

Agricultural and Culinary Tourism

Translating Opportunity into Farm Profitability

Final Report

Grant period: September 30, 2013 through September 29, 2015

Submitted by



AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

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PROJECT SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

Significant growth in agricultural and culinary tourism offers opportunities for farm businesses. However, diversifying into agritourism activities has not always translated directly into improved financial success. Many Vermont farms are small and find it challenging to invest in the infrastructure needed to ensure the safety of food, visitors, or livestock as they open their operations to the public.

This project was proposed at a critical time to build the support infrastructure for farm businesses interested in developing and expanding agritourism offerings, as substantial growth has been projected for the agricultural and culinary tourism market. A 2007 survey of U.S. leisure travelers found that while only 17% engaged in culinary or wine-related activities within the past three years, an astonishing 60% were interested in this type of travel in the near future¹.

Although this growth offers opportunities for farm businesses, diversifying into agritourism activities had not always translated directly into improved financial success. Many Vermont farms have already recognized some of the rewards of engaging in agritourism activities: in a 2012 survey, 60% of respondents replied that agritourism had a very positive impact on the quality of life. However, there was more work to be done to translate these activities into economic drivers for farms: only 43% of farms in the survey were confident that they were better off financially as a result of agritourism activities².

The project built on important groundwork that was done as part of a 2008 FSMIP project entitled “Culinary Tourism: Expanding the Economic Benefits of Agritourism.” Recognizing that the mutual interests of agriculture, cuisine, and tourism in Vermont have not always been well integrated, this project strengthened the linkages between agriculture, cuisine and tourism through the creation of an Agriculture and Culinary Tourism (VACT) Council. The final report published in 2009 stated that, “From listening to the producer voice we have identified the need to increase educational opportunities and technical support. We also need to come together around a cohesive messaging campaign that captures the unique attributes of the Vermont brand.”

¹ Travel Industry Association (TIA), Gourmet, and the International Culinary Tourism Association. Culinary Travel Survey. 2007.

² Duffy, Marlow. Exploring Marketing Strategies for Agricultural Tourism Farmers in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the State of Vermont. 2012.

This project aimed to amplify the economic impacts (and mitigate risks) of agricultural and culinary tourism for Vermont farms through a multi-faceted approach, including:

1. Capacity development and risk management for producers offering on-farm experiences;
2. Coordinated marketing campaign to drive visitors to farm and food businesses offering authentic experiences;
3. Leadership and network development to ensure the sharing of best practices and strong agricultural organizations; and
4. Research and evaluation of economic impacts.

PROJECT APPROACH

The goal of this project was to increase profitability of Vermont farm and food businesses by supporting growth in agriculture and culinary tourism.

Objective 1: Assess effects of agritourism on farm viability and evaluate models for increasing profitability

Evaluation of the economic impacts of agritourism activities on Vermont producers was a key objective for this project. Participants in workshops, technical assistance, and Open Farm Week were surveyed to determine how participation impacted their businesses.

All evaluation was conducted by Lisa Chase, Extension Associate Professor at the University of Vermont and Director of the Vermont Tourism Center. Her research interests include food systems, agritourism, and culinary tourism. She works with qualitative and quantitative methods to conduct program evaluations and document measurable impacts. Lisa received her B.A. in Economics from the University of Michigan, and her M.S. in Resources Economics and Ph.D. in Natural Resource Management and Policy from Cornell University.

Evaluation of Workshops On-site

To measure short-term outcomes of the workshops, we distributed evaluation forms at the end of each workshop. Of the 290 respondents, 174 identified themselves as farmers. The rest were agricultural service providers, educators, non-profit or government agency staff, food or tourism entrepreneurs, or consultants.

Almost all of the farmers who responded (96%) reported that they increased their knowledge of opportunities related to farm experiences and agritourism; and 81% felt that the workshops had given them the knowledge needed to implement these

opportunities and best practices on their own farms. Most farmers (93%) said that the workshops helped them identify useful resources such as publications, websites, and people knowledgeable about farm experiences and agritourism.

When asked about intentions related to agritourism for the next year, almost all the farmers (90%) said they were likely to assess their business to determine where improvements or new ventures are needed, and 85% said they were likely to implement improvements or new ventures. Follow-up evaluations 6 to 12 months later were used to track specific actions and outcomes of farmers that participated in the workshop.

Follow-up Evaluation of Workshops

In addition to the surveys that took place on-site immediately after workshops, we followed up with participants 6 to 12 months after the workshops to find out what they had accomplished. Of the 75 respondents to the online survey, 46 were farmers in Vermont. The rest of the respondents were agricultural service providers, educators, non-profit employees, government employees, or they worked in the tourism industry. Of the Vermont farmers responding, 98% reported that they had assessed their farm to determine where improvements or new ventures were needed, and 87% had implemented improvements or new ventures during the past year.

Over three-quarters (78%) of Vermont Farmers reported a positive impact on profitability as a result of the information, resources, and contacts from the workshops. A similar percent (76%) reported an increase in the number of visitors/customers. Over one-third of respondents (41%) indicated that they had created additional jobs for their farm. Considering quality-of-life, more than three-quarters (76%) reported increased personal satisfaction from their farm.

Evaluation of Technical Assistance

Nineteen farms received technical assistance including visits to their farms from specialists in agritourism. Ten of those farms responded to a follow-up survey online. Of the farmers responding, 100% reported that they had assessed their farm to determine where improvements or new ventures were needed, and 80% had implemented improvements or new ventures during the past year. Almost all (90%) reported a positive impact on profitability as a result of the technical assistance; and the same percent (90%) reported increased personal satisfaction from their farm.

Evaluation of Open Farm Week

Vermont's first Open Farm Week was held August 3-9, 2015 with over 80 farms participating. Shortly after Open Farm Week, we sent an online survey to participating farms to find out how it went. Of the 50 farms that responded, 87% said that it was helpful for attracting new visitors and 70% said it was helpful for increasing sales. Most (91%) felt that it was helpful for educating visitors about farms and food.

Objective 2: Develop capacity within Vermont's farm and food industry to offer safe, authentic, and profitable experiences

Objective 2.1: Education

1. Workshops

During the past two years, 10 workshops were conducted as part of this project (only eight were proposed). The workshops were incredibly well attended, with a total of 509 participants, of which 168 were farmers from Vermont. Below is a list of workshops:

1. Farm-Based Education Forum: Agritourism, Education, and Economics on Your Farm. Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, Vermont, October 22-23, 2013. 143 participants, 27 were farmers from Vermont.
2. Marketing Farm Experiences to Increase Product Sales. Held at the Northeast Organic Farmers Association (NOFA-VT) Direct Marketing Conference, January 12, 2014, Royalton, Vermont. 10 participants, 7 were farmers from Vermont.
3. Building Collaborative Networks to Strengthen Vermont Agritourism. Held at the Green Mountain Girls Farm, Northfield, Vermont, March 5, 2014. 20 participants, 8 were farmers from Vermont.
4. ABC's of Farm-Based Education. Held at Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, Vermont, March 7-9, 2014. 27 participants, 2 were farmers from Vermont.
5. Designing Your Farm Retail Space. Killdeer Farm, Norwich, Vermont. August 5, 2014. Co-organized with NOFA-VT and Shelburne Farms. 22 participants, 17 were farmers from Vermont.
6. Agritourism Study Tour of Quebec. Bus Tour of Farms in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, Canada. October 29-30, 2014. 35 participants, 17 were farmers from Vermont.
7. Working with Tourists: Practices for a Successful Agritourism Effort. The Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference, Sturbridge, Massachusetts, February 25-26, 2015. 64 participants, 42 were farmers from New England and New York, none of the farmers were from Vermont.
8. Best Practices for Opening Your Farm to Visitors. Northeast Organic Farming

- Association – Vermont (NOFA-VT) Winter Conference, Burlington, Vermont, February 14-15, 2015. 52 participants, 44 were farmers from Vermont.
9. ABC's of Farm-Based Education. Held at Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, Vermont, March 12-15, 2015. Approximately 30 participants, 7 were farmers from Vermont.
 10. Welcoming Customers on Your Farm: Using Agritourism, Education, and Direct Sales to Increase Farm Profits. Rutland, Vermont. 106 participants, 39 were farmers from Vermont.

2. Web-based resource library

The [website](#) was launched in February 2014.

The resource library features five subject areas: Agritourism and Your Farm; On-farm Experiences; Financial Planning; Safety and Risk Management; Marketing. Thirteen resource chapters which were developed in collaboration with the Vermont Farms! Association, Shelburne Farms, Rutland Regional Planning Commission and others are featured on the site. These include: Best Management Practices In... Assessing Your Farm for Agritourism, Land Use and Zoning Regulations, Business and Financial Planning, Safety and Risk Management, Marketing and How-to...Develop a Farm Stand, Develop a Farm Stay, Develop a Farm Tour, Develop a Pick-Your-Own Business, Host Dinners, Host Weddings, Host Summer Camp.

