2022

Guide to Assistance

For Agricultural Producers of Vermont

A Comprehensive Guide to Assistance Opportunities for Agricultural Producers of Vermont

FRANKLIN COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Introduction

This Guide is intended to serve as a desktop and field reference to technical and financial assistance for agricultural operators and businesses within the State of Vermont.

Visit the website or contact information associated with each grant or program for the most up-to-date information.

If you are need of assistance in regards to any opportunity, such as help applying to a program or grant, please feel free to contact your local Natural Resources Conservation District; the Contacts list is at the end of this Guide.

View the interactive version of this Guide on the Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District website:

FranklinCountyNRCD.org/agproducersguide

Last updated: July 18, 2022

FRANKLIN COUNTY
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION DISTRICT
What is a Natural Resources Conservation District?

Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCDs) are non-regulatory entities that work with private landowners, farms, state agencies, federal agencies, and other partner organizations to promote and implement conservation programs. In some parts of the United States, Conservation Districts may also be referred to as Water Conservation Districts, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and Natural Resource Districts.

What services do Natural Resources Conservation Districts offer?

- Coordinate assistance from all available sources—public and private, local, state and federal—to develop locally-driven solutions to natural resources concerns. This can mean coordination with other organizations, communities, municipalities, homeowners, land owners, agricultural and forest producers, as well as businesses.

- Assist other organizations in program implementation.

- Coordinate plantings through outreach, funding, plant and volunteer procurement, installation, and maintenance.

- Refer community members to programs and opportunities, strengthening community connection.

- Coordinate and administer outreach and education events and provide assistance related to agricultural practices, water quality, invasive species, native species, lawn care, and landscaping.

- Assist agricultural producers with Nutrient Management Planning, water quality sampling, soil sampling, manure sampling, equipment rentals, and more. Check out the RAP Quiz.

- Some Conservation Districts offer annual plant and fish sales.

Check with your local Conservation District to see what programs and opportunities they offer!
# Table of Contents

## Engineering, Construction & Equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rural Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food & Markets (VAAFM)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development (ACCD)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Energy

**Efficiency Vermont**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rural Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table of Contents

Business Development, Research & Innovation

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
20 Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) (Develop, Coordinate and Expand Direct Producer-to-Consumer Markets)
21 Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) (Coordinate and Expand Local and Regional Food Business Enterprises)

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)
22 Farm to School Grant Program (Support for Farm to School Programs)

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
23 Beginning Farmer & Rancher Development (Programs to Sustain Beginning Farmers and Ranchers)
24 Small Business Innovation Research Program (Research Related to Scientific Problems and Opportunities in Agriculture)

Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)
25 Farmer Grant Program (On-Farm Research to Expand Farm Businesses) Requires Organizational Partner

Rural Development
26 Value-Added Producer Grant (Processing and Marketing of New, Value-Added Agricultural Products)

The University of Vermont (UVM) Extension
27 Farm Viability (Business, Cash Flow, Enterprise, Transition, and Transfer Plans as well as Clinics)
28 Northeast Direct Vegetable Benchmark (Financial Benchmarking for Produce Farm Owners)
29 Water Quality Business Analysis (Strategic Planning, Integrating Conservation, and Business Planning)

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM)
30 Community Supported Agriculture Grant
31 Farm First (Stress Support)
32 Farm to School and Early Childhood Grant
33 Farm to School Vision Grant
34 Local Food Market Development Grant
35 VT Specialty Crop Block Grant (Specialty Crops that Benefit Multiple Farms) Requires Organizational Partner
36 Trade Show Assistance Grant (Support for Out-of-State Trade Show Attendance)
37 Working Lands Enterprise Initiative (Business Development Grant)

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB)
14 Farm & Forest Viability Program (Business Coaching)
Dairy Business Support

38  Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC) General Information

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

39  Dairy Margin Coverage Program (Related to Fluid Milk Prices)

The University of Vermont (UVM) Extension

40  Dairy Business & Herd Management Technical Assistance  (Dairy-Specific Support)

Grazing

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM)

41  Pasture and Surface Water Fencing Program (Focusing on the Relationship between Pasture and Surface Water Management)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

15  Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) (Grazing Management Plans, Fencing, Lane ways, Crossings, Water Systems)

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)

42  Fund-A-Farmer Grant (Grazing Support to Improve Animal Welfare)

The University of Vermont (UVM) Extension

43  Grazing and Livestock Program (Technical Grazing Assistance)

Conflict Resolution

The Environmental Mediation Center (EMC)

44  Vermont Agricultural Mediation Program (VTAMP) (Mediation for Agricultural Disputes)
# Table of Contents

**Croplands & Conservation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 45   | Farm Service Agency (FSA)  
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)- General Enrollment (Reserving Certain Areas by Halting Production) |
| 46   | Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)- Continuous Enrollment |
| 47   | Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Agricultural Land Easement (ACEP-ALE) |
| 48   | Agricultural Conservation Easement Program - Wetland Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE) |
| 49   | Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA) (Risks and Natural Resource Concerns) |
| 50   | Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) (Large Programs to Develop Agricultural Innovation) |
| 51   | Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) (Conservation Planning)  
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) (Individual Farm Planning, Conservation Practices) |
| 52   | Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM)  
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) (Incentive-based Stream-side Conservation) |
| 53   | Farm Agronomic Practices Program (FAP) (Cropping & Grazing Assistance and Incentives) |
| 54   | Grassed Waterway & Filter Strip Program (GWFS) (Assistance to Reduce Erosion and Runoff) |
| 55   | Pay for Phosphorus Program (PFP) (Incentive Program for Phosphorus Reduction) |
| 56   | United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)  
Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (Planning, Design, and Supervision of Restoration Projects) |
| 57   | Vermont Housing and Conservation Board  
Farmland Conservation Program (Conservation Easement) |
| 58   | Regional Organizations  
Department of Environmental Conservation Clean Water Initiative Design and Implementation Block Grant (Engineering Design and Implementation for Water Quality Improvements) |
| 59   | Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District Signs of Conservation |
| 60   | Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) (Map of Projects) |
| 61   | Regional Organizations Tree Plantings (Native Trees and Shrubs) |
| 62   | Natural Resources Conservation Districts - Agricultural Support |
| 63   | Vermont Association of Conservation Districts (VACD) - Required Agricultural Practices (RAP) Quiz |
Awards, Microgrants, Scholarships & Stipends

