

AGRiVIEW



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Business Emergency Gap Assistance Program (BEGAP) for Agriculture Operations

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

Governor Phil Scott and the Vermont Department of Economic Development (DED) has announced that the Business Emergency Gap Assistance Program (BEGAP) application portal is now open. BEGAP is a grant program for businesses, nonprofits, landlords, and farms that suffered physical damage from flooding. It is available for properties damaged in 2024.

As Vermonters continue efforts to recover from the devastating flooding of the last two years, BEGAP has been an important lifeline for our businesses who often are not eligible for federal disaster grants," said Governor Scott. "I'm pleased we are restarting this



program to help more employers receive the necessary support to rebuild, reopen, and bring people back to work."

"We understand that the challenges faced by our businesses and nonprofits have only intensified with the recent floods," said DED

Commissioner Joan Goldstein. "Our team at DED has been working diligently to relaunch BEGAP and ensure those impacted receive support to rebuild and reopen. While we know this funding won't make them whole, we are hopeful that it will provide a crucial step

towards recovery."

You are encouraged to visit the Business Emergency Gap Assistance Program page to learn how the program works and what you need to have on hand before beginning the online application process. Eligibility and grant calculations differ depending on several factors.

2024 BEGAP Funding

Applications are due November 15, 2024 for properties affected by the 2024 floods. Grants will cover 30% of net uncovered damages, up to \$100,000. Preference will be given to Vermont-based operations, and 10% of funds have been set aside for Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color applicants.

All applicants seeking assistance in preparing to submit this grant

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Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

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THE VIEW FROM 116 STATE STREET

The harvest is here across the Green Mountains. But it did not arrive without many challenges including another round of severe weather. It was another wild summer for many working to feed us. The floods that hit many regions of Vermont during July will have lasting impacts across agriculture. To help cover some of the economic losses, Governor Scott and the legislature launched the Business Emergency Gap Assistance Program or (BEGAP) program. This program is for businesses, nonprofits, landlords, and farms that suffered physical damage from flooding. It is available for properties damaged in 2024.

Working with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development the BEGAP program works to “rebuild, reopen, and bring people back to work.” Farmers who

sustained damages this year should look at this program. It could help cover some of your losses. It will not cover all the losses, but it will help cover some of economic harm.

Here a few of the details:

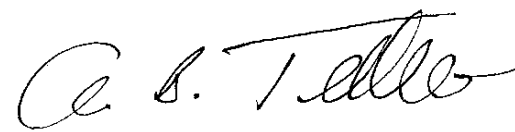
- Applications are due November 15, 2024, for properties affected by the 2024 floods. Grants will cover 30% of net uncovered damages, up to \$100,000. These grants are first come-first served so please look at the requirements for funding to see if you are eligible. You can find more information on our website, <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/business-emergency-gap-assistance-program-begap>
- If you need help with an application, we do have support. We understand these applications can be challenging to complete. All

applicants seeking assistance in preparing to submit this grant application can receive help from the Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation. They have an online form <https://www.centralvermont.org/begap-support> to request help. If you would prefer, they can be reached by phone at 802-223-4654.

- If agricultural businesses have questions, you can email the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets at agr.floodresponse@vermont.gov or call 802-828-2430, press Option 0.

- If you know someone who is a non-English speaker and needs translation assistance, please email ACCD.BizFloodGrant@Vermont.gov to be connected with state-contracted translation and interpretation services.

Please reach out to us if you have any questions. As we enter stick season and winter, we will continue to work on programs that offer support to the farm community. Let's hope winter is kind to all of us after a difficult summer of 2024.



Anson Tebbetts

Secretary, Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

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This Month's Recipe

Pumpkin, Cranberry, Apple and Oatmeal Bake

Ingredients

- 3 cups rolled oats, old-fashioned, certified gluten-free if necessary
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon ginger (optional)
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup milk
- ¾ cup pumpkin purée (Do not use pie filling!!)
- ¼ cup melted butter, cooled slightly
- 1 cup finely chopped Vermont apples
- ½ cup cranberries, fresh or dried, chopped

Cinnamon Sugar Topping (Optional)

- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon

Directions

- Heat oven to 350°F. Grease an 8-inch square baking dish.



- In a large bowl, combine the dry ingredients.
- In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs, milk, pumpkin, melted coconut oil (or butter) and applesauce.
- Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir until well combined.
- Gently add chopped fresh cranberries or dried cranberries and finely chopped apples. Stir to distribute evenly. Spread evenly in your prepared 8-inch baking pan.
- Combine 1 tablespoon sugar and 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon and sprinkle evenly over the top of each muffin cup. Yes, its optional, but very tasty.
- Bake for 35-40 minutes. Cool slightly and cut into squares.
- Serve warm, plain or with maple syrup, yogurt, kefir, applesauce or sliced apples.
- Freeze any extra squares in an airtight container. Reheat in a microwave for a quick breakfast.

This Farm Feeds Vermont Kids: Celebrating Farm to School Month

By Gina Clithero, VT Agency of
Agriculture, Food and Markets

October is National Farm to School Month. It is a time to celebrate the importance of agricultural education, community connections, and institutional markets for local food. Did you know that over 100 Vermont farms sell to a Vermont schools or early childhood programs? As a result, over 80 percent of schools and more

than half of all early childhood programs regularly serve some local food in their child nutrition programs.

Since 2007, the Agency has stewarded grant funds to help schools and early childhood programs build farm to school connections. The Agency's Farm to School and Early Childhood (FTSEC) Grants help Vermont schools and early childhood programs develop farm-to-school programs that sustain relationships

with local farmers and producers, enrich the educational experience of students, improve the health of Vermont children, and enhance Vermont's agricultural economy.

Each October, grant applications open for the first FTSEC grant of the fiscal year. Please spread the word about these FY25 FTSEC grant opportunities to schools and early childhood programs in your community.



FTSEC Capacity Building Grant Application Window

October 3 – November 14, 2024

Award Size: \$5,000-\$20,000

Purpose: Grants to provide a combination of financial support and technical assistance to help schools and early care providers develop robust farm to school programs. The technical assistance component of this grant is designed to build strong and lasting farm to school and early childhood programs.

Eligible Applicants

- Vermont licensed early childhood centers
- Consortiums of at least three registered home-based early care providers
- Independent schools participating in any federal child nutrition programs
- Individual public schools
- Supervisory unions or educational districts on behalf of a public school or consortium of schools

FTSEC Community Supported Agriculture Grant

Application Window

February 7 – March 7, 2025

Award Size: Up to \$1,500

Purpose: Grants to help early

childhood education providers and after school programs access more Vermont grown and produced food. Successful applicants will receive a reimbursement grant to subsidize the cost of a community supported agriculture (CSA) share(s).