3. List serve

During the period of the grant, the listserv grew from 78 members to 118 members. Between 9/31/13 and 9/31/15 there were 159 unique posts, which engaged hundreds of Vermont farmers who shared resources, learned about workshops and grant opportunities, and passed along inspiration and wisdom which enhanced their businesses.

4. Educational Videos

The Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing partnered with the University of Vermont Extension and Vermont Agency of Agriculture to develop two high quality educational videos: "[Local Land Use and Agritourism](#)," and "[Farm Safety and Liability](#)." These videos were created with Knowledge Vision, an interactive online tool which allows users to work their way through the curriculum at their own pace.

Objective 2.2: Direct Technical Assistance

To complement educational offerings, Shelburne Farms contracted with experienced consultants to deliver direct, one-on-one technical assistance for farmers interested in diversifying into agricultural tourism or increasing profitability from their existing agritourism enterprises. Nineteen farms received technical assistance over the course of the two-year project.

The technical assistance offered took many forms. One recipient produces farmstead goat cheeses in Northern Vermont and hosts visitors to tour her farm. She received support from an attorney about how she could legally structure her multi-faceted business as she prepares for growth. Another farm used the support to send their bookkeeper to a series of workshops around financial sustainability, as the bookkeeper prepared for deeper engagement with the farm's evolving business plan. Another farmer had constructed a large barn to serve as a packing and storage facility, with the eventual goal of adding on-farm retail. Through the grant, we were able to connect him with an architect and brand strategist who helped create a basic plan which he can workshop as he moves closer to achieving the goal of bringing the public to the farm

Objective 2.3: Signage

Project partners worked with the Department of Tourism and Marketing to design a series of 10 informative yet creative signs to keep food, people and animals safe, and promote an enjoyable experience for all. Templates have been made available to farmers so that they can print the quantity that suits their needs. The signs were showcased at an agritourism conference in Rutland, VT on April 7-8, 2015. They have been posted on the resource library [here](#).

Objective 3: Drive visitors and Vermonters to farm and food businesses through the DigInVT.com website

The Vermont Fresh Network manages the collaborative farm and food adventure website DigInVT.com. The goal of DigInVT.com is to increase the economic viability of diversified farm and food enterprises across the State of Vermont by making it easy for the public to find, support and participate in authentic Vermont farm and food experiences. Over the last two years DigInVT.com has maintained social media presence promoting Vermont agriculture and culinary tourism. They have also populated their website with seasonally relevant photos, blogs and event information contributed by collaborative membership organizations and participated in food and agricultural events such as county fairs and food shows across the state. In addition, DigInVT.com has served as the virtual home for the inaugural statewide Open Farm Week, encouraging tourists, whether first-time visitors to Vermont or lifelong

Vermonters to explore the authentic farm and food experiences across the state. If DigInVT.com can inspire just a small percentage of the 12.8 million annual Vermont tourists to visit a farm or have a memorable food experience, there is vast economic potential for the rural farm communities of Vermont

The Department of Tourism and Marketing (VDTM) managed the out of state digital ad campaign for DigInVT.com. The digital campaign and event participation have been the main marketing strategies to drive user traffic to DigInVT.com. It is challenging to quantify the economic impact of DigInVT.com for each of the place listings on the site. We are able to track the website users and engaged social media friends and we extrapolate from our statistics that we are serving a need by consolidating all of these locations in one website and inspiring tourist visits through the content and user experience of the website. Below is an example of the creative from one of the campaigns, designed by VDTM:



The DigInVT.com website lists events and blog post from contributing member organizations, community members and place listing. Since 2014 DigInVT.com has posted 756 Vermont food event listings and 71 blog posts. All events and blog posts contribute to the seasonal relevance of the content of the site. Traffic to the website is steady but seems to have seasonal trends that follow our traditional tourism seasons. The site is most heavily used in the late spring, summer and early fall. Since March of 2014 DigInVT.com has had 26,529 unique users visiting 111,096 pages. The most heavily trafficked page is the home page, the second most trafficked page is our Events listing page.

DigInVT.com has an active Facebook page. Since March 2014 we have posted 519 times with 4,706 engaged fans, meaning they have clicked on our facebook posts.

DigInVT.com was the virtual home of the first Vermont Open Farm Week from August 3 – 9, 2015. Open Farm Week gave people a behind-the-scenes look at Vermont’s vibrant working landscape. Farmers across Vermont opened their barn doors and garden gates to welcome the public. Visitors were able participate in a wide variety of location specific on-farm activities. Open Farm Week was organized to increase farm profitability, local food availability, and consumption of Vermont food products. 84 farms participated in Open Farm Week and there were 241 events related to Open Farm Week. Over 40 earned media stories about Open Farm Week were printed, posted, blogged or videoed. Open Farm Week coincided with a digital ad campaign that the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing launched. In the month leading up to Open Farm Week, 11,478 unique visitors used DigInVT.com and viewed over 41,000 pages.

DigInVT.com representatives, outreach material and display information participated in each of the following events:

2014

Vermont Farm Show – Feb. 29
Governors Tourism Conference in Oregon – April 27-29
Fancy Food Show – June 29 – July 1
Taste of Vermont at the UVM Food Summit – June 18
Vermont Cheese Festival – July 20
Vermont Fresh Network Annual Forum Dinner – Aug. 3
Celebrate Vermont Festival – Aug. 15 – 17
Woodchuck Grand Opening Ciderbration – Aug. 23
NASDA – Sept 12
Traditional Food Symposium – Sept. 26-27
Taste Trekkers – Providence RI – Oct. 3-5
Terra Madre – Oct. 23-27

2015

Vermont Farm Show – Feb. 28
Maple Open House Weekend – March 28 – 29
Vermont Agritourism Conference – April 8
Brooklyn Food Show – May 2
Fancy Food Show – June 28 - 30
Rudy Maxa National Radio Show – July 18
Vermont Cheese Festival – July 19
Vermont Fresh Network Annual Forum Dinner – Aug. 2
Open Farm Week – Aug. 3-9
Eastern States Exposition – Sept. 18 – Oct. 4

On September 9, 2014 we completed the online portal for farmers to sign up to be listed on DigInVT.com regardless of their membership in a contributing membership organizations.

Objective 4: Leadership and organizational capacity development for members of the Agriculture and Culinary Tourism Council

Over the course of this project, the Vermont Ag and Culinary Tourism (VACT) Council, was revitalized and restructured to include greater representation from across Vermont’s Working

Lands sectors. It was renamed to become the Council of Agricultural Associations, and focuses on identifying collaborative opportunities around agritourism, marketing, policy, and organizational capacity development.

The Council is coordinated by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, with an advisory committee that is elected from the membership. The expanded membership now includes:

- Agritourism Task Force
- Beef Producers Association
- Brewers' Association
- Cheese Council
- Dairy Industry Association
- Farmers Market Association
- Grape and Wine Council
- Maple Sugar Makers Association
- Sheep and Goat Association
- Specialty Food Association
- Tree Fruit Growers Association
- University of Vermont Extension
- Vegetable and Berry Growers' Association
- Vermont Fresh Network
- Vermont Organic Farmers
- Wood Manufacturers Association

Professional development was offered through the Vermont Agricultural Development Program (VADP). Eight of Vermont's agricultural trade associations have been participating in a series of capacity building workshops with John Ryan, Program Director. Associations have focused on membership development, board and governance development, and putting their association on a path to financial sustainability. Participating associations have surveyed their members' needs, evaluated their boards' performance and compositions, explored opportunities for joint marketing and staffing, and developed 5 year financial plans aimed at sustaining the association while delivering greater value and services to their membership. Participating associations are eligible to receive small grants administered through the VADP to help catalyze a project or initiative that will help them implement their 5 year plan for financial sustainability.

Additionally, social media expert Alexandra Tursi was hired to provide one-on-one social media strategy consultations with interested Associations. Eight associations opted into the trainings, with 100% satisfaction. A "Best Practices Guide" was also created for the associations to reference in implementing their social media strategies.

PARTNER ROLES

This was truly a collaborative project. The Agency of Agriculture coordinated the all project components and kept objectives on track. University of Vermont Extension helped organize workshops, conducted evaluations, created a website, and compiled the Knowledge Vision videos. Shelburne Farms spearheaded the workshops and technical assistance programming, build the list serve, and consulted on sign design, videos and other project components. Vermont Fresh Network managed content on the DigInVT website, and played a leadership role in Open Farms Week. The Department of Tourism and Marketing developed the creative for the DigInVT campaigns, and provided matching funds for campaign distribution.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Evaluation was a key priority of this project. As reported above, the workshops and technical assistance were evaluated through on-site hardcopy surveys handed out immediately following workshops and then online surveys 6-12 months after events took place. The project exceeded objectives for workshop participants, with 509 participants in total and 168 Vermont farmers. The project also exceeded objectives for technical assistance recipients with 19 farms.