64  Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA VT) Family Farmer of the Month
65  The Fruit Guys Small Farm Microgrant
66  Vermont Land Trust (VLT) Eric Rozendaal Memorial Award
67  Vermont Farm Women's Fund (VFWF) Scholarships and Stipends

Forestry & Maple

Audubon Vermont
68  Bird Friendly Maple Project

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation
69  Resources for Loggers (Training, Equipment, Support)
70  County Foresters (List of Vermont County Foresters)
71  Forest Legacy Program (Forestland Conservation)
72  Use Value Appraisal Program (Forestland Valuation)
73  Resources for Trail Stewardship (Public Trail Installation and Maintenance)
74  Vermont Invasives: Forest Pests (Species to be aware of, Reporting, Resources)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
15  Environmental Quality Incentives Program (Forest Management Plans, Forest Stand Improvement, Invasive Control)

The University of Vermont Extension
75  Forest Business Education & Planning Assistance (Individual Assistance, Clinics, and Roundtable)
76  Maple Resources

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)
56  Partners for Fish And Wildlife Program (Consultations, Stream Bank Stabilization, Invasive Species Control)

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB)
14  Farm & Forest Viability (Business Coaching)
# Table of Contents

## Organic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food &amp; Markets (VAAFM)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Certification Cost Share Program (Reimbursement for Certain Fees and Costs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Quality Incentives Program (Organic Transition Support)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microgrant for Research and Education (On-Farm Research)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants Program (On-Farm Research)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Natural Disaster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm Service Agency (FSA)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Conservation Program (Repair Damaged Farmlands)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (Assistance for Noninsured)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer Emergency Fund (Funds for Organic Farms)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Directories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directory</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm Service Agency (FSA) Directory</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCD) Directory</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Directory</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Organizations Listed in this Guide - Directory</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

07
Equipment Rental Directory

Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District, 59 Waterfront Plaza, Newport VT 05855; (802) 334-6090 x 7008
Service Area: Orleans County and neighboring region
Equipment & Services: No-Till Drill (Sunflower 9412 -Aerator (Aerway - 20 ft), Portable Truck Scales (Set of 6 GEC MD 500 portable wheel load truck scales), Soil Probes, Portable Skidder Bridge, Manure Sample Shipping Service, Soil Sampling Service.

Poultney-Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District, PO Box 209, Poultney VT 05764; (802) 558-6470
Service Area: Southern Addison, Rutland, and Bennington Counties.
Equipment: No-Till Drill (10ft), Aerator (8ft), Portable Truck Scales

UVM Extension Middlebury Office, 23 Pond Lane, Suite 300, Middlebury VT 05753; (802) 388-4969
Service Area: Addison County and neighboring regions
Equipment: No-Till Drills (10ft), Portable Truck Scales

UVM Extension Rutland, 271 North Main St, Rutland VT 05701; (802) 773-3349
Service Area: Rutland County
Equipment: Soil Probes

UVM Extension St. Albans Office, 278 So. Main Street, St. Albans, VT 05478; (802) 524-6503
Service Area: 75-mile radius of St. Albans, unless part of a larger project or special arrangement.
Equipment & Services: No-Till Drills (10ft, 12ft, 15ft), Manure Spreader (Tebbes), Subsoiler (Krause), Interseeder (15ft), Cover Crop Seeding Service, Interseeding Service, Reduced-till Corn Planting Service.

White River Natural Resources Conservation District, 28 Farmvu Drive, White River Junction, VT 05001 (802) 369-3167
Service Area: White River and Ottaquechee Conservation Districts
Equipment: Portable Truck Scales, Moisture Probes

Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, 617 Comstock Road, Suite 1, Berlin, VT 05602 AND 300 Interstate Corporate Center, Suite 200 Williston VT 05495; (802) 288-8155 Ext 104 (Williston) (802) 828-4493 (Berlin), or info@winooskinrcd.org
Service Area: Chittenden, Washington and Orange Counties
Equipment & Services: Aerator (11.25 ft), Soil Probes, Soil Sampling Service

There are additional NRCDs that do not offer equipment rentals, but may offer additional agricultural support and services.
Navigate to the full Directory through the Table of Contents
This program provides affordable financing to develop housing for year-round and migrant or seasonal domestic farm laborers. This program assists qualified applicants who cannot obtain commercial credit on terms that will allow them to charge rents that are affordable to low-income tenants.

Apply by November 1st

Loan term up with payback period up to 33 years @ fixed rate 1% for on-farm housing

Refer to notice of solicitation for applications (NOSA) in federal register

Who may live in the housing?

Domestic farm laborers, retired and / or disabled farm laborers. *Must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident*

What governs this program?

Off-Farm: 7 CFR 3560 Subpart L
On-Farm: 7 CFR 3560 Subpart M
Title V of the Housing Act of 1949

Laurie Warzinski, Rural Development Northeast Region Regional Director
MFHFODNortheast@usda.gov
https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/multifamily-housing-programs/farm-labor-housing-loans
The USDA Rural Development Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (MPPEP) provides grants to help eligible processors expand their capacity. USDA Rural Development designed the MPPEP to encourage competition and sustainable growth in the U.S. meat processing sector, and to help improve supply chain resiliency.

**April 11th, 2022**

**Ranking**

- Building new – or modernizing or expanding existing – processing facilities
- Developing, installing, or modernizing equipment and technology
- Ensuring compliance with packaging and labeling requirements
- Upholding occupational and other safety requirements
- Modifying facilities or equipment to protect food safety
- Paying for voluntary grading services on value-added processed products
- Offsetting costs associated with becoming an inspected facility
- Supporting workforce recruitment, training, and retention

**Eligibility**

- Sole proprietor businesses or other entities that engage – or want to engage – in meat and poultry processing

**Requirements**

The Applicant Must:

- Process – or plan to process – one or more species subject to the Federal Meat Inspection Act, or the Poultry Product Inspection Act
- Have – or plan to get – a Federal Grant of Inspection through USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service, a Grant of Inspection under the Cooperative Interstate Shipment Program, or a federal equivalent Tribal or state-based meat and poultry inspection program
- Comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and all other applicable state, local or Tribal laws

The Meat & Poultry Processing Expansion Program offers only an online ‘Ask a Question’ form. Please contact your local Natural Resources Conservation District for additional assistance. Navigate to the Directory via the Table of Contents.