Eligible Applicants

- Vermont registered or licensed early childcare providers
- Vermont licensed after school programs
- 21st Century Child Learning Center Programs

Farm to School and Early Childhood Vision Grant

Application Window

February 27 – April 10, 2025

Award Size: \$10,000 - \$50,000

Purpose: Grants to support innovative and impactful initiatives that engage Vermont youth in addressing and learning about issues related to food, agriculture or related fields. Strong proposals will be scalable and/or replicable and will prioritize youth leadership.

Eligible Applicants

- Vermont licensed early childhood centers
- Vermont registered home-based early care providers

- Independent schools participating in any federal child nutrition programs
- Individual public schools
- Supervisory unions or educational districts on behalf of a public school or consortium of schools
- Licensed afterschool programs
- Non-profits or community organizations that conduct programming in Vermont are also eligible, but must demonstrate partnership in their application with a school, childcare provider, afterschool program, or another organization in the Vermont Farm to School and Early Childhood Network.

Farm to Institution

The Agency also manages a Farm to Institution Market Development Grant, to which farms can apply for funding for infrastructure, marketing, or other activities to increase local food sales to schools, early childhood centers, and other institutions like hospitals, colleges, prisons, etc.

Farm to Institution Market Development Grant

Application Window

September 11 – October 23, 2024

Award Size: \$10,000 - \$30,000

Eligible Projects/Expenses

Grants to improve Vermont food

producers' access to institutional markets and to increase the quantity of local food available in Vermont institutions.

Eligible Applicants

- Vermont farm or food businesses
- Vermont producer groups or associations
- Supply chain facilitators (non-profits, economic development authorities, food hubs, etc.)

FY24 FTSEC Grant Program Summary

In FY24, the Agency awarded 69 Farm to School, Early Childhood, and Institution grants across the four programs listed above: 13 FTSEC Capacity Building Grants, 49 FTSEC Community Supported Agriculture Grants, 6 FTSEC Vision Grants, and 1 Farm to Institution Market Development Grant.

To learn more about these projects, visit agriculture.vermont.gov/farmtoschool and navigate to "Grant History" from the side menu.

Please direct any questions about Farm to School grants or the Farm to Institution Market Development Grant to Farm to Institution Program Manager, Gina Clithero, at gina.clithero@vermont.gov or 802-585-6225.

DAIRY BUSINESS INNOVATION CENTER

Announcing the 2024 Goat & Sheep Dairy Development Grant Awards

By Katie Spring, Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center

The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center is pleased to announce the Goat & Sheep Dairy Development Grant Awards. This grant funds both Individual Business projects and Sector Enhancement projects. With an aim to enhance the growth of individual small ruminant businesses, as well as address gaps in technical

assistance, supply chain partnerships, and market access, the program's overall goal is to support long-term business viability.

Ten dairy businesses from across six states were selected for awards. Funded projects include the purchasing of specialized equipment to expand production and increase energy efficiency, working with marketing specialists to promote products throughout the Northeast, and installing a virtual

fencing system. Individual award amounts will range from \$16,848 to \$74,617 with a total of \$422,575 in overall funding.

Three Vermont businesses have been selected for awards:

Danz Ahn Dairy – \$19,417 to improve farm efficiency and accommodate continued business growth by replacing its milk storage and handling equipment. This project will add a bucket milker, a 30-gallon bulk storage tank, and a

dump station to the farm's milkhouse and creamery.

Doe's Leap – \$16,848 to install a virtual fencing system for dairy goats, enabling a management-intensive rotational grazing system that includes both traditional grassland and silvopasture. They will share information about fencing improvements and innovation through a video presentation and offer opportunities for a pasture walk to other regional goat dairy business owners.

Hall and Breen Farm – \$50,000 to complete a transition from cow-to goat-based dairy operations by purchasing and installing a new milking parlor, retrofitting existing barns to accommodate goats, and beginning the sale of goat's milk to dairy processors within the regional supply chain.

Visit nedairyinnovation.com/2024-goat-sheep-awards to see the full list of farms selected for awards.

Announcing the Dairy Product Trade Show Assistance Grant Awards

By Ali Boochever, Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center

The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center is pleased to announce recipients of the Dairy Product Trade Show Assistance Grant.

This grant supports value-added dairy processors by providing them with funds to showcase their regionally produced dairy products at domestic and international business-to-business trade shows. The goal is to increase brand exposure, engage with distributors, and capture new market segments.

In this round, seven

dairy processors from across the region were selected for awards. The recipients represent four states, including: Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont. These awardees will be exhibiting their products, offering samples, and engaging with potential wholesale customers and distributors while amplifying their brand visibility.

The grant funds cover various costs associated with attending trade shows including registration fees, booth fees, travel expenses, product samples, marketing materials, professional branding services, booth set-up, and more. Awards ranged from \$5,000 to



\$20,000, with a total of \$105,224 in overall funding.

Two Vermont businesses received awards:

Vermont Cheese Council – \$8,975 to represent and exhibit Vermont cheeses at the American Cheese Society (ACS) Conference's

“Meet the Cheesemaker” event. They will also create and share information about the Vermont Cheese Summit and Vermont Cheese Week to retail and distribution buyers to drive attendance to these events.

Grafton Village Cheese

Co – \$18,205 to exhibit their cheeses at trade shows including the Summer Fancy Food Show, Good Food Mercantile, and the “Meet the Cheesemaker” event at the American Cheese Society (ACS) Conference. Grafton Village Cheese will target retailers, distributors, media representatives, and restaurants to reinforce brand awareness, reach new markets and customers, and promote sheep milk cheeses.

A new round of this grant is open now. Rolling applications are open from August 6 through November 28, 2024, at 2 PM ET, or until funds run out. Learn more at nedairyinnovation.com/grants/trade-show-assistance-grant

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

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

The application deadline is October 31, 2024 at 2 PM ET. Awards range from \$75,000 to \$350,000, with



a 25% match commitment. Approximately \$1,500,000 in total funds are available this round.

Dairy Trade Show Assistance Grant

This grant will provide funds for dairy processors and/or producer associations to exhibit and sell value-added dairy products at domestic and/or international business-to-business trade shows. This grant will support established value-added dairy processor businesses and producer associations in increasing exposure and promotion of their regionally

produced dairy products.

Grant funds will cover the cost of attending up to five tradeshow including registration, travel, costs of product samples, production and distribution of sell-sheets and other marketing materials, professional branding and design services, trade show booth set-up, and more. Trade shows must occur before June 30, 2025.

Applications are currently being accepted on a rolling basis until November 28, 2024 at 2 PM ET or until funds run out. Awards will range from \$5,000 to \$20,000 with a 25% match commitment. Approximately

\$150,000 total funds are available this round.

