Vern Grubinger,
University of Vermont
Extension
802-257-7967 ext. 303, or
vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu
www.vvbga.org

Reports From The Field

(Westminster) I don't think we've ever been so on top of things: on-time planting, cultivating, hoeing, and weeding. On-time enough to give the workers a day off here and there.

Fertility seems to be holding up well, and we're averaging 0.72 inches of rain a week, a shade over my perfect average of one-half inch but well within acceptable limits. We're on-time for at least a meal of sweet corn on the Fourth of July, the earliest ever. A combination of wasps and timely Entrust spray seem to have taken care of corn borer. Timely spraying has also been effective against cabbage worm in the cabbage, which we've started to cut. We've seen no *Cercospora* on our beets.

(Marlboro) Raspberries coming along earlier than normal, looking good so far but still lots of time for things to go wrong. Black raspberries have a great crop. but we lose more than ever to birds, will have to cover them someday.

Lighter blueberry crop than normal and ripening a bit early, SWD net in place over a part of the patch and putting out SWD traps soon. A good growing season with enough but not too much rain, and in good intervals.

(W. Rutland) Blueberries are slowly getting ripe. Early varieties look good, as do the late varieties. Mid-season varieties looking thin due to excessive pruning.

Garlic harvest in 2-3 weeks. Had to irrigate for 2 weeks since the rain went all around us. Observed more leek moth than ever, glad the spinosad still works. All brassica crops rocking.

(Grand Isle) Blueberries look nice. We anticipate opening 5-7 days earlier this year. We are trying a new idea to get our Japanese beetle issue under control. We have covered all the grass areas up to within inches of the plants with ground cover. We have stapled the cover down with staples every 3 feet or less. Our hope is that once the Japanese beetles emerge, they will not be able to find a way out from under the ground cloth. Our plants are completely enclosed under SWD insect netting, so the Japanese beetles can't get in or out.

(Newfane) Strawberry season will be coming to an early end. This season is 10 to 12 days earlier than usual. Extreme heat and 7 or 8 inches of rain was not good. Raspberries earlier than any time in forty-one years of picking. Pick-your-own totals will be down as customers expect good strawberry picking leading

into July 4. The yield potential in the raspberries and blueberries is excellent.

(Orwell) Tunnel tomato harvest is underway with good looking fruit and steady harvest. This is our third year with potato aphids as one of our main pests. With a combination of early releases of beneficials and spraying hot spots, we are keeping them under better control than past years.

Botrytis is our biggest disease issue, especially in the middle of larger tunnels where ventilation and air circulation are limited. These areas of the tunnels also suffer most in the heat.

Other crops look good although brassicas and eggplant are taking a hit from heavy flea beetle pressure. We are appreciating the moderate but adequate rainfall we've received so far this season--hoping that continues.

(Newbury) Digging new potatoes. Harvesting shell peas for the last week. Fava beans are ready. No signs of leek moth and Colorado potato beetles are scarce. Squash and cukes look good. Brassicas are robust but not producing eatables. Observed first cabbage moth

Update From The UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic

Ann Hazelrigg,
UVM Extension

Blueberries: *Exobasidium* leaf and fruit spot identified. This fungus is sporadic and considered to be a more southern disease. Pale green spots appear on the upper leaf surface with pure

white fungal growth on the underside. Infected spots on berries stay green and do not ripen. Spots become sunken and distorted over time and berries may drop prematurely. To reduce disease, encourage air flow and reduce humidity in the blueberry field. Use drip irrigation instead of overhead irrigation, eliminate standing water, and remove trees on the perimeter that block air movement. Prune bushes to create an open canopy with good air flow. A single application of lime sulfur about two weeks before bud break will provide significant control of *Exobasidium* leaf and fruit spot. <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/exobasidium-leaf-and-fruit-spot-of-blueberry>

Strawberries: several plantings have experienced significant collapse. Some crowns are infected with anthracnose and show severe damage. Black root rot is commonly seen in roots. <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/plpath-fru-05>. This is a catch-all term for red stele disease (*Phytophthora*), nematodes, *Rhizoctonia* and other soil borne fungi. Even though the winter was on the mild side, I suspect the very saturated soil of last summer contributed to the collapse we are seeing this year.