"The Agricultural Engineering Section assists farmers with on-farm improvements designed to abate non-point source agricultural waste discharges."

**Technical Assistance**
- Apply Year-Round
- No Cost
- Apply when a water quality concern is identified, or when a permitting variance is needed

**EQIP-Assist**
- Apply Year-Round
- Offers additional cost-share on EQIP practices
- Apply after you have an approved EQIP contract in place

**Design & Construction**
- Apply Year-Round
- Cost-share reimbursement up to 90% for implementation
- Eligibility:
  - Farm must be required to meet RAPs
  - Design must meet NRCS Standards or designed and certified by an engineer licensed in VT + design is equivalent to federal performance standards and specifications
  - Must receive the grant prior to construction
  - Farmer must finance, then be reimbursed
  - Payment rates are determined by invoices
  - Applicant’s equipment and labor costs can be reimbursed

**Practices**
- Manure storage, composting stack pads, bedded pack, barnyard runoff collection, gutters, ditches, laneways, stream crossings, exclusion fencing, watering facilities, milk house waste collection and treatment, silage leachate collection

Apply Online
www.Agriculture.Vermont.gov/bmp

Jenn LaValley, VAAFM (802) 828-2431
jenn.lavalley@vermont.gov
Financial assistance is available for new or innovative equipment that will aid in the reduction of surface runoff of agricultural wastes to state waters, improve water quality of state waters, reduce odors from manure application, separate phosphorus from manure, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce costs to farmers when they apply manure.

Cost-share reimbursement up to 90% Does not include shipping freight/travel

Apply by November 1st

Eligibility:
- Farms required to meet RAPs, custom operators, businesses, non-profit organizations, phosphorus extraction equipment providers.
- Limit 1 application per individual per funding opportunity. If you applied previously and were not awarded, you are eligible to apply.
- Recipient must be able to finance equipment as program is reimbursement based.
- Ineligible Equipment: Frac tanks, manure tankers, manure pumps, solid manure spreaders or broadcast spreaders, tractors, subsoilers, field tillage equipment including vertical tillage
- Silage baler and wrapper equipment is eligible only as an alternative to leachate management improvement as a least cost alternative and will require VAAFM engineer site visit to confirm eligibility.

Application should include:
- Quotes: 1 to 2 for requested equipment that detail equipment provider, make, model, cost, and installation cost. Examples of equipment include conservation tillage equipment, no-till grain drills, roller crimpers, precision agriculture equipment such as flow meters and data loggers, manure injectors, dragline systems, phosphorus removal equipment/technology. *Certain equipment has monetary caps.

- Acreage: Committed usage of equipment for next 5 years. This goal must be met to funding must be repaid. A major aspect in ranking considers the scale of the equipment’s conservation value on an acreage basis. The recipient should be committed to reporting the use of equipment at intended scale annually.

- Listed Service Provider: Establish a Provider to assist in application, such as a Conservation District or UVM Extension.

- Financial Backing: Ensure backing from financial institution or matching funds.

- Letter: An unbiased letter of support.

Apply Online www.Agriculture.Vermont.gov/ceap

AGR.WaterQuality@Vermont.gov (802) 622-4098
Established in 1992, the State-funded Barn Preservation Grant program helps individuals, municipalities, and non-profit organizations to rehabilitate the historic agricultural buildings that are a symbol of Vermont’s rural landscape. This is the oldest state-funded agricultural-based grant program in the United States. Since its inception, the program has provided over $3 million towards the preservation of over 360 historic barns and agricultural outbuildings around the state. Preservation of these buildings not only protects Vermont’s agricultural and architectural legacies, but it also generates jobs, supports independent businesses, increase civic participation, and bolsters a community’s sense of place while enhancing the experience of visitors.

### Eligibility
- Individuals, businesses, and non-profit organizations may apply.
- Property must be listed or determined eligible for listed in the State Register of Historic Places.
- Project cannot start until grant has been awarded.
- Barn does not have to be in use.
- Practices: Historic barn preservation, repairs and / or enhancement.
- Ineligible: Improvements, new construction, electrical, plumbing, heating, planning projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Annoucement in August</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reimbursement up to $15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Application to: <a href="mailto:accd.barngrants@vermont.gov">accd.barngrants@vermont.gov</a> or mail to address on application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ranking
- Feature Preservation: Aim of preserving historic, character-defining features.
- Urgency of Need: Degree of failing of structural components; degree of damage or deterioration.
- Corrective Measures: Necessity of repairs to prevent structural failure.
- Enhancement and Restoration: Replacement or enhancement of features critical to its historical or architectural significance.
- Public Benefit: Public access or visibility, community symbolism or landmark representation.
- Planned Use: Planned and committed maintenance and use of structure.
- Location: Geographic distribution may be used in the event of a tie.
- Application Quality: Points for clarity and applications exceeding minimum requirements.

---

Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development
Caitlin Corkins, Tax Credits and Grants Coordinator
1 National Life Dr.
Davis Bldg, 6th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501
(802) 828-3047
office.accd@vermont.gov

---

FRANKLIN COUNTY
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION DISTRICT
RETURN TO CONTENTS
Established in 1987, the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board remains the forerunner in the nation in pioneering a comprehensive approach to affordable housing and community development linked with land conservation and historic preservation. The Board’s enabling statute is: The Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund Act, 10 V.S.A. Chapter 15, §§302-325a. Programs include Housing, Conservation, Vermont Farm & Forest Viability, Healthy & Lead-Safe Homes, VHCB AmeriCorps, Rural Economic Development Initiative, Leadership, Farmland Access, Water Quality, Energy Efficiency and Food Access and Affordable Housing.