A full evaluation report is provided above, but the following outcomes are notable:

- Over three-quarters (78%) of Vermont Farmers reported a positive impact on profitability as a result of the information, resources, and contacts from the workshops. A similar percent (76%) reported an increase in the number of visitors/customers.
- Over one-third of respondents (41%) indicated that they had created additional jobs for their farm.
- Considering quality-of-life, more than three-quarters (76%) reported increased personal satisfaction from their farm.
- Almost all (90%) reported a positive impact on profitability as a result of the technical assistance; and the same percent (90%) reported increased personal satisfaction from their farm.

Another positive impact of this project was growing the network of technical assistance providers to work with farms providing agritourism experiences. When the project began, many TA providers were skeptical about the profitability of agritourism enterprises on farms. However, there has been an increase in awareness of the financial viability of including on-farm experiences into an agricultural business plan. Independent business planning consultant, Rose Wilson has been a strong ally for several of the farms enrolled, as has Maggie Donin, beginning farmer specialist at Intervale Center.

Additionally, at least two mentorship relationships between four farmers were set up during this time period. Building a strong peer network is critical to having a vibrant agritourism network in the state, and as a result of the FSMIP funding, this happened informally at workshops and formally through mentorship relationships.

The videos and signs became available recently online and can be found on the right hand banner of this [page](#). We just started to publicize them, so they have not been widely used yet. We will continue to monitor downloads in the future. To date, two farms have reported using the signs.

CURRENT OR FUTURE BENEFITS

Current benefits include 78% of Vermont farmers reporting a positive impact on profitability as a result of the information, resources, and contacts from the workshops. A similar percent (76%) reported an increase in the number of visitors/customers. Over one-third of respondents (41%) indicated that they had created additional jobs for their farm. Considering quality-of-life, more than three-quarters (76%) reported increased personal satisfaction from their farm.

With the recent release of the videos and the signs, we expect future improvements in agritourism safety on farms, as the signs are printed and the videos are used.

FUTURE RESEARCH

More research is needed to improve our understanding of the economic impacts of agritourism and culinary tourism in Vermont and other states. Additionally, profiles of visitors would help farms capture a greater market share and benefit from the growing trends in food and farm tourism.

BENEFICIARIES

Business/Organization	Total
Farmer	168
Homesteader/Gardener	43
Non-profit employee	82
Student	14
Government employee	24
Service provider	33
Researcher	10
Educator	15
Other	68
Type of Farmer (check all that apply)	
Dairy	34

Fruit/Vegetable/Berry	127
Livestock	75
Maple products	19
Greenhouse/nursery	27
Winery/vineyard	2
Prepared food	25
Wool/fiber	13
Farm-stay, bed and breakfast or inn	16
Other	47

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Agritourism Website](#)

[Agritourism Best Practices Guides](#)

Videos: [Land Use](#) and [Farm Safety & Liability](#)

Appendix A: Digital & Print Advertisements



How do you know you're getting the best quality produce?

Frankie Ridge, owner of the Ridge Farm in Vergennes, Vermont, says he knows because he grows it. "I know what it tastes like, and I know what it looks like. I know what it smells like. I know what it feels like. I know what it does to me. I know what it does to my family. I know what it does to my community. I know what it does to my country. I know what it does to the world."

It's a new program to an increasingly crowded market. The Vermont Food System, a coalition of growers, processors, and distributors, has created a new standard for quality. As the first farm-to-table initiative in the state, it's a first for Vermont. It's a first for the world.

It's a first for the world because it's the first time that a state has created a standard for quality. It's a first for the world because it's the first time that a state has created a standard for quality. It's a first for the world because it's the first time that a state has created a standard for quality.



**DISCOVER
VERMONT FOOD
&
AGRICULTURE
EVENTS**

— GRS —

**UNEARTH
YOUR
TASTE
BUDS**

— GRS —

VISIT US AT DIGINVT.COM **go**

**DIG IN
VERMONT**

**UNEARTH
YOUR
TASTE
BUDS**

— GRS —

VISIT US AT DIGINVT.COM **go**

**DIG IN
VERMONT**

UNEARTH YOUR TASTE BUDS

VISIT US AT DIGINVT.COM **go**

**DIG IN
VERMONT**

**UNEARTH
YOUR
TASTE
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— GRS —

VISIT US AT DIGINVT.COM **go**

**DIG IN
VERMONT**

**UNEARTH
YOUR
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— GRS —

VISIT US AT DIGINVT.COM **go**

**DIG IN
VERMONT**

UNEARTH YOUR TASTE BUDS
"GREAT"

VISIT US AT DIGINVT.COM go

DIG IN VERMONT

UNEARTH YOUR TASTE BUDS
"GREAT"

VISIT US AT DIGINVT.COM go

DIG IN VERMONT

UNEARTH YOUR TASTE BUDS
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{Dig In}

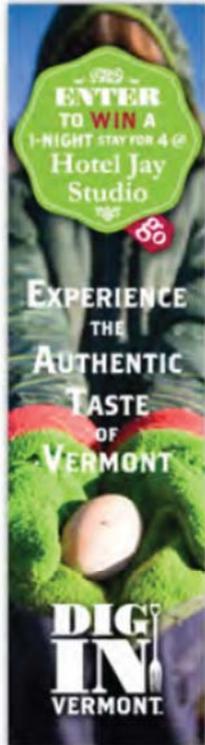
Enter to win a 1-night stay for 4 people in a Hotel Jay Studio. Includes Lodging and dinner at the Saturday Night Localvore dinner at Alice's Table. (Alcohol not included)

NAME

EMAIL



ENTER





Appendix B: Evaluation Forms

Agritourism Program Follow-Up

Thank you for taking part in workshops and programs that support agritourism, education, and direct sales! Let us know how these programs worked for you and how they can be improved. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. If you have questions about the survey, or if you would prefer to fill it out over the phone, contact Lisa Chase at Lisa.Chase@uvm.edu or 802-257-7967 or 1-800-278-5480 (toll-free in Vermont).

1. During the last two years, which workshops and programs were you a part of? Select all that apply.

- Welcoming Customers on Your Farm: Using Agritourism, Education, and Direct Sales to Increase Farm Profits conference in Rutland, Vermont on April 7-8, 2015.
- ABC's of Farm-Based Education workshop at Shelburne Farms in Shelburne, Vermont on March 12-15, 2015.
- "Working with Tourists: Practices for a Successful Agritourism Effort" workshop at The Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference in Sturbridge, Massachusetts on February 25-26, 2015.
- "Best Practices for Opening Your Farm to Visitors" workshop at the NOFA-VT Winter Conference in Burlington, Vermont on February 14-15, 2015.
- A Study Tour of Quebec Agritourism, Bus tour in Quebec, Canada on October 29-30, 2014.
- Designing Your Farm Retail Space workshop at Killdeer Farm in Norwich, Vermont on August 5, 2014.
- ABC's of Farm-Based Education workshop at Shelburne Farms in Shelburne, Vermont on March 7-9, 2014.
- Building Collaborative Networks to Strengthen Vermont Agritourism workshop at Green Mountain Girls Farm in Northfield, Vermont on March 5, 2014.
- "Marketing Farm Experiences to Increase Product Sales" workshop, at the NOFA-VT Direct Marketing Conference in South Royalton, Vermont on January 12, 2014.
- Agritourism Enterprise Program (Technical Assistance visits on your farm and work with consultants or peer mentors, coordinated by Lisa Chase and Vera Simon-Nobes).

Other (please specify)

2. State

- VT
- Outside of VT

3. Describe yourself. Check all that apply.

- Farmer
- Extension/Service Provider
- Non-profit
- Government Agency
- Educator
- Other (please specify)

4. If you checked "Farmer" above, what do you produce? Check all that apply.

- Maple products
- Dairy/Cheese
- Farm-stay, bed and breakfast or inn
- Vegetable or fruit operation
- Greenhouse/nursery
- Winery/vineyard
- Livestock
- Prepared food
- Wool/fiber
- Other (please specify)

5. During the last two years, did you accomplish any of the following as a result of the information, resources, and contacts from the agritourism programs that you participated in?

	Did not accomplish	Partially accomplished	Completely accomplished
Assess your business/organization to determine where improvements or new ventures are needed?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Implement improvements or new ventures?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create a new or change an existing business plan to accommodate the improvements or new ventures?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expand or improve marketing efforts?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expand communications with farmers, potential business partners, service providers, and/or collaborators?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
See an increase in the number of visitors/customers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create additional jobs for your business/organization?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

6. If you created additional jobs, how many were created?

7. Please comment about jobs created and other accomplishments or challenges:

8. Have you used any of the signs from the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing online at www.uvm.edu/vtagritourism/?Page=farm-signage.html ?

Yes

No

Comments

9. How have the following impacted the profitability of your business/organization during the past year?

	Highly negative impact	Negative impact	No impact	Positive impact	Highly positive impact
The economy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The weather	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information, resources and contacts from the agritourism program(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Changes in your family life during the past year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments

10. What opportunities and best practices from the agritourism program(s) have you used in your business/organization over the past year? Please comment why you did or did not make changes.

11. What additional income and expenses have these opportunities and best practices generated in your business/organization during the past year? (All answers will be kept confidential.)

Choose amount that matches best.