Tomatoes: Anticipate seeing a lot of leaf spot disease (Early blight, Septoria) showing up this week on the lower leaves of field tomatoes. Fungicide sprays can protect new tissue but need to be reapplied often. We don't usually see this in high tunnels, but it can be present in the outside rows. Some tortoise beetle adults

(resemble mini turtles) and larval (green and spiny with fecal matter on back) feeding seen on Solanaceous plants. <https://extension.umaine.edu/home-and-garden-ipm/fact-sheets/common-name-listing/tortoise-beetles/>

Squash vine borer reported in western Massachusetts last week. There is only one and maybe two generations per year and adults emerge from late June into July with peak flight being mid-July. Some growers sacrifice the first fruit by keeping squash row covered until after their first blooms. <https://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/fact-sheets/squash-vine-borer>

Leek moth damage is high in scapes. Garlic anthracnose was diagnosed on garlic scapes in Massachusetts. <https://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/newsletters/vegetable-notes/vegetable-notes-2024-vol-3611>. "In garlic, this pathogen (*Colletotrichum fioriniae*) only infects the scapes and bulbils. *C. fioriniae* has a broad host range including celery, tomato, pear, apple, blueberry, strawberry, and many weeds. On garlic scapes, lesions are sunken and initially tan, turning orange as the fungus produces spores. The spores are dispersed by splashing water. The fungus can survive on crop debris in the soil for several years. Remove scapes and rotate."

Suspected Swede midge damage seen causing multiple heads in brassicas. Tiny adult flies lay eggs in the growing points. The feeding damage causes deformation of plants including brown corky

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CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad in *Agriview* sign up to be a paid subscriber, visit: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/administration/vaafm-news/agriview/advertising-agriview>

Email: Agri.agriview@vermont.gov, phone: 802-828-1619. Deadline for submissions is the 1st of each month for next month's issue. Example: January 1st deadline for February issue.

Cattle

Jersey & Jersey/Holstein cross dairy cows, in Highgate Ctr Vermont; Certified Organic & Grass-only, very tame. Farmer retiring, needs surgery. Vaccinated, Negative for Johnes. Two A2 cows and ten A1 cows still need new homes! (as do 12 bred heifers, all A1, due to freshen in late spring). (802)868-2356 (landline); (802)370-1051 (cell); jyoust87@vt.edu (7)

4 AI Holstein heifers due in March. Georgia Vt. 802-527-2010 leave message. (7)

Angus Bulls for sale. Greensboro, VT (802) 533-9804 (10)

Equipment

1 1/2 horsepower Deloval vacuum pump good for sugaring or milking. 80ft New Holland hay elevator like new. 802-624-0143. (7)

Red Cedar fence posts 7ft & 8ft. 803-265-4566 (7)

Commercial Blooming onion cutter & frying tanks 802-365-4000 (7)

Massey-Harris "Pony" tractor with cultivators, plows, runs great. \$5,000. J.D. Gator - as is. Special \$950. Steel Totes 4x4 with plastic liner. \$99 each. 1-802-483-2870 (7)

32 X 8 ft. Flat Trailer suitable for up to 23 dry round bales. Large unobstructed space constructed with pressure-treated planks, railroad rails, trailer hitch, and 8 tires. \$5000 or best offer. Braintree Call Lynn, 802-728-9749. (8)

J.D. post hole digger, 3pt., ex condition = \$950. N.H. Model 900 chopper, 2 heads, excellent = \$25,000. Pinwheel Rake, 3pt., 4 wheels

= \$750. J.D. hopper blower, pto, good condition - \$950. J.D. Forage Wagons, tandem, 16 ft. = \$12,500 each. Several plows 3, 4, 5 bottom, good condition. Pittsford, VT 1-802-483-2870 (9)

John Deere 446 Round Baler. 2 - 32 foot Hay elevator on wheels. 600 gallon bulk tank sap. Call 802-222-7645 (9)

1985 John Deere 950, \$WD, power steering, 1249 hrs, \$8400. John Deere brush hog \$750. 802-453-2724 (9)

2 Hay Wagons just running gear. 717 New Holland one row corn chopper. 3 Pt hitch weight for tractor. Phone (802) 442-4877 (9)

D&S Livestock Feeders. Two D&S #F1316 8' long. One D&S #H600 round feeder. List price \$1,835 & shipping. Price \$600 West Rupert, bearmountainfarmVT@gmail.com 802-394-7852 (9)