On-Farm Milk Storage and Handling Grant

This program will provide grants for dairy farmers to access funds that support the purchase of equipment and other related costs that will improve milk storage, handling, and energy efficiencies. The focus of this grant is on the purchase of specialized equipment. Applicants may select from a pre-approved list of eligible equipment. Projects funded by this grant will streamline milk pick up, create efficiencies around milk storage, and improve handling for both farmers and their processors.

The RFA will be released October 8 with an application period from October 24 to December 5, 2024 at 2 PM ET. Awards range from \$15,000 to \$50,000 with a 25% match commitment. Approximately \$1,500,000 in total funds are available this round.

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 resources, please visit the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets website here:

<https://agriculture.vermont.gov/HPAinDairyCowsAnEmergingAnimalHealthIssue>

BEGAP Funding

continued from page 1

application can receive help from the Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation. Fill out the support request form and CVEDC will follow up with resources to help.

If agricultural businesses have questions, they can email the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM) at agr.floodresponse@vermont.gov or call 802-828-2430. 40% of 2024 funds are reserved for applications from agricultural and silvicultural businesses until November 15, 2024.

If you are a non-English speaker and need translation assistance, please email ACCD.BizFloodGrant@Vermont.gov. You will be connected with state-

contracted translation and interpretation services.

You can view the Vermont Department of Economic Development's pre-recorded webinar following the opening of the BEGAP application that will walk applicants through the process step-by-step and answer FAQs.

Overview

The BEGAP program has money available through the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM) in partnership with the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development to support agricultural operations losses or physical damage related to this flooding event. Awards may be available for food and farm businesses, organizations, or individuals who raise animals

and/or grow food or crops for sale, or who operate on-farm processing operations that have experienced physical damage due to the flooding event. These applicants will apply as "Agriculture" sector applicants via the BEGAP application.

Agricultural or food businesses engaged in off-farm processing or food manufacturing should apply directly to ACCD BEGAP as a "manufacturing" or "retail" applicant via the BEGAP application.

BEGAP Details

Agricultural Business Eligibility Criteria

- Established agricultural business prior to July 2023 flooding
- Physical property damages must be located in Vermont, which includes

damage to real estate (infrastructure and land damage); inventory (crop damage or loss, livestock loss); machinery; and equipment associated with the agricultural business

- All losses or damage under the same agricultural business are considered one damaged property.
- If a farm is operated separately from an additional processing facility, the farm would apply with the Agency of Agriculture under "Agriculture," and the processing facility would most likely apply under "Manufacturing" with ACCD. These would be two separate applications.
- Agricultural business must intend to reopen or to remain open and will use grant funds for the agricultural business.

Applicant Information Required

- Contact information
- Damaged property location and ownership documentation such as property tax bill or lease arrangement
- Federal Employer Tax Identification Number (FEIN)
- Insurance policy information: type of coverage, policy number, agent contact
- Dollar amount of damages anticipated to be recouped through insurance
- Other grants or donations received and used to defray the costs of repairing or replacing damaged assets
- Description of the impact of the flooding on the applicant

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Three Invasive, Non-Native Pests Threaten Vermont's Trees

By Vermont Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR), the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (Agency), and UVM Extension are once again alerting the public about threats from non-native, invasive insects to the state's trees and ecosystem. Among them is the spotted lanternfly, first found in Pennsylvania in 2014, and slowly making its way north with established populations already in southern New York and

much of Connecticut and Massachusetts. This pest, which is emerging into the environment now, to date has no known infestations in Vermont, but could easily be established here.

A new effort by FPR, the Agency and UVM Extension seeks to educate gardeners, grounds managers, landscape professionals and anyone travelling into Vermont about all three pests, but especially the spotted lanternfly. A new poster, "Help Protect Vermont's Trees," will be hung around the state at welcome centers, state parks, historic sites, and other locations to raise awareness of the threat of these non-

native insects, and what to look for to prevent their spread. The other two highlighted in this effort are the emerald ash borer and the Asian longhorn beetle.

Spotted Lanternfly

While these non-native invasive pests may eventually become established in the state, outdoor recreationists and travelers can do their part now to help slow the spread - of spotted lanternfly by checking their gear and vehicles for egg masses, nymphs, or adults, especially when traveling from states with active infestations. An interactive map showing known infestations in

our region can be found at <https://go.uvm.edu/lanternflies> along with information about the insect's life-cycle and biology, its feeding behavior and management. More information and imagery of the spotted lanternfly, its nymphs and egg masses can be found at VTinvasives.org.

Emerald Ash Borer

Infestations of the invasive pest Emerald ash borer (EAB) naturally spread one to two miles annually. However, through human movement of ash logs and firewood, EAB and other wood pests can be moved long distances to uninfested



areas, killing ash trees in new locations. While EAB is present in most of Vermont's counties, its population is low, and it has infested only a small percentage of the state's total ash trees. Attention and care in managing the movement of infested ash material will slow the spread of EAB and allow time for planning, monitoring, and research. More information and Imagery of

continued on page 7

Changes to Accessory On-Farm Business Law: Act 181 Explained

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

In 2018, Act 143 established a statewide municipal land use category called Accessory On-Farm Business (AOFB), which restricted how municipalities could apply zoning regulations to AOFBs. These businesses can engage in the on-farm sale of agricultural products and host educational, recreational, or social events that promote agricultural activities or products, as a way to increase revenues and promote farm viability. The legislature recently passed Act 181, which expands an AOFB's ability to sell qualifying products that they do not produce themselves and created related Act 250 exemptions for the construction of improvements for an AOFB.

Prior to the passing of Act 181, an AOFB looking to sell qualifying agricultural products had to ensure that at least half of their annual income was from the sale of products grown or produced on the farm where the business is located. Now, AOFBs involved in the sale of qualifying products are able to sell:

- Agricultural products produced on any farm, regardless of total annual sales; *i.e. maple syrup produced by a neighbor, strawberries grown down the road, with no threshold of how much income needs to come from items grown or produced on their own farm*



Green Mountain Girls Farm store in Northfield — numerous jars of maple syrup, honey, and vinegars are on a shelf, and a fridge stocked with vegetables can be seen.

- Products that name, describe, or promote the farm or Accessory On-Farm Business; *i.e. sweatshirts with the farm's name and logo, a mug with the name of the on-site farm stay*
- Bread and baked goods, *i.e. pies baked with fruit grown*

on-site, bread sold alongside local cheeses

Additionally, there have been changes to the way Act 250 applies to improvements of structures related to AOFBs. Depending on what category of activity the proposed improvement is built for, the structure

may gain partial or full exemptions from Act 250 permitting. The exemptions are as follows:

- Construction of improvements for the **storage or sale of qualifying products** are exempt from Act 250 permitting.
- Construction of improve-

ments for the **preparation or processing of qualifying products** are exempt from Act 250 permitting, provided that **more than 50% of the total annual sales** of the prepared or processed qualifying products come from products **produced on the farm** where the business is located.