Additional Income. Consider income sources such as visitor expenditures at your business, investments from new partners, and additional funding sources such as grants and loans.

Additional Expenses. Expenses can include additional employee wages, loan payments, insurance coverage, product or equipment purchases, land rentals or purchases, and promotional costs needed to implement the new opportunity or idea.

Comments or Other Amount:

12. How have the following changed as a result of these opportunities and best practices from the agritourism programs that you have participated in?

	Has increased or decreased?	How important are these changes?
The amount of personal satisfaction I receive from my business/organization.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
The amount of time I spend with my family (during both work and free time).	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
The amount of free time I have.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
The income I receive from my business/organization.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
My enjoyment in sharing farm life and/or heritage with visitors.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
My satisfaction with preserving the agricultural landscapes of my farm.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
My enjoyment with meeting new people through my business/organization.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other (specify below)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

"Other" please specify here:

13. What additional resources, workshops and/or technical assistance would be helpful for your business/organization?

14. Please provide us with contact information (optional). All individual information provided on this evaluation will be kept strictly confidential.

Your name:

Name of business/organization:

E-mail address:

Phone:

Mailing address:

15. Additional comments

Thank you for sharing your feedback! **Please be sure to click the "Done" button to submit your answers.**

If you have additional thoughts, please get in touch with Lisa Chase at Lisa.Chase@uvm.edu or 802-257-7967 or 1-800-278-5480 (toll-free in Vermont).

Workshop NAME

Workshop at LOCATION – DATE

1. Describe yourself. Check all that apply.

- Farmer Extension/Service Provider Non-profit Government Agency
- Educator Other (specify): _____

2. If you checked “Farmer” above, what do you produce? Check all that apply.

- Maple products Dairy/cheese Farm-stay, bed and breakfast or inn
- Vegetable or fruit operation Greenhouse/nursery Winery/vineyard
- Livestock Prepared food Wool/fiber
- Other (specify): _____

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements regarding this workshop? Circle the number corresponding to your answer.

This workshop has...	Level of agreement or disagreement				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	No opinion	Agree	Strongly agree
Increased my knowledge of opportunities related to farm experiences and agritourism.	-2	-1	0	1	2
Improved my understanding of best practices for safety and quality related to agritourism.	-2	-1	0	1	2
Given me the knowledge needed to implement these opportunities and best practices in my own farm business or to help others implement them in their farm businesses.	-2	-1	0	1	2
Helped me identify useful resources such as publications, websites, and people knowledgeable about farm experiences and agritourism.	-2	-1	0	1	2
Expanded my contacts with other farmers, potential business partners, service providers, community leaders, and/or collaborators.	-2	-1	0	1	2
Other (specify below)	-2	-1	0	1	2

Other (specify here):

4. What opportunities and best practices presented at the workshop are you considering for use in your existing or future farm business or your organization/agency?

5. During the next year, will you do the following as a result of the information, resources, and contacts provided to you at the workshop? Circle the number corresponding to your plans for each item below.

Over the next year, will you...	Level of planned implementation				
	Definitely will not	Not likely	Maybe	Likely	Definitely will
Assess your business to determine where improvements or new ventures are needed?	-2	-1	0	1	2
Implement improvements or new ventures?	-2	-1	0	1	2
Create a new or change an existing business plan to accommodate the improvements or new ventures?	-2	-1	0	1	2
Expand or improve marketing efforts?	-2	-1	0	1	2
Expand communications with other farmers, potential business partners, service providers, and/or collaborators?	-2	-1	0	1	2
Other (specify below)	-2	-1	0	1	2

Other (specify here):

6. Please provide contact information (optional). All individual information provided on this evaluation will be kept strictly confidential.

Your name: _____

Name of business: _____

E-mail address: _____

Phone: _____

7. Would you be interested in receiving follow-up assistance from UVM Extension and Shelburne Farms?

- Yes! Please contact me using the information above.
- No thanks. I'll get in touch if I need anything.

8. Additional comments, including suggestions for future workshops and other ways to support agritourism? Feel free to use extra paper for your comments. We appreciate the feedback!

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!
Please return to Lisa Chase or Vera Simon-Nobes.

Appendix C: PowerPoint Presentation

Best Practices for a Successful Agritourism Effort

Harvest New England
February 26, 2015



Presenters

- **Lisa Chase**, University of Vermont Extension
- **Vera Simon-Nobes**, Vermont Farms! Association, Farm-based Education Network, and Shelburne Farms
- **Beth Kennett**, Liberty Hill Farm and Vermont Farms! Association

Questions

- Farmers? Service Providers? Who else?
- Is your farm already open to visitors?
- What kind of farm experiences and agritourism?
- Pressing issues/concerns? (safety, liability, marketing, financial management, customer service)

What is Agritourism?

"a commercial enterprise on a working farm conducted for the enjoyment, education, and/or active involvement of the visitor, generating supplemental income for the farm" [definition from Vermont Farms! Association]

Variety of terms & labels used interchangeably.

Recent research suggests 'Farm Visit' may be best understood by stakeholder groups

This is NOT to suggest the term agritourism should not be used but rather some additional education & communication may be required to ensure the intended audience understands the term and expectations.

-Arroyo, Barbieri, & Rich, 2013

Agritourism
FarmVisits
Agritainment *Agrotourism*
FarmTourism *Agricultural* *Tourism*

Examples

- Direct sales of agricultural products (e.g., farmstands, CSAs, PYO operations)



Roadside Corn Stand in Wallingford, VT

Photo by Mike Dresser (Creative Commons by-nc)

Examples

- Education (e.g., school tours, winery tours, farm work experiences)



UVM Extension Youth Agriculture Project in Brattleboro, VT

Examples

- Events and entertainment (e.g., hay rides, corn mazes, petting farms)



Shelburne Farms

Examples

- Accommodations (e.g., bed & breakfasts, farmstays)



Liberty Hill Farm in Rochester, VT

Examples

- Outdoor recreation (e.g., horseback riding, hunting, fishing, bird watching)



Cross-country skiers



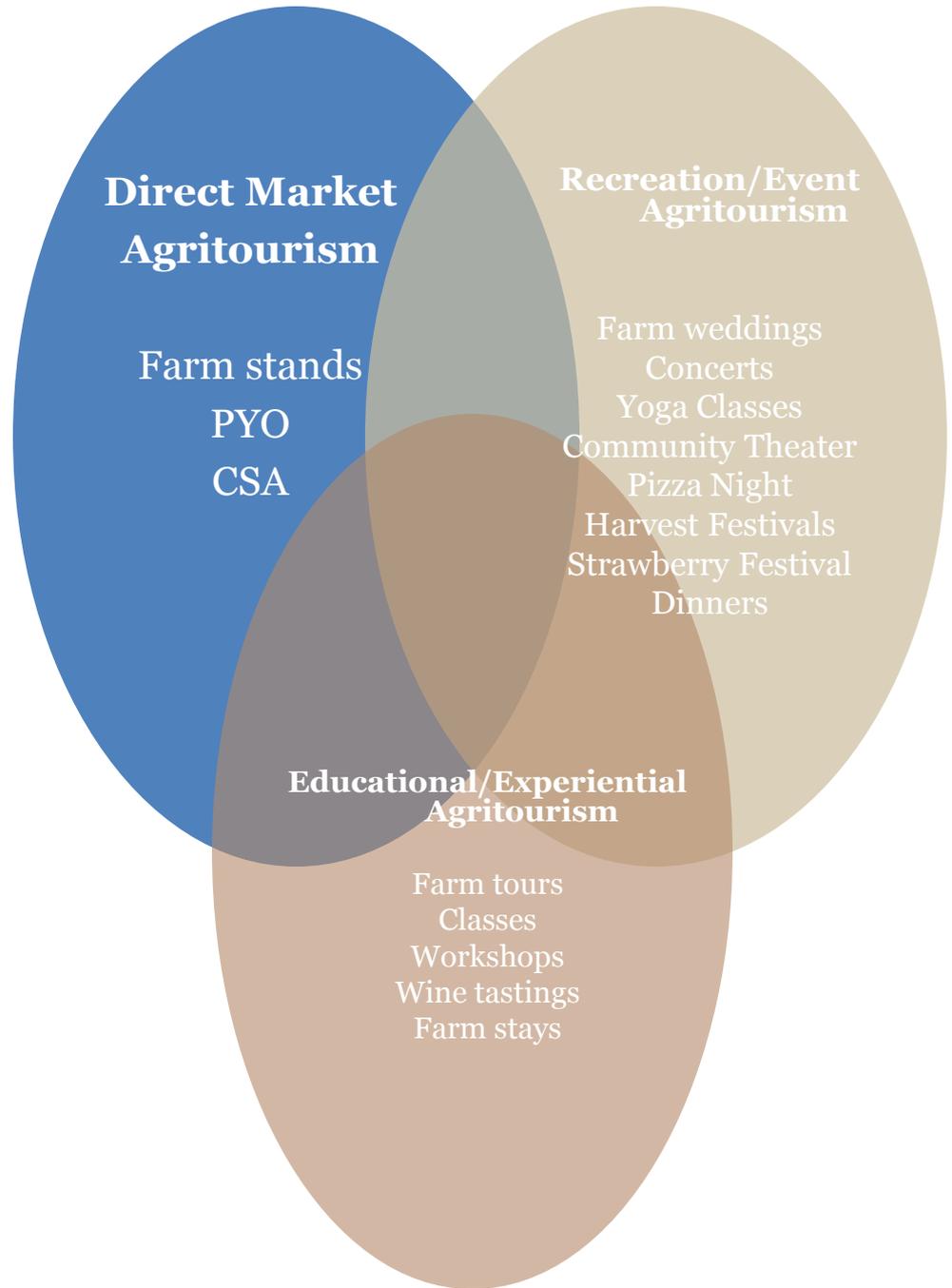
Flack Family Farm



Green Mountain Girls



Bread and Butter Farm



Why Agritourism and Direct Sales?