Milking Equip, Bulk Tank, Vac Pump, Balance Tank, Pipe Line, Receiver, Milk Pump, 2 ATO, 4 Cow Walk Thru, Head Locks, Free Stall, Hoops, Rd Bale Unroller, Ford Sq Baler, 3 Pt Fert Spreader, JD 450, Dozer, 3 Pt Wood Splitter, Bulk Tank Washer, 91' 2WD Dodge Trk, 75 gal, Hot H2O Heater LPG. 802-348-6303. (9)

4 Gehl Forage Boxes with good running gears. \$1500.00 each or 5500 for all four. Gehl 99 Blower \$1500.00 - Very Good Shape. 2 Older Hay Elevators \$250.00 each. Please call 802-272-0548 (9)

Gehl round bailer model RB1475. In very good, well-maintained condition. New belts still in the box will come with it. Please call 802-425-2385. (9)

**THE VERMONT AG BULLETIN****Grants, Learning, News & More**

The Agriculture Development Division publishes a weekly newsletter featuring grant opportunities, workshops/webinars, and news, for its subscribers. The Agency encourages you to sign up to receive the newsletter. You can also find the form and past issues by going to <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/administration/vaafm-news>.

John Deere 10 1/2 transport harrows. 7 - 8 ton Brock grain bin. 19 ton Brock grain bin. 16ft Snuco hay elevator. 15 ton Brock grain bin. 802-624-0143 (10)

Pasteurizer/Chart Recorder/Thermometers: 30 gallon Micro Process Design pasteurizer, lids, paddle and motor. Thermometers; indicating, recording, and air space. Anderson chart

recorder, spare paper and pens. In good condition and used lightly seasonally. Selling as a set for \$11,000 Located in Westminster, Vt. Contact rachel@alpineglofarm.com for details and pictures. (10)

Equipment and supplies for small-scale home dairy production in very good, scrupulously clean condition. Price negotiable. Pownal, VT 802-823-5654 7am-7pm (11)

Kobota tractor model L345 DT, 34HP, loader 4wheel drive, chains, snowplow 8', scrapper blade 6', york rake 4' shop manual, clean \$11,950. IH 5ft finish mower, 3 blades, new condition \$2950. Several steel totes with plastic liner 4x4 \$100 - \$120 each. 802-483-2870 (11)

continued on page 12

**HAVE FEED?
NEED FEED?
BUY/SELL**

**FARM
FEED-FINDER
MARKETPLACE**

HELPING CONNECT FARMS AND FEED

<https://agriculture.vermont.gov/farm-feed-finder-marketplace>

VERMONT
AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

Classifieds*continued from page 11*

New Holland section for elevator. John Deere 80 ft hay elevator. Price to sell. 4 Flex auger \$1000. 802-624-0143 (11)

Woods Rake – Model LR107-2, 7 foot, 3 pt hookup \$750.00. West Rupert – bearmountainfarmVT@gmail.com (802)-394-7852 (11)

General

Trucking to C.V.L.M. every Tuesday, strong market, several buyers for Beef, Sheep, Goats. Call Eddie 1-802-483-2870 (7)

Hay, Feed & Forage

Hay small square bales 1st cut never wet. \$5 a bale. Leave message. 802-442-2646 (7)

Small square bales of 2022 1st cut, nice and dry \$5.00 per bale. Also have 2023 2nd cut for \$6.00 per bale. Call 802 223 5747 (7)

1st, 2nd and 3rd cut grass haylage layered in bunk with preservatives. 250 tons, \$55/ton. Call Larry Scott, Ekolott Farm, Rt. 5, Newbury, VT 802-291-2363 (9)

ORANGE COUNTY

1st, 2nd and 3rd cut grass haylage layered in bunk with preservatives. 250 tons, \$55/ton. Call Larry Scott (8)

WINDHAM COUNTY

Riverview Market Farms has certified organic hay available in round bales. We have first quality hay as well as mulch hay. Pick up at our farm at 68 East Putney Ferry Road Putney, VT 05346. Call Cory at 802-289-3420. (9)

Large Square Bales, 1st Cut Hay. Saxtons River, VT. (802) 463-3875 (9)

WINDSOR COUNTY

1st and 2nd Cut wrapped 4x4 round bales for sale, \$55/bale, Call Tom at 802-698-3390

Wanted

Drive end for John Deere hay elevator. 802-624-0143 (11)

Family Cow Wanted!