- It is important to note that the construction of improvements related to **hosting events or farm stays do not gain exemptions** through the changes in this law.

More information about AOFBs can be found at <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/development/accessory-farm-businesses>.

For questions about Act 181 and how it affects AOFBs, please contact Noah Gilbert-Fuller at Noah.Gilbert-Fuller@vermont.gov or (802) 505-3407.

Non-native Pests *continued from page 6*

the emerald ash borer can be found at VTinvasives.org.

Asian Longhorn Beetle

This non-native pest has not yet been identified in Vermont. However, our state's hardwood forest, especially maple trees, make Vermont an attractive environment for this beetle that could severely impact the maple syrup industry. To combat this threat, the alert encourages those traveling to or within Vermont to

not move firewood. Current quarantines prohibit firewood movement out of known infested areas, but it can take years for an infestation to be detected. Many of the known infestations have been traced to firewood movement. More information and imagery of the Asian longhorn beetle can be found at VTinvasives.org.

The "Help Protect Vermont's Trees" outreach works in conjunction with the Arrive Clean, Leave Clean campaign, which debuted in June, promoting ways to help slow the



spread of invasive, non-native insects and plants. In addition to checking vehicles for spotted lanternflies, the campaign encourages anyone spending time outdoors this summer and fall to clean their gear and avoid moving firewood. It's a joint effort of University of Vermont Extension; the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation;

and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

To download the new Help Protect Vermont's Trees campaign poster, click here: <https://vtinvasives.org/resource/poster-help-protect-vermonts-trees>

To learn more about the Arrive Clean, Leave Clean campaign and measures to control non-native invasive insects, go to www.vtinvasives.org/arriveclean. The website also has a link to report any sightings of these invasive pests.

Capital Equipment Assistance Program (CEAP) Open for Applications

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

The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets is pleased to announce that funding is available for farmers in the Capital Equipment Assistance Program (CEAP). Financial assistance is available for new or used innovative equipment that will aid in the reduction of surface runoff to agricultural wastes to State waters, improve water quality of State waters, reduce odors from manure application, separate phosphorus from manure, mitigate greenhouse gases, or reduce costs to farmers. Eligible applicants

include custom applicators, nonprofit organizations, phosphorus extraction equipment providers, and Vermont farms required to comply with the Required Agricultural Practices.

Please note that tractors, frac tanks, manure tanks, manure pumps, solid manure spreaders, and equipment that performs full width tillage, deep tillage, or soil inversion are not eligible.

The focus of the Capital Equipment Assistance Program (CEAP) is to help farms buy equipment that will provide a clear and direct path to water quality improvements on their farm. Applications are competitively ranked and reviewed. Successful

applicants clearly show how their requested equipment will increase or improve their installation of conservation practices or otherwise reduce

runoff on their farm.

CEAP applications are due by November 1. Notification of grant awards will occur by February

1, 2025, and equipment purchase will occur after award notice and before June 1, 2025. Once grantees

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Eligible Equipment Purposes and Funding Rates

Equipment Purpose	Example: Eligible Equipment	Anticipated Funding Rates
Precision Agriculture - To accurately and digitally observe, monitor and respond to field variability and improve nutrient management planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manure or Yield Constituent Sensor Precision Planting or Precision Feed Equipment 	90% cost-share up to \$25,000 per applicant
Conservation Tillage – To reduce the frequency or intensity of tillage operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No-Till Planter No Till Grain Drill for planting small grains or reseeding pastures/hayland Planter Downforce 	90% cost-share up to \$40,000 per applicant
Cover Crop Equipment – To increase or improve cover cropping implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No-Till Grain Drill primarily for planting cover crop Roller Crimper 	90% cost-share up to \$40,000 per applicant
Waste Management – To improve waste and nutrient management, nutrient application efficiency and methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injectors Wastewater irrigation Dragline system Bedded pack management equipment Composting equipment for compost principally produced and used on farm 	90% cost-share up to \$60,000 per farmer or group of farmers 90% cost-share up to \$100,000 per custom applicator or nonprofit organization.
Feed Management – To reduce impacts from silage leachate* OR reduce import of phosphorus in feed† OR increase haying height	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balers/Wrappers to enable feed bunk decommissioning* Equipment that will reduce feed import to the farm† High Shoes on mower 	90% cost-share up to \$50,000 per applicant

NOTE: A precision manure record keeping system [GPS, Flow Meter & Display Unit] must be used with injection and dragline equipment. Include cost of precision system in application if needed.

* Field visit from AAFM staff required

† Whole Farm Nutrient Balance required



At the 2023 UVM Extension Northwest Crops and Soils Annual Field Day, dairy nutritionists Patrice Vincent and Kurt Cotanch and grazing expert Sarah Flack demonstrated that higher cutting height increases yield, quality, and persistence of forages – and decreases nutrient runoff on haylands. “High skid shoes” for mowers to increase cutting height are low cost – and are also newly eligible for 90% cost share from CEAP in the Feed Management category.

Improving Calf and Heifer Management Practices in New England

By Dr. Glenda Pereira – Assistant Professor and Dairy Specialist, University of Maine.

Project collaborators: Sarah Allen, Pete Erickson, Toyin Osulale, University of New Hampshire.

Replacement heifers remain one of the top expenses of dairy farms, and in the Northeast U.S. can cost up to \$2,500. It is also anecdotally reported that many farms raise too many heifers, resulting in further costs to farmers. However, there is a lack of empirical data to support these claims or show its impact on dairy viability in the Northeast. Dairy specialists from the University of Maine and New Hampshire are collaborating on a project funded by the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC). Through

technical assistance and education, the dairy specialists and graduate students (pictured below) are working with New Hampshire and Maine dairy farmers to improve calf and heifer management.

The anticipated outcomes of this project include 1) implementing strategies to improve calf and heifer management to generate higher quality heifers, 2) calculating the expenses for raising a calf until they are a 2-year-old to estimate true cost of raising heifers in New England, 3) farmer cohort groups will work together and learn from each other, 4) project investigators will continue multi state extension programs.

The project kicked off this spring, and farmers were provided a refractometer, a thermometer, and a weigh



tape, and record sheets. We asked farmers to measure pre weaning average daily gain on their farm. Most farms are around 1.6 to 1.7 lbs per day, and most heifers are doubling their birth weight by weaning.