Diversify Farm Income

Sizing the Culinary Market

17% of American leisure travelers have participated in one or more culinary activities while traveling over the past three years.



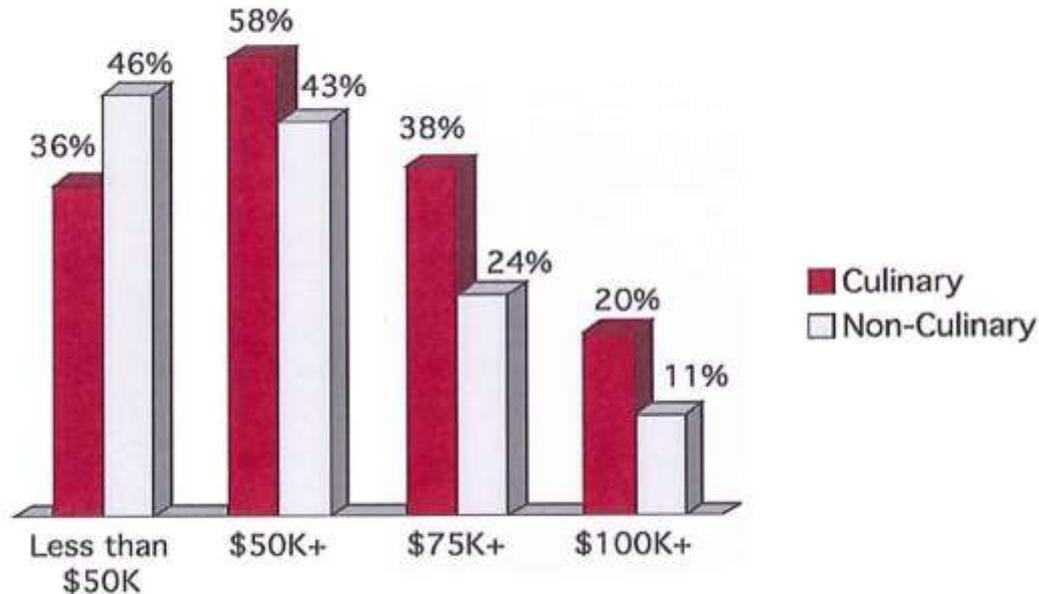
Source: TIA, Gourmet Magazine, International Culinary Tourism Association, 2007



Affluent Visitors

The Serious Culinary Traveler: Demographic Profile

Serious Culinary Travelers—"deliberate" or "opportunistic" culinary travelers are more affluent than non-culinary travelers.

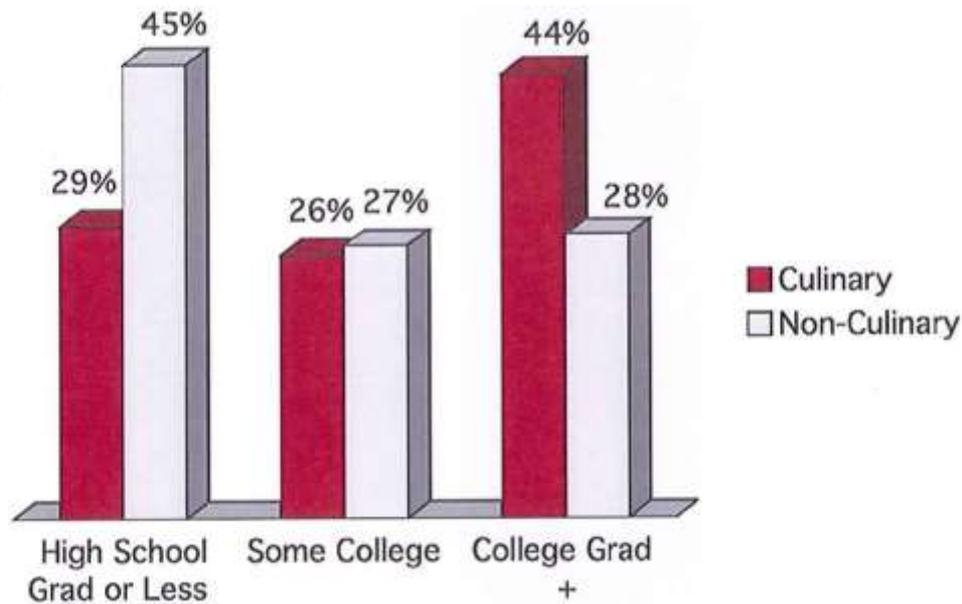


Source: TIA, Gourmet Magazine, International Culinary Tourism Association, 2007

Educated Visitors

The Serious Culinary Traveler: Demographic Profile

Serious Culinary Travelers—"deliberate" or "opportunistic" culinary travelers are better educated than non-culinary travelers.