Experienced farm owner seeking sound, gentle, older cow, low producing, and able to be milked by hand. A Jersey is preferred! G. Brigham 802-492-3458 or email nancy_bell@vermontel.net (11)

For Sale

We have Black and White Border Collie puppies for sale. One male and one female. Parents are on our farm. Born 1/9/2024. Beautiful lovable smart puppies ready for a new home. Call 802-342-0612 Wallingford, Vt. \$500. (9)

Help Wanted

Organic Livestock Farm in N. Danville seeks co-manager/co-producer to assist in current operations while leveraging farm assets to conduct their own enterprise. Farm currently raises cattle, sheep and pork but could host more of the same or other production. Looking to diversify offerings in our farm store as well. Could help facilitate the look for housing for those from out of town. More detailed description of the opportunity can be found on the Landlink listing for Lewis Creek Jerseys. Email badgerbrookmeats@gmail.com or call Vince at 802-748-8461. (8)

Vegetable & Berry News*continued from page 10*

tissue, galls, blind-heads, multi-heads, and twisted leaf petioles.

Send a picture or sample if you need help identifying a problem. ann.hazlrigg@uvm.edu

Vermont Farm Tick Survey

Ticks and tickborne diseases are increasing in Vermont and you, your workers and animals are at high risk of exposure. Scientists at the UVM

Entomology Research Laboratory are gathering information about ticks on farms and how you deal with them.

To help us develop resources for farmers to reduce the risk of tick bites, please complete this 5-10 minute survey: https://qualtrics.uvm.edu/jfe/form/SV_00nshllEvEdmldc. And check out our new Tick Information Center <https://site.uvm.edu/vt-tic/> with resources specifically for farmers. Questions? Contact Cheryl Sullivan at cfrank@uvm.edu

Still Time To Add Your Free PYO Listing

Promote your PYO crops to the public on the new VVBGA web site vermontpickyourown.org Log in as a VVBGA member at <https://vvbga.org/> and click "Pick-Your-Own-Listing" on the left. It takes just 5 minutes – or simply ask me to add your information for you (from your existing web site or social media).

Act 706*continued from page 3*

the neonicotinoid pesticide would be effective in addressing the emergency, and (3) no other, less harmful pesticide or pest management practice would be effective in addressing the emergency. Neither exemption order may exceed one year.

The prohibition related to the use of neonicotinoid

pesticides becomes effective on July 1, 2025, and the prohibition related to neonicotinoid treated article seed on January 1, 2029. Of note, however, the effective dates are contingent on New York's similar law being in effect at those times. Further, Act 182 provides that in the event New York's law is repealed, so are the prohibitions provided in Act 182.

For Immediate Release

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets have received an application for a Milk Handlers license from the following entity: Vermont Butter Company, of Bethel, VT to buy/sell, transport, bargain, process and package butter within 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 August 31, 2024.

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.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Dairy Cows

By Scott Waterman, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Since early March 2024, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and State veterinary and public health officials has been investigating an illness among primarily older dairy cows.

Vermont veterinarians continue to monitor the situation as it develops

and are learning from other states and officials around the country. As of June 7, 2024, no cases have been detected in Vermont and no links to affected states have been identified.

For more information, the latest updates and resoures, please visit the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets website here: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/HPAinDairyCowsAnEmergingAnimalHealthIssue>

Milk Ordinance

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equipment must be washed to pasteurization of milk or aging of raw milk cheeses;

regulations for food safety in the dairy industry play a role in the safety of the dairy we consume today.

While PMO standard for food safety in the dairy

world may not be front and center in the minds of consumers, our dairy industry knows its value. From the farm, to hauling, to the processor to your plate, the dairy industry puts in a tremendous effort to follow

regulations that results in safe and high-quality food for all to enjoy.

So, raise a glass of maple milk or a wedge of sharp Vermont cheddar cheese or a maple creemee, and toast 100 years of food safety

under the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance! The future of our dairy industry moves forward with a strong foundation to continue to provide safe and delicious dairy for all.