We also collected calf and heifer metrics (such as hip and wither height and heart girth), discussed colostrum management and conducted a sanitation audit with each individual farm. With heifer weights and heights, we were able to assess where the farm falls on the growth curve. These growth charts also helped indicate whether the heifers were being bred at the appropriate weight. Farmers should target body weight at first conception to be 55% of mature bodyweight on their farm (cows in their 3rd or greater lactation). This ensures that the heifers are not doing a lot of growing in their first or second lactation and are also calving in at an adequate weight after first calving.

While cleanliness is important across the entire farm, it's crucial during the newborn and pre-weaning period. Research

has indicated that heifers that were affected by diarrhea events during the pre-weaning period had 50 g/d reduction in average daily gain, required more inseminations and were associated with reduced performance in the first lactation by 716 lbs.

The participant farmers manage calves and heifers differently, which allows cohort group members to learn from each other. Each participating farm hosts the group on their farm, and the project investigators facilitate the meeting discussion. In July 2024, we had a cohort meeting discussion on colostrum management. Farmers learned how to build a

colostrum water bath which allows for colostrum to heat up without “cooking” and denaturing important proteins. Additionally, farmers learned about the “3 Qs” of colostrum for newborn calves’ health and success as a future lactating dairy cow.

- Quantity:** calves need to drink at least 10% of their body weight in colostrum to receive essential nutrients and passive immunity.
- Quality:** colostrum should contain at least 50 g/L of IgG to obtain passive immunity; use of a refractometer can help assess this.

continued on page 12



From left to right: Peter Erickson, Sarah Allen, Toyin Osulale, Lydia and Glenda Pereira.

FALL IS A GREAT TIME TO GET BACK TO BASICS

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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

(Waterbury) On our cut flower farm tarnished plant bug and white fly populations have been very high. Dahlias are very late due to heat and rain. Buds are finally starting to open. Zinnias are producing in good numbers. We have browns spot on some plants, but they are able to grow out of it. Ours are on black landscape fabric to help limit disease.

(Westminster) In some ways, it's been a good growing season, at least in southern Vermont. Except for a few too-hot days and a few too many rainy days, it's been okay overall. One problem is some crops maturing too early – the sweet corn season, for instance, may end earlier than would be helpful. A bigger problem is with some storage crops maturing early. A few of our standard cabbage varieties weren't available and of the different ones we tried, some did well. But we are harvesting them already when we usually wait until October. Let's hope they keep well in storage.

Winter squash is ready ahead of time, too, which is good because we won't have to worry about frost. With luck, it will also hold up well in storage, unlike last year when it all rotted. And soon we'll start harvesting parsnips. By getting a fair amount of our winter crops in early, we'll be able to send most of our H2A workers home earlier than

usual.

One benefit to us, although not to our northern fellow farmers, is that we're selling way more carrots than usual, making it hard to keep up with our regular accounts. Lettuce and kale are steady. After several weeks of poor lettuce, the crop is looking better with the cooler weather.

(Starksboro) Late blight on tunnel tomatoes, whomp whomp. Waiting to see if we get our first frost Monday night.

(Westminster West) Feels like fall with this morning's temperature of 42. Non-stop harvesting and patching a crew together however I can. Considering we were hit by hail a month ago, things aren't too bad. Two-thirds of winter squash is in the barn or tunnel for curing. Seed garlic all cured and selling well. Sweet onions did well, tomatoes are petering out.

Potatoes are about finished; we started digging

a few weeks ago. Tried a couple new varieties, Magic Molly and Pinto Gold. Both have strong tops. I tried a new CPB regimen this year that was a great success! Hardly any CPB in the field at this point and no leafhoppers. Sprayed 3 times, first with Beauveria bassiana, trade name BioCeres WP, combined with Azera and Kinetic. Next two applications I added Entrust. After the last spray the field was 99% clean. Now my problem is the few weeds that the Treffler and Einbock weeder missed, and selling the crop.

Updates From UVM Extension Ag Engineering

Andy Chamberlin,
UVM Extension

Our latest blog post "A Guide to Preparing High Tunnels for Extreme Weather" is now available at <https://go.uvm.edu/extremetunnels>. High tunnels and greenhouses provide protection for crops, extend the growing season,

and improve yield and quality. However, climate change brings both a higher frequency and increased intensity of extreme weather events. It is important to think about how high tunnel structures can best be built and modified to endure the extremes. The blog post summarizes specific practices to consider and as well as experiences shared by the VVBGA growers, including individual grower comments.

High Tunnel Newsletter – Issue 3

The latest *Northern New England High Tunnel Newsletter* is available. In this issue:

Spider mite and cucumber beetle management strategies, summer diseases, costs/benefits of exclusion netting, tissue testing, and report from Quebec tour. Use this link or click Resources on the High Tunnel Production Toolkit webpage at <https://www.uvm.edu/~htunnel/>

BEGAP

continued from page 6

- Damage type and estimated costs for repair/replacement
- An economic injury estimate and description (anticipated or actual revenue loss). (This estimate will not be used to calculate the award but is for informational purposes only.)

Documentation Required, When Applicable

- Most recently filed Federal Tax Return (or 990) – full

- tax return required
- Profit and Loss Statement if business started in 2023
- An updated IRS Form W-9 – wet signature required
- Declaration or Certificate of Insurance for all policies held
- Supporting documentation for claimed damages (insurance adjusters report, vendor estimates)
- Repair estimates for physical structures, equipment, inventory, supply purchases or invoices of actual paid expenses
- Photographs of damaged property (maximum of 5)

- Proof of property ownership (e.g. property tax bill, deed, lease agreement)

Awards

Awards help applicants recoup a portion of their total net uncovered damages. This is the damage amount

remaining after subtracting any insurance proceeds (estimated or received) and other grants issued to defray the costs of repairing or replacing those damaged assets. Loans received should also be deducted from the amount of damages you report. Any funds

received through BEGAP may impact future federal relief assistance program payments, including FEMA, SBA, or USDA. BEGAP awards are also considered taxable income.

Award Calculation

Agriculture sector applicants are eligible for the category of funding to businesses that have less than \$1 million in net uncovered damages. Therefore, Agriculture sector applicants may be eligible for awards of up to 30% of net uncovered damage.



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

Angus Bulls for sale.