Farm Business Coaching

The Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program offers business planning, technical assistance, and grant opportunities to Vermont's commercial-scale farm, food, and forest products enterprises to help them achieve long-term success. Businesses enrolled in the Viability Program can work with a professional advisor on a variety of topics, including:

- Business Planning
- Enterprise & Feasibility Analysis
- Management Coaching
- Financial Record-Keeping & Cash Flow Management
- Marketing & Sales
- Human Resources Management
- Retirement & Ownership Succession Planning
- Planning Capital Improvements & Accessing Financing
- Land Access & Conservation Assistance

Eligibility: Must be based in Vermont, have at least 2 years managing this or another related business, and the business must be commercial scale with a gross minimum of $15k annually. Viability Program Services are delivered by professional business advisors at service provider organizations located throughout the state. They include the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE), Intervale Center, Land for Good, Northeast Organic Farming association (NOFA-VT), UVM Extension, and others.

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board
58 East Street, Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 828-3250
info@vhcb.org
Calley Hastings
calley@vhcb.org
https://vhcb.org/

View Funding Opportunities for Water-Quality Related Projects at
www.vhcb.org/wqg

Includes Maple Producers
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Through EQIP, NRCS provides agricultural producers and non-industrial forest managers potential financial resources and one-on-one help to plan and implement improvements, or what NRCS calls conservation practices. Using these practices can lead to cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat, all while improving agricultural operations. Through EQIP, you can voluntarily implement conservation practices, and NRCS can assist with implementation of these practices with you.

**Process**

Apply at your local Natural Resources Conservation Service Field Office. There is a list of these offices toward the end of this guide. After Applying, you will be assigned a Planner, where they will look at natural resource conditions, problems, and concerns, as well as opportunities. The Planner will determine the objectives of the client, and perform an inventory and analysis of resources. Next, the Planner will formulate and evaluate alternatives to achieve client objectives and solve natural resource concerns, implementing a variety of economic and technical strategies. The Client selects their preferred alternatives. The Client's application is ranked and a contract may be offered. The client implements the plan. The planner provides detailed information related to design, layout, inspection, and certification. The plan's effectiveness is evaluated and adjustments are made as needed.

**Eligibility**

**Land:** Cropland, hayland, rangeland, pastureland, non-industrial private forestland, other farm and ranch lands, environmentally sensitive areas

**Applicants:** Agricultural producers, owners of non-industrial private forestland, Indian Tribes, those with an interest in agriculture or forestry operations, and water management entities

**Other Requirements:** Records should be current for proposed land and indicate the applicant controls the eligible land. The applicant should meet AGI and payment limitation provisions. The land should be in compliance with wetland requirements.

**FAQ**

- Multiple NRCS conservation initiatives are incorporated into the NRCS General EQIP Program
- Historically underserved producers are eligible for advanced payments
- Priority practices and their corresponding payments are determined on an annual basis

**Example Practices**

Nutrient management, waste storage facility, heavy use area protection, livestock pipeline, pumping plant, stream crossing, fence, access roads, diversion, forest stand improvement are some common examples

Ready to Apply? Contact your local NRCS Office. Field Offices can be Found from the Table of Contents, or at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/vt/contact/local/
Efficiency Vermont
Agricultural Loan

Secure a flexible, low-interest loan so you can make cost-effective energy improvements to your agricultural operation. Get access to affordable, low-interest loans with $0 down, so you can improve the energy efficiency of your farm or ag operation, boost production, and lower your operating expenses. We perform a cash-flow analysis of your energy efficiency project, then work with VSECU to structure your loan. Contact us with questions or to get started on our streamlined application process.

Projects

"Give us a call to talk about your energy efficiency project—whether it’s upgrading your barn lighting, buying a reverse osmosis system to boost syrup production, or adding variable frequency drives to your farm’s milking equipment. After we talk, we’ll run a cost-savings analysis to ensure that the proposed improvements strengthen your bottom line. If you decide to move forward, we can guide you through the application process and help you secure financing with terms that work for you."

- Experienced, unbiased advice on cost-effective improvements
- Loan terms structured to meet your cash-flow needs
- Rebates available for qualifying agricultural products

Eligibility

- Financing must be for energy efficiency improvements
- Agricultural operations and farms must be located in Vermont
- Must be registered and in good standing with the Vermont Office of the Secretary of State

Efficiency Vermont
20 Winooski Falls Way 5th Floor,
Winooski, VT 05404
Monday to Friday
8 AM to 5 PM
(888) 921-5990
https://www.efficiencyvermont.com
The USDA Rural Development Rural Energy for America (REAP) program provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements. Agricultural producers may also apply for new energy efficient equipment and new system loans for agricultural production and processing.

### Example Projects

- Biomass (for example: biodiesel and ethanol, anaerobic digesters, and solid fuels)
- Geothermal for electric generation or direct use.
- Hydropower below 30 megawatts
- Hydrogen
- Small and large wind generation
- Small and large solar generation
- Ocean (tidal, current, thermal) generation

Funds may also be used for the purchase, installation and construction of energy efficiency improvements, such as:

- High efficiency heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVAC)
- Insulation
- Lighting
- Cooling or refrigeration units.
- Doors and windows
- Electric, solar or gravity pumps for sprinkler pivots
- Switching from a diesel to electric irrigation motor.
- Replacement of energy-inefficient equipment

### Terms

**Renewable Energy System Grants:**
$2,500 minimum. $500,000 maximum.

**Energy Efficiency Grants:**
$1,500 minimum. $250,000 maximum.

Are there additional requirements?
Applicants must provide at least 75 percent of the project cost if applying for a grant only.

Applicants must provide at least 25 percent of the project cost if applying for loan.

All projects must have technical merit and utilize commercially available technology.

Energy efficiency projects require an energy audit or assessment.

Ken Yearman, Vermont Rural Development Energy Coordinator
Kenneth.Yearman@usda.gov (802) 828-6070
The Vermont Diesel Emissions Reduction Financial Assistance Program was developed to provide technical assistance and incentive funding for projects that reduce diesel emissions from engines, vehicles, and equipment in Vermont with the goals of reducing public exposure to emissions from diesel-powered engines and the associated risks to public health and the environment. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) periodically solicits applications from potential project partners for projects that achieve significant reductions in diesel emissions from diesel powered engines, vehicles and equipment operating in Vermont.