Upcoming Grant Opportunities

The Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets is pleased to be able to help you more easily identify upcoming grant opportunities. Please go to <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/calendar> for more information.

Programs Open Year-Round

Farmstead Best Management Practices (BMP) Program

Technical and financial assistance for engineered conservation practices on Vermont farms.

Emma Redel
Emma.Redel@vermont.gov
802-261-5628

Ellen Friedrich
Ellen.Friedrich@vermont.gov
802-261-5629

Pasture And Surface Water Fencing (PSWF) Program

Technical and financial assistance for pasture management and livestock exclusion from surface water on Vermont farms.

Mary Montour
Mary.Montour@vermont.gov
802-461-6087

Grassed Waterway and Filter Strip (GWFS) Program

Technical and financial assistance for implementing buffers and seeding down critical areas on VT farms.

Ellen Friedrich
Ellen.Friedrich@vermont.gov
802-261-5629

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Implementation costs of vegetated buffers and rental payments for maintained buffers on VT agricultural land.

Ben Gabos
Ben.Gabos@Vermont.gov
802-461-3814

Phil Wilson
Phillip.Wilson@vermont.gov
802-505-5378

August

Innovation in Dairy Processor and Packaging Grant

Grants to provide long-term investments that increase dairy processors' environmental and economic sustainability.

Kathryn Donovan
kathryn.donovan@vermont.gov
(802) 585-4571

Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program

Grants for equipment to improve the aggregation, distribution, manufacturing, processing, storing, transporting, and wholesaling of Vermont food products including specialty crops, dairy, grains, aquaculture, and value-added products.

Julia Scheier
Julia.Scheier@vermont.gov
802-522-7042

September

Capital Equipment Assistance Program (CEAP)

Purchase of innovative farm equipment that aids in the reduction of runoff.

Sonia Howlett
Sonia.Howlett@vermont.gov
802-522-4655

Fall

Organic Certification Cost Share Program

Partial reimbursement of direct costs for organic certification

Terry Smith
Terry.Smith@vermont.gov
802-828-5667

Agency Contact Numbers

Phone numbers for Agency programs are listed below. You are always welcome to call our main line at 802-828-2430. We will do our best to route you to the person most able to answer your question quickly and accurately.

Program Phone Numbers

Act 250	802-461-6798
Animal Health	802-828-2421
Business Development	802-828-1619
Dairy	802-828-2433
Enforcement: Water Quality/Pesticides . .	802-828-2431
Feed, Seed, Fertilizer & Lime	802-828-5050
Licensing & Registration	802-828-2436
Meat Inspection	802-828-2426
Northeast Dairy Business	
Innovation Center	802-522-3186
Pesticide & Plant Health	802-828-1732
Produce Program	802-522-7811
Vermont Agriculture &	
Environmental Lab	802-585-6073
Water Quality BMP	802-828-3474
Water Quality Grants	802-622-4098
Water Quality Reports	802-272-0323
Weights & Measures	802-828-2433
Working Lands	802-917-2637

Water Quality Rulemaking Underway: Public Comment Period Open

By Noah Gilbert-Fuller, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets is revising the Best Management Practices Rule and establishing a new Technical Service Provider Rule and both proposed rules are open for public comment through September 9, 2024.

The Best Management Practice Program provides technical assistance and financial assistance to Vermont farmers to support construction of on-farm improvements designed to abate water quality risks from agricultural pollution. This rulemaking corrects findings from a 2018

audit that found the rule misaligned with current statute and practice. Updates reflect current terminology, statutes, processes for project prioritization, operation and maintenance requirements, as well as the petition process that has evolved since the last filing in 1996.

Technical Service Providers (TSPs) provide nutrient management and water quality permit consulting to Vermont farmers for water quality regulations. This rule is intended to ensure farmers receive professional technical services from TSPs that meet a minimum standard of quality assurance related to agricultural water quality nutrient management planning and permitting/certification regu-

lations. The proposed rule will ensure TSPs are held accountable for understanding the rules, regulations, and requirements related to nutrient management planning and permitting/certification services they provide. The rule will also enable enforcement on TSPs if the services they provide are out of compliance with water quality regulations. Currently, farms and the state lack recourse outside of enforcement on farms for work products provided by TSPs that are non-compliant.