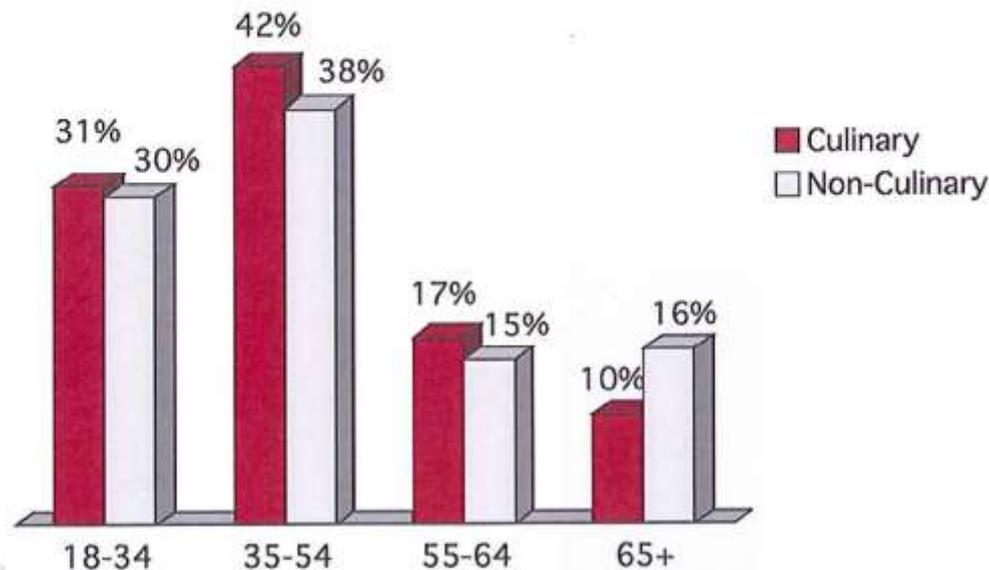


Source: TIA, Gourmet Magazine, International Culinary Tourism Association, 2007

Age of Visitors

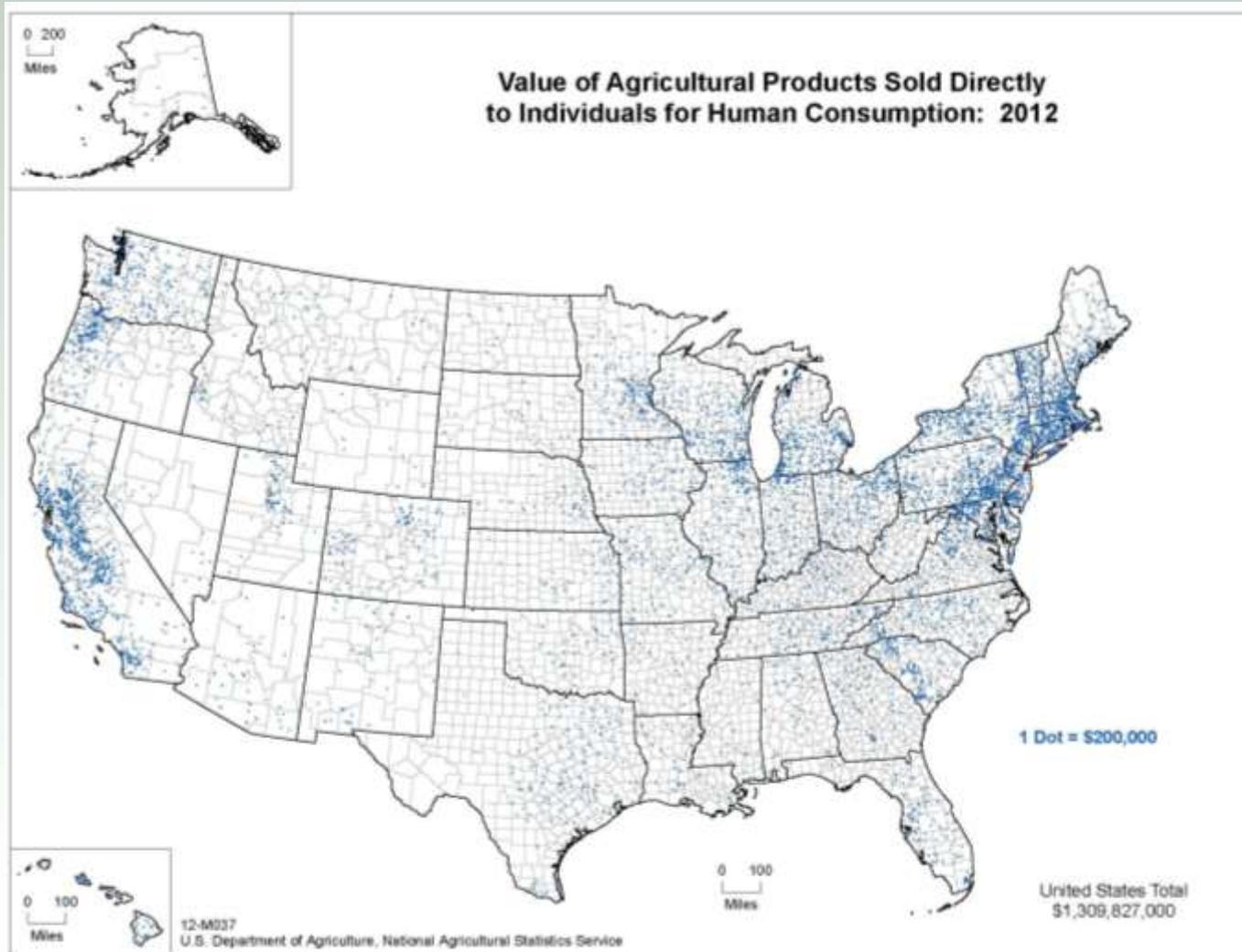
The Serious Culinary Traveler: Demographic Profile

Serious Culinary Travelers—"deliberate" or "opportunistic" culinary travelers are younger than non-culinary travelers.



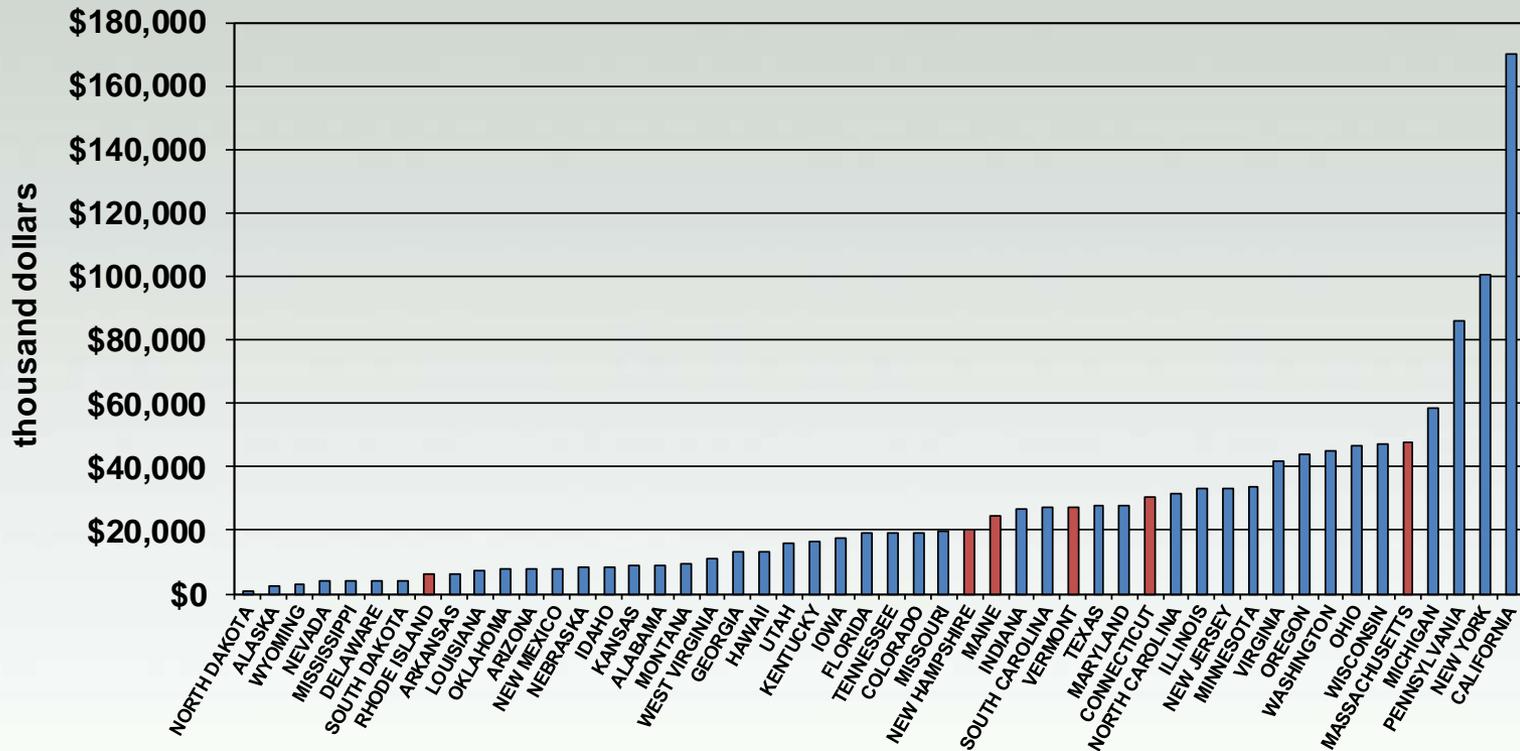
Source: TIA, Gourmet Magazine, International Culinary Tourism Association, 2007