What vehicles and equipment are eligible?
Diesel-powered engines, vehicles, and equipment currently operating in Vermont. These may include: buses, locomotives, heavy-duty trucks, defined as Class 5 through Class 8; Class 5 (16,001 - 19,500 lbs gross vehicle weight rating [GVWR]); Class 6 (19,501 - 26,000 lbs GVWR); Class 7 (26,001 - 33,000 lbs GVWR); Class 8a (33,001 - 60,000 lbs GVWR); Class 8b (60,001 lbs GVWR and over), marine engines, non-road engines, equipment or vehicles used in construction, handling of cargo, agriculture, mining or energy production (stationary generators and pumps).

What projects are eligible?
Certified vehicle or equipment replacement with all-electric (battery, grid, or fuel cell), alternative fuel, or newer diesel options; certified engine replacements; clean alternative fuel conversions; verified emission control technologies such as exhaust controls, cleaner fuels, and engine upgrades; verified idle reduction technologies such as auxiliary power units, fuel operated heaters, shore connection systems, transport refrigeration unit (TRU) electrified parking spaces, and truck stop electrification technologies; and/or verified aerodynamic technologies and low rolling resistance tires.

Who is eligible to apply?
All interested local, State and regional agencies or departments as well as businesses, institutions, and nonprofit organizations operating in the State of Vermont.

What are the qualifications?
There are a number of eligibility and cost share requirements. Cost share requirements vary depending on the project. For example, the program can fund up to 45% of the cost of replacing a heavy-duty diesel truck with a new, zero tailpipe exhaust vehicle (grid, battery, or fuel cell), while up to 25% of the cost of the truck’s replacement with a newer, cleaner diesel, hybrid, or alternative fuel vehicle can be funded under this program. For more information, please review the DERA State Program Guide.

Please relay all questions about potential projects or eligibility requirements to Leigh Martin at (802) 261-0713 or leigh.martin@vermont.gov.
www.dev.vermont.gov
The Vermont Economic Development Authority’s Agricultural Energy Loan Program (AELP), created through Act 87 in 2013, is administered by the Vermont Agricultural Credit Corporation (VACC). The AELP provides loans to agriculture- or forest product-based companies for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. The maximum loan amount is $2,000,000, and the percent of the project funded by VACC is negotiable. Loans are provided at variable rates, although fixed rates may be available in some circumstances; current rates can be found here. Loan terms are determined on a case-by-case basis. Fees associated with CELP loans include (1) a 1% commitment fee ($5,000 maximum), (2) a $30 credit report fee, (3) if applicable, appraisal fee, document recording fee, flood certificate fee, and other out-of-pocket fees.

### Eligibility

- A Vermont resident who is engaged in agriculture or forest products businesses within the state and will help expand the agricultural economy of the state
- An operator or proposed operator of an agricultural or forest-based products business
- A current or prospective owner/prospective purchaser or lessee of agricultural land in the state or of depreciable machinery, equipment and/or livestock in Vermont.

### Contact

Vermont Economic Development Authority
58 East State Street, Suite 5
Montpelier, Vermont 05602

Phone: (802) 828-5627
Fax: (802) 828-5474
Email: info@veda.org

https://www.veda.org
The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) funds projects that develop, coordinate and expand direct producer-to-consumer markets to help increase access to and availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products by developing, coordinating, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, online sales or other direct producer-to-consumer (including direct producer-to-retail, direct producer-to-restaurant and direct producer-to-institutional marketing) market opportunities.

- **Check Website for 2023**: $50,000 - $500,000
- 25% cash or in-kind match

Apply at [https://www.grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)

**Projects**

- Long-term organizational capacity in the development, coordination, and expansion of direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. Projects can include but are not limited to:
  - market analysis and strategic planning
  - producer or market manager training and education
  - online sales operation or expansion
  - producer and consumer outreach

**Eligibility**

- Agricultural businesses and cooperatives, producer networks or associations, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) networks and associations, food councils, local governments, nonprofit and public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers’ market authorities, and tribal governments.

**Contact**

FMLFPPgrants@usda.gov

[https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp](https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/fmpp)
The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) funds projects that develop, coordinate, and expand local and regional food business enterprises that engage as intermediaries in indirect producer-to-consumer marketing to help increase access to, and availability of, locally and regionally produced agricultural products. Grants can be used for the planning stages of establishing or expanding a local and regional food business enterprise, or to improve or expand a food business that supports locally and regionally produced agricultural products and food system infrastructure by performing feasibility studies, market research, training and technical assistance for the business enterprise and/or for producers working with the business enterprise. A 25% match is required.

### Assistance
- Announcement in spring
- Minimum $25,000
  - Maximum $500,000
  - 25% match required

### Eligibility:
Must be a domestic entity owned, operated, and located in the United States.
Open to:
- Agricultural businesses and cooperatives
- CSA networks and associations
- Food councils
- Economic development corporations
- Local governments
- Nonprofit and public benefit corporations
- Producer networks or associations
- Regional farmers’ market authorities
- Tribal governments

### Practices
Feasibility studies, market research, training and technical assistance for enterprise of producers.

### Contact
https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp
FMLFPgrants@usda.gov
The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) (42 USC 1751 et seq.) establishes a Farm to School Program in order to assist eligible entities, through grants and technical assistance, in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in USDA Food and Nutrition (FNS) Child Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Each year $5 million is provided to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support grants, technical assistance, and other activities related to USDA’s Farm to School Program. Additional funding for the Farm to School Program was made available from the FY 2018 through FY 2021 agriculture appropriations acts and, as a result, USDA expects to award approximately $12 million under this solicitation. The USDA Farm to School Grant Program is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Office of Community Food Systems (OCFS).

### Example Projects
- Make local food products available on the menu of the eligible school
- Serve a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches
- Incorporate experiential nutrition education activities in curriculum planning that encourage the participation of school children in farm and garden-based agricultural education activities
- Demonstrate collaboration between eligible schools, nongovernmental and community-based organizations, agricultural producer groups, and other community partners
- Include adequate and participatory evaluation plans
- Demonstrate the potential for long-term program sustainability
- Meet any other criteria that the Secretary determines appropriate

### Practices
- Training;
- Supporting operations;
- Planning;
- Purchasing equipment;
- Developing school gardens;
- Developing partnerships; and
- Implementing farm to school programs

### Contact
https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/farm-school-grant-program
FarmToSchool@usda.gov
Beginning farmer education for adult and young audiences in the United States can generally be traced back to the advent of the 1862 and 1890 Morrill Land-Grant Acts. But, for the first time, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Pub. L. No. 110-234, Section 7410) appropriated $75 million for FY 2009 to FY 2012 to develop and offer education, training, outreach and mentoring programs to enhance the sustainability of the next generation of farmers. The anticipated amount available for Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) through the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture grants is approximately $19 million in FY 2022.