Comments may be submitted to the Agency in writing, given over the phone, or may be provided

at either public hearing listed below:

TSP Rule: 116 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05620 in the 2nd Floor Conference Room on August 29th, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

BMP Rule: 116 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05620 in the 2nd Floor Conference Room on August 29th, 2024 from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Written comments can be submitted via email to: AGR.WQPublicComment@Vermont.gov.

To submit a comment over the phone or for other questions related to the draft rule revision, you may contact:

Nate Sands
802-224-6850
nathaniel.sands@vermont.gov

Brittany Cole
802-522-7413
brittany.cole@vermont.gov

General inquiries or comments may also be sent to: AGR.WQPublicComment@Vermont.gov

The Pesticide Applicator newsletter is going digital in 2024!

This change will allow:

- Fast delivery direct to your email
- Easy to click links and answer quizzes
- Save time and money

The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets wants to ensure you receive the Pesticide Applicator Report (PAR). Please confirm your email address with the Agency using the link, <https://forms.office.com/g/fNFGigN3FF>.

If you have any questions, please email agr.pest@vermont.gov or call 802-828-1732.

Please adjust your email settings so that email coming from agr.pest@vermont.gov will make it to your inbox and avoid it arriving in your Junk email box. You can also always find the latest, and past PARs with quizzes by scanning the QR code.



Pesticide Applicator Certification Exams

By Stephanie Smith, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Are you ready to take a Pesticide Applicator certification exam? Have you studied the appropriate materials? Do you know which exam or exams you need to become certified or licensed? Are you 18 or older? Please register online at least a week (7 days) in advance or by contacting the Certification & Training coordinator at 802-828-1732. All exams are given by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets. Scan the QR Code to schedule.

- All exams are CLOSED BOOK
- Please bring a calculator
- Please bring a current, state-issued, picture ID (required)

There is no cost to sit for (take) exams, *however* there is a fee for obtaining certification.



Montpelier
Every Wednesday
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Williston
Bi-weekly
1st and 3rd Thursdays
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

St. Johnsbury
Monthly
Every 2nd Thursday
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Rutland
Monthly
1st Tuesday
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Brattleboro
Monthly
1st Thursday
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Why Worry About Wineberry?

By the Plant Health Section, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

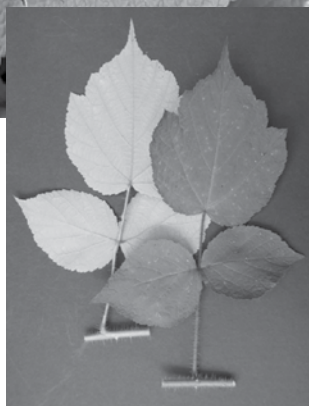
Wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*) is a member of the same family as raspberries and blackberries. This plant species was introduced to North America in the late 1800s as breeding stock for raspberries but has since escaped cultivation and become naturalized in parts of North America and poses a threat to Vermont's natural communities and working landscape. One hundred and twenty-five years after it was first brought over to the U.S. for its 'desirable' traits, Wineberry is problematic today because of its vigorous growth and ability to form dense spiny mats that can outcompete and displace native plants



Ben Dillner, Plant Health, VAAFM

and significantly alter habitat.

Subject matter experts from the Agency of Agriculture and Agency of Natural Resources Departments of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Environmental Conservation, and Fish & Wildlife agree on the threat posed by



Leslie Mehrhoff, Bugwood.org

Wineberry. AAFM recently designated Wineberry as one of eight plant species requiring a permit for activities

such as selling, transporting, or moving these plants within Vermont.

During a recent nursery inspection, mislabeled Wineberry plants were offered for sale, and incorrectly identified as a commonly sold raspberry cultivar. The inspector

promptly addressed the issue, leading to the removal and quarantine of the plants. Vermont staff notified the originating state's Department of Agriculture about the misidentification and mislabeling. This incident underscores the importance of accurately

recognizing and identifying invasive plant species to prevent their spread.

Wineberry can be identified by its thorny impenetrable thickets, reddish stems covered with dense red hairs, and silvery white under-leaf surfaces. The fruit is bright

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NRCS Fiscal Year Deadline for Programs is August 23rd, 2024

In an effort to get ahead of the harsh Vermont winters, the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Vermont has decided to move up the funding deadline for all applications. This change impacts all programs that the NRCS offers.