Direct Sales



Direct Sales by State

2012 Direct Sales Income by State

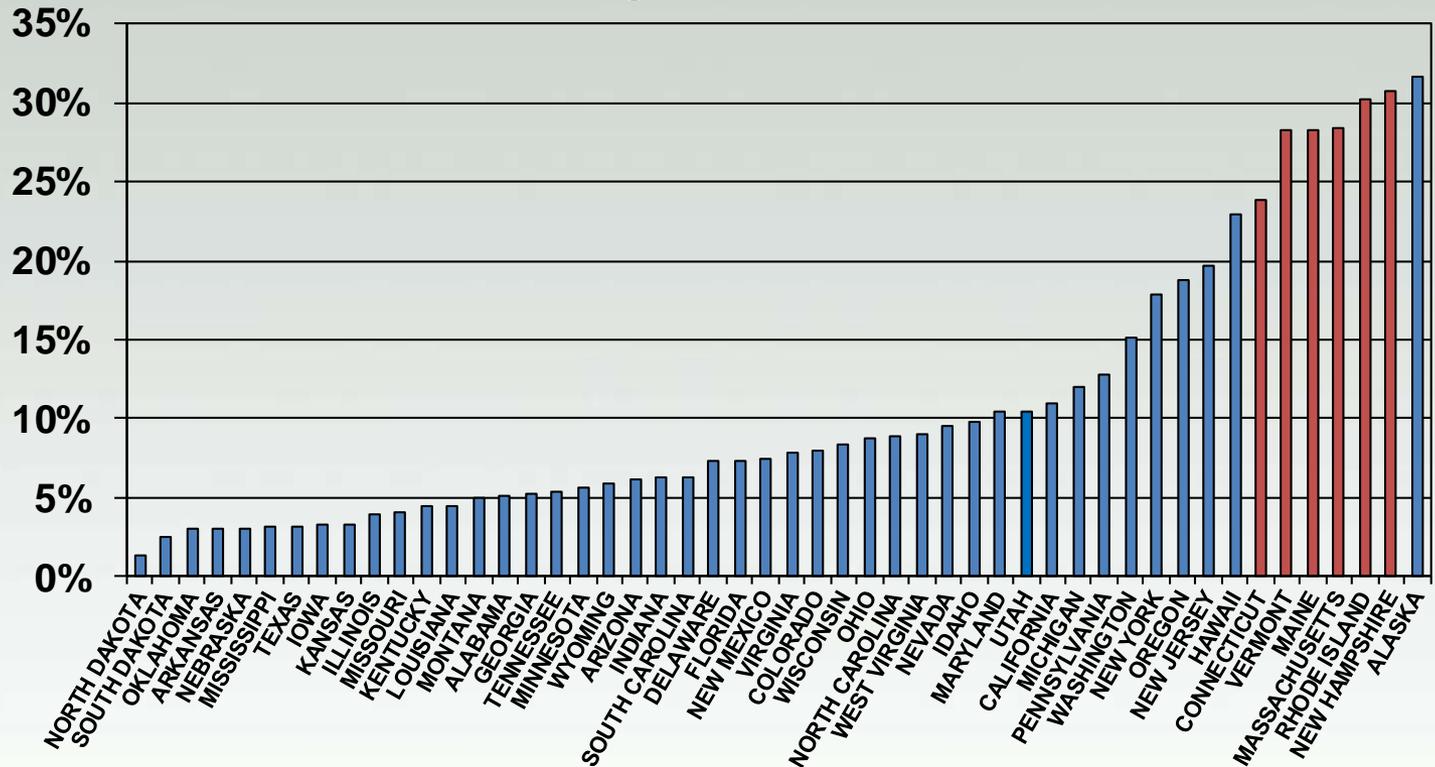


MA=5, CT=15, VT=18, ME=21, NH=22, RI=43

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service 2012 Census

Farms with Direct Sales

2012 Percentage of Farms Involved in Direct Sales



NH=2, RI=3, MA=4, ME=5, VT=6, CT=7

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service 2012 Census

www.uvm.edu/vtagritourism



The University of Vermont



Opening your farm to visitors



Couture's Sugarhouse

Home

[Agritourism and Your Farm](#)

[On-farm Experiences](#)

[Financial Planning](#)

[Safety and Risk Management](#)

[Marketing](#)

What is Agritourism?

Agritourism is the business of establishing farms as destinations for education, recreation, and the purchase of farm products. Farm tours, tastings, dinners-in-the-field, farm stays, workshops, festivals, and direct sale of products through 'pick-your-own' are just some examples.

Agritourism activities give visitors the opportunity to connect with the working

Farmers

Connect with Agritourism Farms in Vermont

[Vermont Farms!](#)

[Assoc. Mailing List](#)



SHELBURNE FARMS
Cultivating Change for a Sustainable Future



Shelburne Farms
Shelburne, VT



Four Acre Farm, Glover, VT

HOW BIG ARE YOU?



Stonewall Farm
Keene, NH

Grand View Farm
Washington, VT





Appleton Farms
Ipswich, MA

Drumlin Farm and
Wildlife Sanctuary
Lincoln, MA



Today at the FARMYARD

10:00	Good Morning
10:30	Chicken Parade
11:00	Farm Games
11:30	Meet the Calf
12:00	
12:30	
1:00	
1:30	
2:00	
2:30	
3:00	
3:30	
4:00	



Shelburne Farms
Shelburne, VT



Shelburne Farms
Shelburne, VT



Shelburne Farms
Shelburne, VT



Shelburne Farms
Shelburne, VT

WELCOME TO THE FARMYARD!

ANIMAL * NAME * AGE

BROWN SWISS COW	JAMAICA	7 YEARS
BROWN SWISS CALF	KILDAIR	MAY 8 2010
HEREFORD/ANGUS/SWISS CALF	BLUE	APRIL 20 2010
TEXEL WETHER	SHELBY	8 YEARS
GOATS	SHIRT TAIL, SAL, FETA, LADYSLIPPERS, BASSINI, ZOLA	RANGE 1-11 YEARS
SOW	WINNIE	3 YEARS
DONKEYS	DUDLEY, PENELOPE	27, 15 YEARS
DRAFT HORSE, PONY	KATE, GINGER	BOTH 19 YEARS
ALPACA	TRIGUEYENO	8 YEARS

DID YOU KNOW?

- 

OUR SHEEP FLOCK GETS A NEW PASTURE EVERY DAY. THEY HAVE A "GUARD" LLAMA NAMED FRECKLES (6 YEARS) WHO LIVES WITH THEM. IF YOU GO EXPLORING, TO FIND THEM, PLEASE KNOW THE FENCE IS ELECTRIC.
- 

OUR BOURBON RED TURKEYS WERE HATCHED ON APRIL 22 2010. THEY WILL GROW TO BE BETWEEN 15-25 POUNDS BY NOVEMBER. (SEE IF YOU CAN FIND THEM OUTSIDE!)
- 

THE SOW HAD HER PIGLETS ON APRIL 29 2010.
- 

APPLE BLOSSOM HAD HER GOAT KIDS (2 BOYS) MAC AND TOSH MAY 30 2010. FETA HAD HER GOAT KIDS (2 BOYS) CHEDDAR AND JACK. JUNE 2 2010

SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THE FARM!



Shelburne Farms
Shelburne, VT



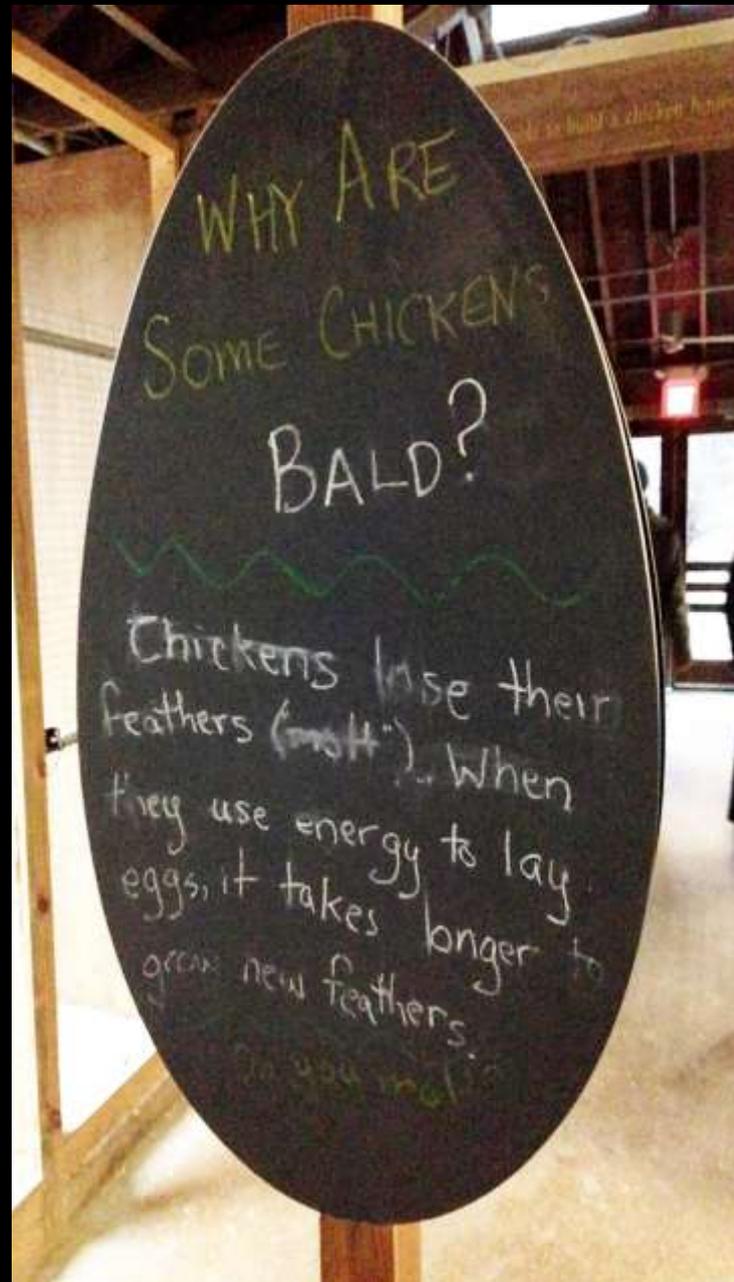
Shelburne Farms
Shelburne, VT

WHAT MEAL OR DISH WILL YOU MAKE THIS WEEK USING MOSTLY (OR ONLY) INGREDIENTS PURCHASED HERE?

- Pasta with Artichokes and Olive Oil
- Tomato, Basil and Mozzarella sauce
- Caesar Salad
- Salad
- Grilled Chicken and corn
- Sausage w/ Raddichio, Broccoli over pasta
- Spinach, garlic, pasta and cheese
Goz pack + 1
- salad, salad, + more salad
- Pasta, corn, tomato, mozzarella + basil
- Arugula, Corn, bean, tomato + Feta Salad
- Basil Olive Oil + Ricotta ice cream
- ~~Eggplant~~ Parmesan
corn + 4x tonic!
Artichokes with Butter!!
Quiche, Corn, Pie
TOM, MOZZ, basil paninis (+carrots)



Green Mountain Girls Farm
Northfield, VT



Drumlin Farm and
Wildlife Sanctuary
Lincoln, MA



Spring Brook Farm
Reading, VT



Someday Farm
East Dorset, VT

CELEBRATING AG LITERACY WEEK IN VERMONT 2011

by a story of a local farm...

Hello! We are  (farmers) that live in . We farm on land that has been in our family for  decades. Some  say we have a old fashion farm but  say it's new fashion!