Projects

**Simplified Standard Grants:** Simplified Standard Grants are intended to assist organizations:

1. To sustain and enhance important collaborations and innovative activities relevant to beginning farmer and rancher programs
2. To initiate and develop beginning farmer and rancher project ideas to lead to future program success or success in obtaining other grants for beginning farmer and rancher education

**Educational Team Projects:** The long-term goals of Educational Team (ET) projects are to identify gaps in beginning farmer and rancher training by evaluating all existing programs, and to develop and conduct train-the-trainer projects to address these gaps.

**Curriculum and Training Clearinghouse:** The purpose of the Curriculum and Training Clearinghouse is to serve as an online platform and library for curricula, training materials, technical assistance materials and any other appropriate information for beginning farmers and ranchers. The Online Clearinghouse assists NIFA leadership in developing and providing an outcome-based results verification system appropriate for use by the BFRDP, provides archival support for all materials and curricula on beginning farmer education and training, organizes appropriate meetings (both in-person and electronic, i.e., webinars, conference calls) under the direction of NIFA leadership and collaborates with BFRDP grantees as needed.

Contact


Denis Ebodaghe, National Program Leader
denis.ebodaghe@usda.gov
805 Pennsylvania Avenue Kansas City, MO 64105
(202) 445-5460
The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) offers competitively awarded grants to qualified small businesses to support high quality research related to important scientific problems and opportunities in agriculture that could lead to significant public benefits. The program stimulates technological innovations in the private sector and strengthens the role of federal research and development in support of small businesses. The SBIR program also fosters and encourages participation by women-owned and socially or economically disadvantaged small businesses.

PHASE I announced July
PHASE II announced December

Projects

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Topics
- Forests and Related Resources
- Plant Production and Protection - Biology
- Animal Production and Protection
- Conservation of Natural Resources
- Food Science and Nutrition
- Rural Development
- Aquaculture
- Biofuels and Biobased Products
- Small and Mid-Size Farms
- Plant Production and Protection -- Engineering

Participation by university faculty or government scientists in SBIR projects is strongly encouraged. Faculty or scientists can serve as consultants or can receive a subcontract (in both cases, payment is limited to no more than 1/3 of the Phase I award or 1/2 of the Phase II award) and continue to work full time at their institution. University faculty or government scientists can also reduce employment at their institution to 49% for the duration of the grant.

Phase I $100,000
Phase II $600,000

Must qualify as a small business concern for research and development (R&D) purposes at the time of award.

In addition, the primary employment of the project director (PD) must be with the small business concern at the time of award and during the conduct of the proposed research.

Contact

Melinda Coffman, Program Coordinator
Melinda.Coffman@usda.gov

UVM Extension Contact:
https://www.uvm.edu/extension/contact-us-form
(802) 656-2990
Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research & Innovation (SARE) Farmer Grant Program

The Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program offers grants and education to farmers, educators, service providers, researchers and others to address key issues affecting the sustainability of agriculture throughout our region. The program serves Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C. The program is administered by Northeast SARE’s host institution, the University of Vermont.

Projects

Farmer Grants are for commercial producers who have an innovative idea they want to test using a field trial, on-farm demonstration, marketing initiative, or other technique.

Farmer Grant projects should seek new knowledge other farmers can use and address questions that are directly linked to improved profits, better stewardship, and stronger rural communities.

A technical advisor—often an extension agent, crop consultant, other service professional or farmer with advanced expertise—must also be involved.

Projects should seek results other farmers can use, and all projects must have the potential to add to our knowledge about effective sustainable practices.

Average projects last 1 to 3 years

Farmer Grant recipients are expected to collect and manage reliable data about their project and convey this information clearly through annual and final reports.

Funds can be used to conduct the research project including paying farmers for their time, for project-related materials, for project costs like consulting fees or soil tests, and any communications or outreach expenses associated with telling others about project results.

This grant program is not meant to help start or expand farm businesses. Farmer Grant funds cannot be used for capital costs associated with building a barn, greenhouse, or other major farm fixture, nor can funds be used to start a farm, purchase durable equipment like tractors or computers, or for any utility, telephone, or other costs that would be there in the absence of the project.

Contact

https://northeast.sare.org/grants/get-a-grant/farmer-grant-program/
University of Vermont
140 Kennedy Drive, Suite 202
South Burlington, VT 05403
(802) 651-8335

Announcement
Summer 2022
Up to $30,000

Includes Maple Producers
The USDA Rural Development Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and marketing of new products. The goals of this program are to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities, and increase producer income.

**Eligibility**

Independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures, as defined in the program regulation, are eligible to apply for this program.

Grant and matching funds can be used for planning activities or for working capital expenses related to producing and marketing a value-added agricultural product. Examples of planning activities include conducting feasibility studies and developing business plans for processing and marketing the proposed value-added product. Examples of working capital expenses include:

- Processing costs
- Marketing and advertising expenses
- Some inventory and salary expenses

**Contacts**


Elijah Massey
Business Programs Specialist
87 State Street, Suite 324 (05602)
P.O. Box 249
Montpelier, VT 05601
Phone: (802) 828-6081
Fax: (855) 794-3680
Elijah.Massey@usda.gov
Serving Vermont and New Hampshire

**Assistance**

2022 Applications were due in May and offered:
Planning Grants:
$75,000

Working Capital Grants:
$250,000 with match required. Please refer to the website for 2023 updates
Our Farm Viability program provides farm owners with business education resources, skills development, and one-on-one planning services.

### One-On-One Business Planning

Get help from a business provider for a variety of business models, including:

- **Full Business Plan:** Develop a comprehensive business plan that covers all aspects of the business for 1-3 years. Includes short-and long-term goals, marketing plans, management plans, risk analysis and financial statements.

- **Cash Flow Plan:** Develop budgets and update the financial statements needed to make key decisions or apply for financing.