If you wish to apply for NRCS programs for the upcoming fiscal year, please visit our website to find out how to contact your local service center: Local Service Centers | Natural Resources Conservation Service ([usda.gov](https://www.usda.gov))

For remaining application deadlines for the current year, please see here: Program Deadlines FY24 | Natural Resources Conservation Service ([usda.gov](https://www.usda.gov))

If you have any other questions, please reach out to our Assistant State Conservationist for Partnerships, Luis Aponte (luis.aponte@usda.gov) or our (Acting) Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, Michelle Jezeski (michelle.jezeski@usda.gov).

For Immediate Release

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets have received an application for a Milk Handlers license from the following entity: Grateful Morning Dairy, LLC., of Shaftsbury, VT to buy/sell, transport, process and package milk, cream, cultured products, butter, and cheese within 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 August 31, 2024.

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.

2024 Vermont Fairs and Field Days

- Franklin County Field Days August 1-4, Highgate, VT
- Addison County Fair & Field Days August 6-10, Vergennes, VT
- Vermont State Fair August 13-17, Rutland, VT
- Caledonia County Fair August 21-25, Lyndonville, VT
- Bondville Fair August 23-25, Bondville, VT
- Champlain Valley Exposition August 23-September 1, Essex Junction, VT
- Guilford Fair August 31-September 2, Guilford, VT
- Orleans County Fair September 4-8, Barton, VT
- The Tunbridge World's Fair September 12-15, Tunbridge, VT

Funding Opportunities for Farm-sized Wind Power

By Alex DePillis, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

When I came to Vermont from Wisconsin in 2012 to work at the Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets, fresh from working with farmers on wind power projects in Wisconsin, I was ready to help farmers here in Vermont get a single wind turbine for their farm. More than once I was told, “Wind power is controversial in Vermont.”

Wind turbines on ridges, yes. A single wind turbine for a dairy farm is a different story.

Farmers have successfully secured permits for farm-sized wind turbines and nowadays a farmer can choose from at least five turbines right-sized to dairy farms, other farms, and food businesses. And, instead of 25%, USDA is offering up to



In May, 2013, schoolchildren and the Audet family welcomed a Northern Power Systems 100-kilowatt turbine to Blue Spruce Farm in Bridport. Photo by Alex DePillis.

50% in grant funding.

Maybe you’ve seen these farm-sized turbines at Blue Spruce Farm on Route 22A in Bridport (see photo) or at the Nea-Tocht Farm in

Ferrisburgh. The same model of turbine, built in Vermont by Northern Power Systems, can be seen from I-89 in South Burlington, on the other side of the highway

from the “whale’s tails” sculpture.

How big? These turbines are big enough to offset the electricity used by a dairy farm with 250 milking head.

On the small end of the range, Bergey Windpower Company offers a turbine with 15-foot blades. Larger models, but still farm-sized, are a Star Wind Turbines model with 35-foot blades, and the Northern Power Systems turbines mentioned above, which now come with a 42-foot blade. These turbines produce enough electricity for a dairy operation with 35, 125, and 250 milking head, respectively.

The deadline for applications to USDA’s Rural Energy for American Program is September 30.

For a listing of potential wind turbines, tips on how to apply for the USDA grant, rules on siting a wind turbine in Vermont, how to estimate your wind speed (and potential energy production), and more, visit: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/farm-scale-wind-power>

Wineberry

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red when ripe which distinguishes it from native black raspberries and blackberries. Unique to Wineberry are its small, greenish, hairy flowers with white petals that cover the fruit until almost ripe. Its tolerance to a wide spectrum of light, soil type, and moisture allows Wineberry to establish itself in a variety of environments including fields, stream and wetland edges and even in the understory of mature forests.

Wineberry is not considered to be widely established



Leslie Mehrhoff, Bugwood.org

in Vermont, but the threat it poses to our landscape is significant. Vermonters can play a crucial role in protecting the state’s ecosystems by

looking for Wineberry and reporting any sightings to vtinvasives.org.

Everyone can contribute to protecting Vermont’s intri-



Ben Dillner, Plant Health, VAAFM

cate ecosystems and natural resources. For information about reportable early detection rapid response (EDRR) plant species, visit the Plant

Pest Designation information page. Together, we can make a difference in safeguarding the natural beauty and ecological balance of Vermont.