Greensboro, VT 802-533-9804 (10)

American Milking Devons for sale, Registered 4 yr old cow, with calf. \$2700. Bull calf for sale, \$1500. Yearling heifer calves for sale, \$1500. We are located in Leicester, VT. We use rotational grazing methods, using single strand electric fencing. Heifers have been worked with and do well on a lead. All are used to going in and out of the barn as we milk our cows daily. Please call or text for more info and pictures: Liza at 802-558-6944 (12)

Jersey/Guernsey cross heifer due to freshen in April. From A2 sire and dam. Friendly and well handled. Waterville VT. 802-730-0604 or text lucyrogersvt@gmail.com. (12)

3 angus bulls for sale currently about 6 months old. Call for more information 802-558-8196. (1)

Equipment

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 - 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)

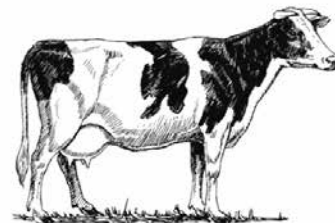
1999 Galignani 3200L round baler for sale. Excellent condition: double twine, fixed chamber, rolls in front, chain in back, runs on little power. Good for baleage or dry hay. \$6000 includes spare auger, assorted parts, operators and parts manuals, 4 bundles of 9000' plastic twine that works best in this machine. Always under cover. Danville, 802-748-8461. (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 baler, model RB1475. In very good, well-maintained condition. New belts still in the box come with it. 802-425-2385. (9)

John Deere 10 1/2 transport harrows. 7 -8 ton Brock grain bin. 19 ton Brock grain bin.

**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>.

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)

Row PTO potato digger 500.6' tandem disk harrow 250. , Hercules 3/4 hp. engine best offer, economy engine 3/4 hp, jd 500b backhoe. \$1,500. Call 802-446-2125, leave message. (11)

Bulk tank for sap or cattle

(water), 600 gallon sunset, 16 to 40 feet sunco elevator, Delval 1.5 horse power pump. Sickle 451 New Holland mower, 32 ft hay elevator on wheels, 10ft KBQ John Deere transport horrows, 15 ton gran bin. 19 ton grain bin, 13 ton grain bin, 7.5 ton grain bin, 10.5 Fisher snow plow. Call 802-624-0143 (1)

continued on page 12

**HAVE FEED?
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**FARM
FEED-FINDER
MARKETPLACE**

HELPING CONNECT FARMS AND FEED

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

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AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

Classifieds*continued from page 11*

Kubota tractor model L 345-DT, 34 HP, loader, 4W/D, chains, snowplow, forks, plows, shop manual, clean \$11,995. York rake 4ft, 3pt hitch, solid \$695. IH Finish mower 5ft, 3 blades, new \$2995. Dir scoop 3pt, J. Deere \$495. NH 1 row chopper #77 3pt solid \$995. Sprayer 300 gals with pump \$995. 802-483-2870 (1)

Cast iron stone boat heads (Sargent Osgocht) and 2

simplex No. 22 railroad jacks \$150, 802-365-7620 (1)

Blooming onion cutter with SS pans. Great for fairs, farmers markets, parties. 802-365-4000 (1)

Hay, Feed & Forage

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

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)

Calf and Heifer Management Practices*continued from page 9*

3. **Quickly:** colostrum should be fed right away (ideally within two hours) to ensure absorption of IgG.

Next steps for the project investigators include distributing a survey across New England to understand the demographics and cost of raising heifers from birth to calving.

Learn more about this project, and read an expanded version of this article on the NE-DBIC website: nedairyinnovation.com/improving-calf-heifer-management

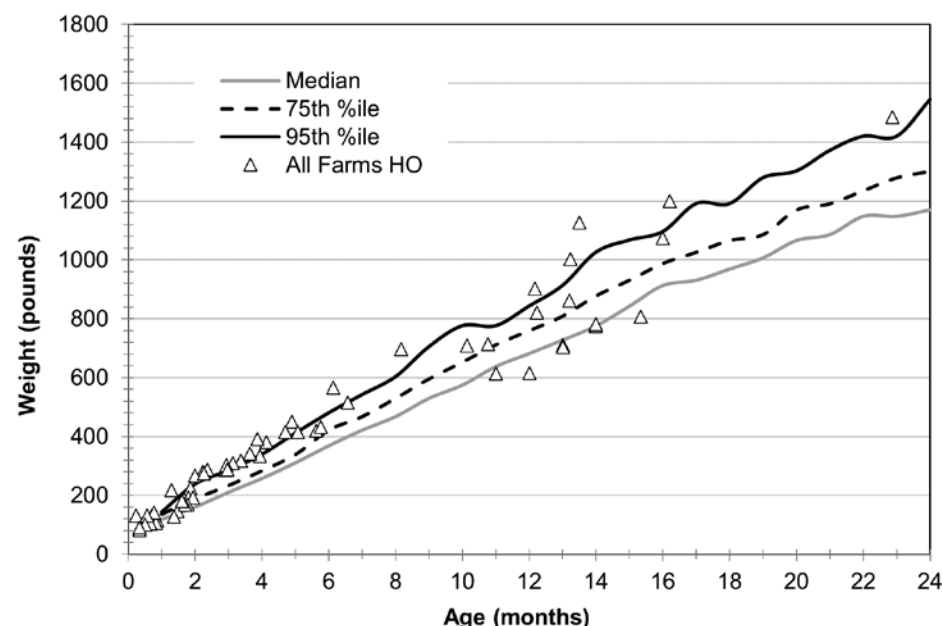


Figure 1a: Body weight of Holstein heifers (designated in the triangle) from project participant farms compared to Penn State University recommended 50th, 75th and 95th percentile benchmarks. The bodyweight measurements of heifers on participant farms were taken with a weigh tape and therefore are estimates.

The heifer growth charts indicate several percentiles of the U.S. Holstein and Jersey populations, allowing a farmer to compare an individual heifer to all others in the population. To achieve early calving (24 months or less) and high production potential, individual heifers should fall near the 95th percentile. The data is outdated and comparing to 95th allows for best representation of modern dairy calves.

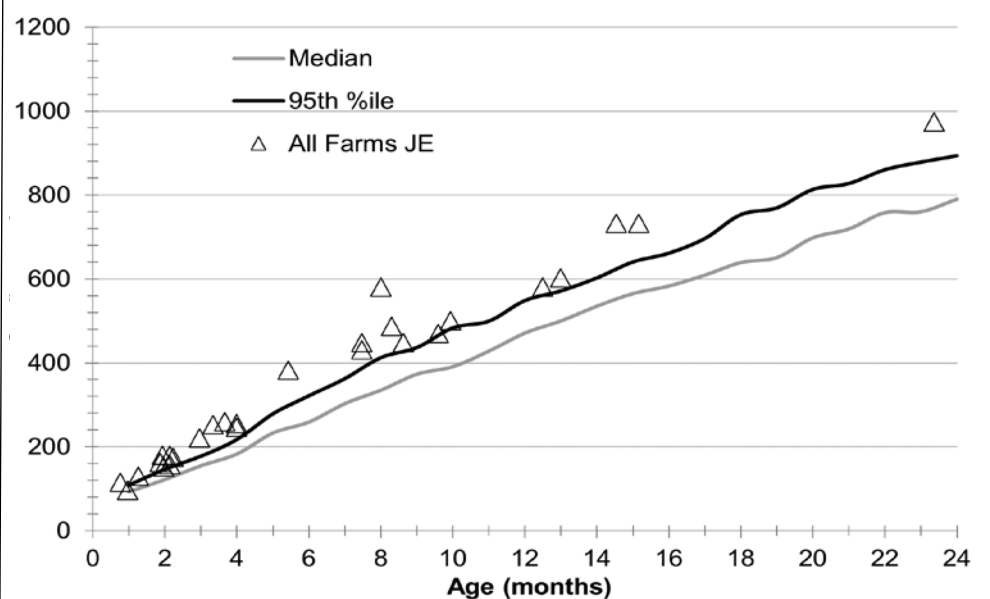


Figure 1b: Body weight of Jersey heifers (designated in the triangle) from project participant farms compared to Penn State University recommended 50th and 95th percentile benchmarks. The bodyweight measurements of heifers on participant farms were taken with a weigh tape and therefore are estimates.