- **Enterprise Analysis Plan:** Single-out and analyze one enterprise within your business or test the feasibility of a new idea.

- **Transition Plan:** Develop a plan to phase out of one ag product and begin or expand production of another. Could include enterprise analysis, goal setting, cash flow analysis, etc.

- **Transfer Plan:** Planning focused on the unique relational, tax, and legal considerations of transferring ownership and management of the farm.

*Farms must meet VHCB eligibility to participate, meaning the participant is a Vermont resident, has 3 years of experience working in and managing farm operations and the farm business generated at least $15,000 of gross sales in the previous year.*

### Pre-Viability One-on-One Business Planning

For individuals not meeting the experience and income requirements outlines above, services are still available, including:

- Budget assistance and preparation
- Business entity guidance
- Help navigating legal, technical and regulatory requirements
- Goal setting and financial planning

### Business Clinics

Short, one-on-one meetings planned for a specific purpose such as a check-up to review progress with a business plan, a brief cash flow analysis or budget review, preparation for a loan application, or a job-level cost analysis. Find out more & register at: [www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/agbizcoaching](http://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/agbizcoaching)

### Contact

Betsy Miller, Farm Business Educator; Farm Viability Program Manager 1-800-287-1552 ext 252 Betsy.Miller@uvm.edu
UVM Extension has partnered with the University of New Hampshire Extension and four additional Northeast states to pilot a new financial benchmarking program for produce farm owners that direct market their crops. The project provides financial statement preparation and financial analysis assistance to eligible farm owners.

Overview

This project is geared toward the owners of farm businesses that rely on the farm for a significant portion of owner household income. In the first year participants will meet three to four times with a business educator to organize accounting records, establish required record keeping systems and integrate farm accounting records with the Finpack® farm financial software program. Participants and educators will meet one to three times in the second year to compile a second round of financial statements and discuss the financial planning goals for the business.

Eligibility

- Primarily engaged in vegetable and/or fruit production
- Annual gross sales of $150,000 or higher
- Over half of sales or crop volume is sold through direct market channels—farm retail, CSA, online sales, farmers markets and direct wholesale buyers where farm self-delivers (restaurant, grocers, caterers)

Sign Up

Fill out the online form at: https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Agriculture/agbusiness/NE-Veg-Benchmark-Program-Info-Sheet.pdf

or send a letter of interest including your name, business name, email, phone, postal address and street address (if different) and years in business to:

UVM Extension
Attn: NE Direct Benchmark Project
327 US Route 302, Berlin, VT 05651

or email to Mark Cannella
Mark.Cannella@uvm.edu
(802) 476-2003
UVM Extension farm business educators are available to work with dairy and livestock farm owners to assess and plan for business changes to meet water quality goals. Farm owners can work one-on-one with a business educator to evaluate the feasibility and impact of changes facing the farm and business.

**Strategic Planning**
- Analysis of current business cash flow and budget
- Infrastructure improvements
- Farm transfer or exit planning

**Integrating Conservation and Business Planning**
- Assessing the adoption of new practices and new investments
- Coordination of water quality project advisors
- Grant and loan application guidance
- Making the necessary referrals to other in-depth business planning resources

**Sign Up**
View the Online Form: https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Agriculture/agbusiness/Water-Quality-Program-Info-Sheet.pdf

Or send a letter of interest describing your goals for joining the program. Please include: Owner Name, Name of Business, Phone, E-Mail, Address, Mailing Address, Acres Owned, Acres Rented

Mail to:
UVM Extension
Attn: Water Quality Business Analysis
278 South Main Street, Suite 2
St. Albans, VT 05478-1866

E-Mail to:
Tony.Kitsos@uvm.edu

Tony Kitsos (802) 476-2003
The goal of this competitive grant program is to help early childhood providers and after-school programs incorporate more local food into their operations. Successful applicants will be awarded a grant to subsidize 80 percent of the cost of a community supported agriculture (CSA) share, or farm share, from the Vermont farm of their choice. Grants of up to $1,000 are available. As a reimbursement grant, successful applicants will be required to purchase their CSA or farm share(s) prior to receiving their grant funds.

Eligibility

Previous CSA Grant recipients should note that the majority of funds for the 2022 round will be prioritized for applicants who did not receive this grant in the previous year. The following entities are eligible to apply for this competitive grant:

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

Applications will open in January of 2023

Trevor Lowell, Farm to Institution Program Manager, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets
116 State St., Montpelier Vermont 05602-2901
(802) 585-9186 (Call or Text)
https://agriculture.vermont.gov/businessdevelopment/farm-school-early-childhood-and-institutions/community-supported-agriculture
We are a public, not-for-profit program jointly sponsored by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture and the Vermont Agency of Human Services' Invest EAP Centers for Wellbeing. Our staff include friendly and caring licensed counselors and an agricultural resource navigator, all with an interest or experience in agriculture. We can assist you remotely through videoconferencing and in person -- oftentimes right at your farm.

What is Farm First?

Farm First provides confidential help with any personal or work-related issue. We know that if left unaddressed, stress correlates with chronic health, safety, family and business problems. Consulting with a Farm First counselor or resource specialist, located statewide, can help you resolve problems before they mushroom into debilitating situations. Farm First is here to provide you, your family and your operation with the resources, professional and personal support to address a wide range of issues, including labor and management issues, financial concerns, alcohol or drug problems, injury, illness or adaptive equipment needs, legal issues, family stress, depression and much more.

Eligibility

Vermont farm owner, or farm-based family member of owner, grossing a minimum of $10,000. per year from agriculture. Farmers working with a disability or injury are also eligible.

With a single phone call, you can reach Farm First's fully licensed, agriculturally sensitive resource specialists and counselors. We will discuss with you, confidentially and at no cost, the best method to address and resolve your concerns.

Call: (802) 318-5538 during daytime work hours
Call: 877-493-6216 outside of daytime work hours
Email: Karen Crowley at karenc@farmfirst.org
www.FarmFirst.org
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM) Farm to School and Early Childhood Grant

The purpose of this grant is to help schools and early childhood education (ECE) organizations develop programs that will 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.

Schools and ECE providers are best able to achieve these goals when they take a holistic approach and incorporate the 3 C’s of Farm to School: Cafeteria (food program), Classroom, and Community. Together, the 3 C’s support healthy children, healthy agriculture, and healthy communities.