Yesterday our "Gracias"  had a . His name is "Goodness". We will milk  and the  will also get the milk. We feed our    and  and  - all crops we grow on the farm. They also eat alot of  that is dried into hay.

Our main crops are  and  and . During the day they are out on  and during the  they sleep in a  on piles of .

We also grow alot of food for  like  and  and . Do you eat food grown in ? Remember to thank the  who grow food for !

HAPPY AG LITERACY WEEK IN VERMONT!

scout

SOMEDAY FARM / 3FARM

NEWS

(scout, tom, mar, main, sean, angeia, and usibj, mike and michalle)

WHO LIVES AT "3FARM" you ask?

- 3 Shells of bees - the hardest workers of all the critters!
- 11 Icelandic lambs (a heritage breed) And yes all the lambs wear horns.
- 3 blue faced Leicester sheep (2 ewes one ram).
- 2 Jersey heifers - which means they are not technically cows yet since they have not had calves yet! (Mama Critter is best at Someday Farm being milked twice a day)
- 450+ Alachua White Turkeys who are eating a pound of food/day/land. Yikes!
- 1000++ Blueback Phalarope - built for table fare our favorite (Lucky to to those who are released!)
- 2 Milking Short Horn Cows Did you know this breed used to be more prevalent than Holsteins? Holsteins are from our grandparents, in northern VT today.
- 4 people - the Fight Family but if you count Ebenezer SEEMS he has to be 5!

NO UNDERGROUND SCHOOL



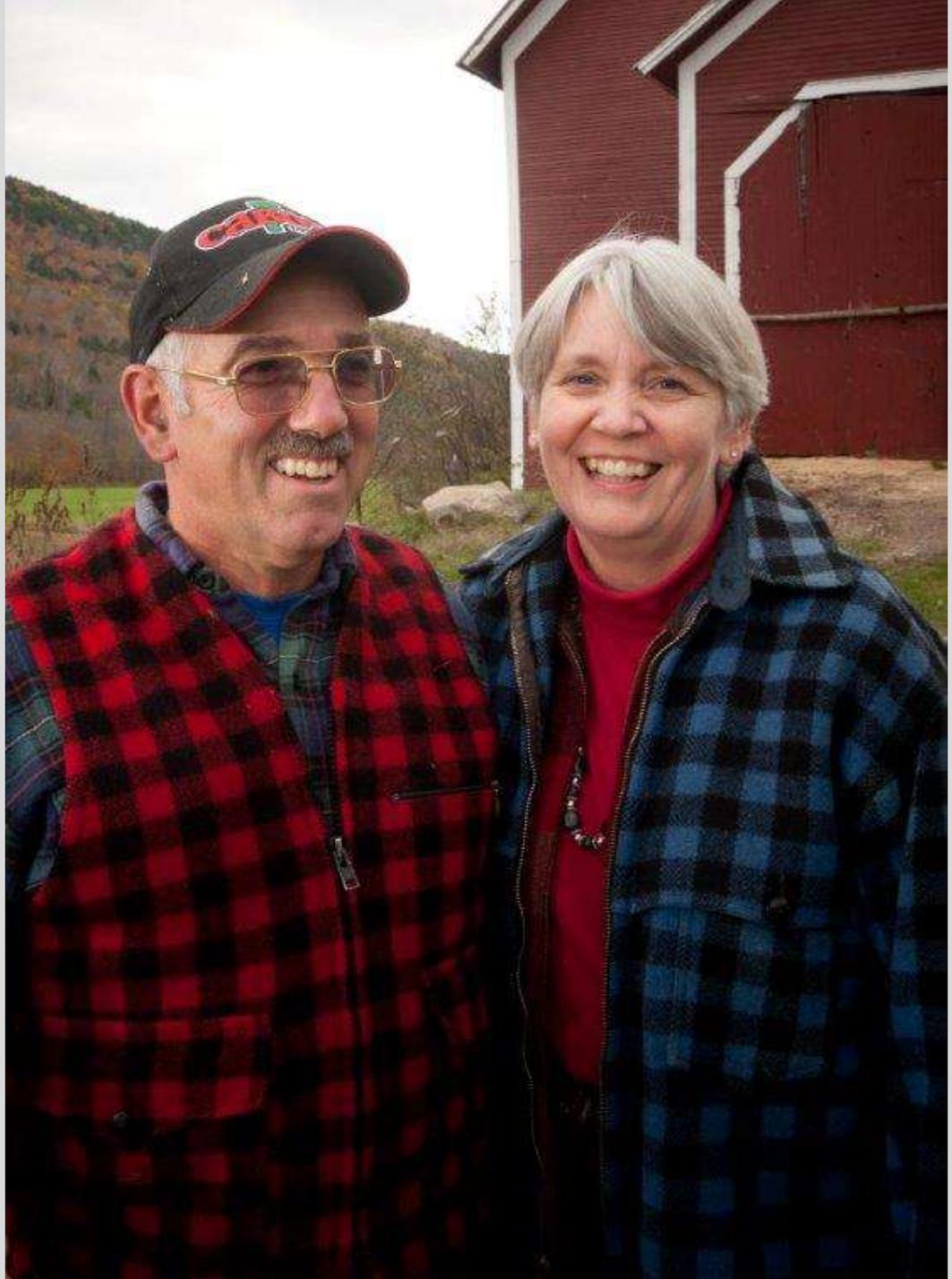
Fable Farm
Barnard, VT



Bread and Butter Farm
Shelburne, VT

Vera Simon-Nobes
Farm-Based Education Network Coordinator
Vermont Agritourism Collaborator
vera@farmbasededucation.org















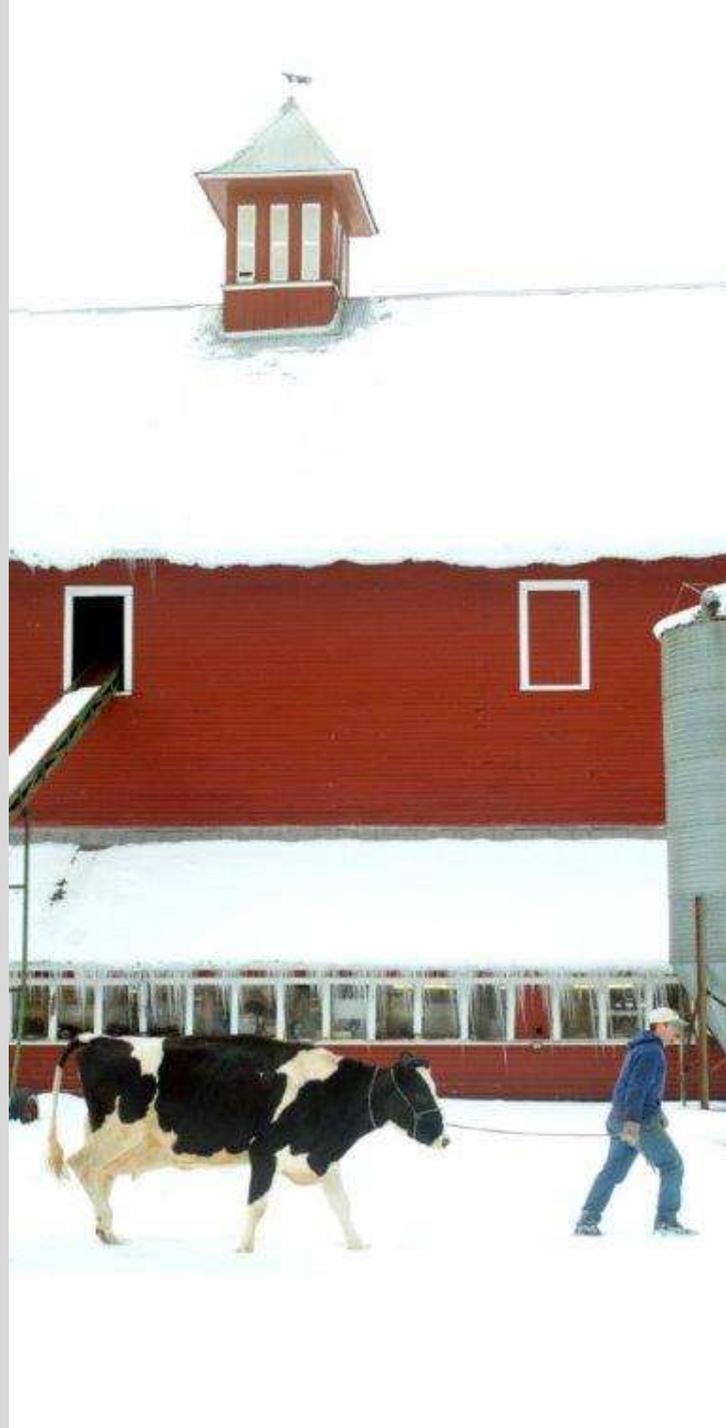








































Contacts and Resources

- www.uvm.edu/vtagritourism
- Lisa Chase, lisa.chase@uvm.edu,
802-257-7967
- Vera Simon-Nobes,
vsimonnobes@shelburnefarms.org,
802-985-0382