CEAP*continued from page 8*

purchase and receive their equipment they are then reimbursed by the State up to 90% of the eligible costs up to the funding cap. Shipping/freight fees are not reimbursable.

To apply, ensure that you 1) input basic information about your farm and requested equipment on the CEAP application, 2) provide written responses to a questionnaire about how the equipment will improve your management, and 3) research and submit quotes for the requested equipment. Letter/s of support are optional and should add relevant and helpful information about your application. Applications for equipment to reduce the importation of purchased feed on the farm need to work with UVM Extension to develop a Whole Farm Nutrient Balance.

Learn more and apply at agriculture.vermont.gov/ceap. Contact Sonia Howlett (Sonia.Howlett@Vermont.gov or (802) 522-4655) with additional questions.



UVM's New Curriculum and Educational Resources for Climate Smart Solutions

By Lindsey Ruhl, UVM Extension

University of Vermont Extension's Northwest Crops and Soils Program is excited to share a new curriculum and educational resources to prepare 21st-century students for climate smart solutions for agriculture. With this engaging and interactive curriculum, middle and high school students will learn how to use scientifically informed approaches to sustainability in agriculture.

On Common Ground: Expanding Agricultural Literacy with Citizen Science (OCG) Resource

Hub, brings agriculture into the classroom with student-driven experimental design and implementation. It is available at no cost on the Extension Foundation website: <https://campus.extension.org/course/view.php?id=2403>.

The OCG Resource Hub provides a 13-lesson curriculum that builds student knowledge in agriculture and develops critical thinking about the practical application of the scientific method to real-world problems. In addition to the lessons, there are a suite of resources hosted on the OCG Resource Hub includes the following: AgConnect is a free, teacher-controlled platform

that guides students through lab and field-based experimental design and the scientific method with an agricul-

tural focus.

360° photo tours will introduce your students to no-till and high-tunnel

crop production systems in Vermont.

WE FARM (Water

continued on page 14

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

October

Farm to School and Early Childhood Grant

Grants to help schools and early childhood organizations develop farm to school programs or farm to early childhood programs

Gina Clithero
Gina.Clithero@vermont.gov
802-585-6225

Farm to Institution Market Development Grants

Grants to help farm and food producers access local institutional markets including schools, colleges, hospitals, and prisons

Gina Clithero
Gina.Clithero@vermont.gov
802-585-6225

On-Farm Milk Storage & Handling Grant

Grants to provide dairy farmers with funds that support the purchase and supplies to improve milk storage, handling and energy efficiencies

Beth Falk
Beth.Falk@vermont.gov
(802) 522-4562

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

\$7 Million Awarded to Local and Regional Organizations to Support Farmer Water Quality and Conservation Efforts

By Mary Montour, VT
Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets (AAFM) has recently announced \$7 million in awards through the Agricultural Clean Water Initiative Program (AgCWIP). These grants will support 23 full-time equivalent positions across seven local and regional organizations to provide Vermont farmers education and assistance on water quality and conservation.

Personalized, local education and technical assistance is a vital part of helping farms achieve water quality goals and regulatory compliance. AgCWIP grants provide statewide access to free and low-cost assistance that would otherwise be limited or unavailable.

Under these new

AgCWIP grants, funded organizations will provide nearly 1,375 free one-on-one consultations and technical assistance visits to farms across Vermont over a two-year period. Key services provided include soil and manure sampling, Nutrient Management Planning, grant writing for farms seeking financial assistance for conservation practices, project planning, case management, and more. Awards will also fund special topics such as climate resiliency planning and the development of statewide peer-to-peer farmer networks.

Funded organizations will also organize over 160 educational events or on-farm workshops across Vermont related to water quality, conservation practices, and the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs). Other educational

activities supported under these AgCWIP grants will include agricultural conservation newsletters, websites, and media postings on environmental topics.

AgCWIP Grant Recipients include:

- University of Vermont Extension (Includes five delivery teams) - \$3,126,268
- VT Natural Resources Conservation Council and 13 individual Conservation Districts - \$2,500,000
- Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition, Inc. - \$551,470
- Farmer Watershed Alliance - \$356,910

- American Farmland Trust - \$242,163
 - Northeast Organic Farmer Association - \$163,375
 - Vermont Grass Farmers Association - \$135,759
- “Investing in these organizations, is investing in our agricultural community. Organizations receiving these awards provide individualized assistance to farms for improving water quality, protecting natural resources, and promoting long-term environmental and economic viability across our agricultural landscape,” explained Secretary of Agriculture Anson Tebbetts.

To learn more about the activities funded by each

agreement and what services may be available to your farm or community, scan the QR code to link you to the AgCWIP webpage: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/agricultural-clean-water-initiative-program>.

Funding is supported by the Clean Water Fund, part of Act 64; and the American Rescue Plan Act supporting strategies in the Vermont Climate Action Plan.



UVM's New Curriculum continued from page 13

& Environment Farm Assessment and Risk Management) transports your students to a virtual farm with this online learning tool. There, students' goals are to identify potential environmental risks and choose the management practices they think will best mitigate potential issues.

These tools will help students prepare for today's job market. A 2020 report for the 2020-2025 outlook summary by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and Purdue University estimated that there would be an average of 59,400 annual job openings in the food, renewable natural resources, and environmental fields. Current graduation rates

in these fields indicate that only 61% of these new positions will be filled. In the most recently updated U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report (2022), there were 804,600 workers employed in the agricultural industry sector.

In today's global economy, education is the currency that helps students get good jobs. Not only is there a need for highly qualified individuals in the domestic labor market, but our students must also be prepared to compete in the international market.

In 2022, the U.S. ranking in scientific literacy was 16 out of 80 countries, below Slovenia, Estonia, Singapore, Canada, and many other countries (United States Department of Education).

The overarching goal of the OCG Resource Hub is

to increase agricultural literacy. Less than a century ago, in 1935, when employment in U.S. agriculture was at its highest, 1 out of every 25 people was employed in agriculture.

Now that number is less than 1 in 100 (Roser, 2019). This reflects an American public that is losing a connection to agriculture, decreasing Americans' ability to make informed decisions about their agricultural purchases and policy.

Learn more about On Common Ground: Expanding Agricultural Literacy with Citizen Science Resource Hub at the Resources for Educators webpage of the University of Vermont Extension's Northwest Crops and Soils Program: <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/nwcrops/resources-educators>.



A group of farmers and agricultural technical assistance providers discuss manure injection in Addison County, Vermont. Supported by AgCWIP, the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition hosted a "Farmer Connect: Manure Injection" event where local farmers and peers, UVM Extension Agronomy Specialists, and VAAFM staff discussed the benefits and challenges of manure injection on Vermont farms. (Photo Credit: Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition)

Apply This Fall for a Working Lands Business Enhancement Grant

By Clare Salerno, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Applications are open Oct. 18-Dec. 12 for the Working Lands Business Enhancement Grant! Award amounts range from \$10,000 - \$50,000.

This year, there is no match requirement for this grant. If you apply for a project that costs more than the grant amount you are applying for, you must demonstrate that you can pay for the parts of project that grant funds won't cover. Up to \$575,000 is available to award.

Farms of any size and sector may apply. Businesses that exclusively grow food indoors are not eligible (e.g. hydroponic, indoor mushroom,



room, indoor marijuana, or aquaculture). Maple sap and sugarmaking operations, logging businesses, and sawmills are all eligible. Value-added food and fiber businesses that source at least 50% of raw ingredients grown in Vermont OR are applying for a Working Lands grant to significantly increase use of ingredients grown in Vermont are eligible. Secondary forestry businesses, such as

woodworkers or manufacturers, pellet mills, etc. are eligible if at least some portion the wood used is grown in Vermont. Trucking and distribution businesses that primarily transport Vermont-produced forest and/or agricultural products are also eligible to apply.

Grant projects can relate

to market development, research and development, infrastructure, equipment, and/or workforce training and development. This grant will not fund water quality or soil health equipment and infrastructure projects that are eligible for funding under other state programs.

Applicants should expect to include business financial statements in their application, including a profit & loss statement, balance sheet, and cash flow statement. Applicants are not required to submit a business plan, but applicants that have a business plan are welcome to submit it.

The Working Lands

Enterprise Board (WLEB) includes farm and forestry business owners, as well as state employees and service provider organizations who work with agriculture and forestry businesses. WLEB makes the final grant decisions, and Business Enhancement Grant applicants will be notified of awards in late February 2025. Applicants who do not receive a grant are provided with feedback on their application.

For more information, please visit workinglands.vermont.gov/businessgrants or contact Clare Salerno at clare.salerno@vermont.gov or (802) 917-2637.

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

Introducing Some New Faces at the Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

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

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets is comprised of more than 120 full-time employees, working on varying aspects of agriculture regulatory programs and support for our farms and farmers. The Agency would like to introduce you to some new faces that will be working for you in some of these roles.

Selina Rooney

Selina Rooney will be working as a part of the Agriculture Development Marketing Team on the Big E, agritourism, trade show and export support, and other efforts to cultivate and promote the Vermont brand. Selina has been working on her family's organic dairy farm in Morristown since her graduation from UVM with a BS in Dietetics in 1993. She also worked per diem as a registered dietitian at Copley Hospital during that time. She produces



Selina Rooney

maple syrup on their 1500 tap sugarbush and has run the CSA on the farm. Her favorite activities are skiing, reading, paddling, and running. Her two grown children moved back to the farm after college and are active in the agritourism side of the business. She is very excited to be on the team promoting Vermont agriculture.

Dr. Emily Buskey

Dr. Emily Buskey is the new Vermont State Veterinarian in the Animal Health Section and the Food Safety and Consumer Protection Division. Dr. Buskey grew up in Vermont on a small farm, raising a variety of livestock and poultry. After studying music in college, she co-owned and operated a grass-based registered Jersey dairy and 1200-tap maple sugaring operation for several years, milking about 55 cows and eventually transitioning successfully to seasonal dairying. She also spent time teaching therapeutic horseback riding and



Dr. Emily Buskey

working as a DHIA dairy records technician.

After leaving dairying, she returned to school at UVM and then graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine in 2009 with a focus on food animal (livestock) medicine. Dr. Buskey practiced small animal medicine in the Adirondacks and north central Vermont, especially enjoying surgery and emergency work, before finding her calling as a public health veterinarian with USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service in 2016. She has also worked with USDA-APHIS Northern Border Ports, inspecting livestock being imported from Canada.

Dr. Buskey spends her free time outdoors whenever possible, fixing fences and battling invasive plant species around the homestead, and hiking or snowshoeing with her dog. She is an avid vegetable gardener and recently started experimenting with basic cheesemaking.

Earl Fechter

Earl is joining the Agency as the new Compliance Policy & Enforcement Manager. Earl is a graduate of The Johns Hopkins University, the University at Buffalo School of Law, and the University of Miami School of Law where he obtained an advanced law degree. In his position at the Agency, Earl brings



Earl Fechter

professional experience as a civil litigator, trial attorney, State and Federal Prosecutor, and has substantial supervisory experience. He formerly supervised a team of felony division prosecutors in Florida and later supervised the State of Vermont's Department of Human Resources Investigations Unit. As well, Earl is an experienced investigator in rooting out the facts in high volume and high stakes matters. Earl has worked for many years in the public sector. He lives with his family in Montpelier, where he grew up. He is excited to be joining the Agency and to work on behalf of Vermonters.

Josh Knight

Josh will be working with the Agriculture Development Division Marketing Team's price discovery and reporting programs for farmers markets, beef, organic dairy, and (soon) maple syrup. He will also provide support to



Josh Knight

the division for enhancing our quantitative storytelling and impact reporting.

Originally from Florida by way of Kentucky, Josh worked for the Cooperative Extension Service in Kentucky for nearly 10 years after picking up a bachelor's degree in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of Kentucky in 2013. In the years before, during, and after his undergraduate coursework, Josh worked the long summers on diversified farms growing a variety of specialty crops and raising beef cattle, broilers, and pigs in Florida, Georgia, New Mexico, Japan, and Kentucky. Prior to his agricultural career, Josh worked in the Information Technology sector of central Florida for six years, acquiring skills in web development, graphic design, and communication technologies. While working in Extension, Josh completed a master's degree in Plant and Soil Science and a graduate certificate in Digital Mapping.