This is a competitive grant program that is offered annually. The program opens for applications in the fall.

Eligibility

The following entities are eligible to apply:

- Vermont registered or licensed early child care providers, or a consortium of early care providers
- Independent schools participating in any federal nutrition programs
- Individual public schools
- Supervisory unions or educational districts on behalf of a public school or consortium of schools

Contact

Trevor Lowell, Farm to Institution Program Manager, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets
116 State St., Montpelier Vermont 05602-2901
(802) 585-9186 (Call or Text)
https://agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/childnutrition
Farm to school is a broad term. It describes a variety of efforts aimed at educating and engaging children and young adults on the connections that exist between agriculture, nutrition, community and health. This competitive funding opportunity is designed to support projects that engage youth in exploring those connections. We are seeking proposals that address specific challenges related to the interconnections between agriculture, nutrition, community and health.

This is a two-year grant with a maximum award of $16,000. Successful applicants will be required to provide a match equal to twenty-five percent of the total grant award. Matching funds can be in the form of cash, in-kind services or a combination of both. Cash match is not a requirement, but proposals that leverage additional funding will receive preference over those that meet the match requirement through in-kind services alone.

Applicants will be required, through qualitative and/or quantitative evidence, to identify a farm to school related challenge impacting their community. Applicants will then need to demonstrate how their proposal seeks to address that challenge. Proposals must center youth in their scope. Strong proposals will: Clearly articulate the problem they seek to address, engage multiple community stakeholders, demonstrate a high likelihood of success, demonstrate an ability for the project to be easily scaled and/or replicated, and demonstrate the likelihood of continued impact beyond the grant period.

Eligibility

Vermont schools, licensed and/or registered childcare providers and licensed after-school programs are eligible to apply for this grant. Both individual organizations, as well as consortiums are eligible to apply. Non-profits or community organizations that conduct programming in Vermont are also eligible, but must apply as a co-applicant with an eligible school, childcare, or after-school program.

Contact

Trevor Lowell, Farm to Institution Program Manager, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets
116 State St., Montpelier Vermont 05602-2901
(802) 585-9186 (Call or Text)
https://agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/childnutrition
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM)
Local Food Market Development Grant

The purpose of this grant is to foster Vermont producers’ access to wholesale markets and to increase the quantity of local food available in Vermont institutions and other Vermont wholesale markets by addressing barriers in the supply chain. This program encourages local food wholesale market development opportunities with an institutional focus across the state from Vermont farmers, producer groups, and value-chain facilitators. Proposed projects must improve quality, efficiency, or food safety; address distribution challenges; or mitigate the financial risks associated with scaling up to meet new market demands.

Proposals addressing market access in Vermont institutions, defined as colleges and universities, early childcare and pre-k-12 schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and correctional facilities, and wholesale market access, including grocery stores, independent retail, and food co-ops, will be considered. Grants will be distributed through a competitive application review process to agricultural producers, producer groups, and value-chain facilitators. To qualify for funding consideration, applicants must either be a Vermont producer or producer group in pursuit of institutional or in-state wholesale market development, or a value-chain facilitator that will directly support Vermont producers’ access to institutional or wholesale market expansion in Vermont.

Grants ranging from $2,000-$15,000 will be targeted towards

- Infrastructure Developments: On-farm capital improvements, equipment purchases
- Technology: Accounting, tracking, and/or sales software, website, or app development
- Market Access and Development: innovative solutions to logistics and/or distribution

Applications for 2022 are closed, and may re-open in Spring of 2023

Contact
Trevor Lowell, Farm to Institution Program Manager, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets
116 State St., Montpelier Vermont 05602-2901
(802) 585-9186 (Call or Text)
https://agriculture.vermont.gov/local-food-market-development-grants
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM) Vermont Specialty Crop Block Grant

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA AMS) awards Specialty Crop Block Grants to the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories. In Vermont, the Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM) administers these funds to enhance the competitiveness of Vermont and regionally grown specialty crops. Specialty crops are defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, horticulture crops (including honey, hops, maple syrup and mushrooms), and nursery crops (including Christmas trees and floriculture).

**Assistance**
- Deadline January - February
- Check website for 2023
- No minimum or maximum, the average is between $7,000 and $50,000

**Practices**
- On-farm research (in coordination with university/research staff)
- Establishing or strengthening producer collaboration
- Addressing challenges facing multiple producers
- Projects must make measurable improvements in several specialty crop businesses
- Projects cannot help farmers improve their own business

**Eligibility**
- Project must benefit more than one business, organization, or individual.
- Project must describe how the project will have benefits outside of the applicant’s organization.
- Allowable/eligible costs are included in the Request for Applications.
- Farms that are applying for funding for on-farm research should partner with university research and extension professionals on their proposals.

**Program Purpose**
- Leveraging efforts to market and promote specialty crops
- Assisting producers with research and development relevant to specialty crops
- Expanding availability and access to specialty crops
- Addressing local, regional, and national challenges confronting specialty crop producers
- USDA AMS supports projects that address the needs of U.S. specialty crop growers and strengthen local and regional food systems.

Apply in Webgrants
https://agriculturegrants.vermont.gov/index.do

Gina Clithero
AGR.SpecialtyCrops@vermont.gov
(802) 585-6225
The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM) Trade Show Assistance Grants (TSAG) provide Vermont agriculture and forestry businesses with funds to identify, plan, exhibit and sell their Vermont products at out-of-state trade shows or virtual trade shows that target out-of-state buyers. These matching grants can mitigate the financial risks associated with exhibiting at trade shows, which provide excellent opportunities to network with wholesale buyers. Applicants are encouraged to apply for up to 5 trade shows and/or up to $5,000 in eligible reimbursements.

**Assistance**

- **General Application Period:** January-March
- **Minimum $2,000**
- **Maximum $5,000**
- **50% match required**

**Practices**

- Marketing plans with direct reimbursement for out-of-state trade shows
- Covers travel expenses, marketing assets, booth design, registration fees, booth fees, furnishings, utilities, shipping/freight, printing
- May fund up to 5 years of attendance at a single trade show

**Eligibility**

Agriculture and forestry businesses who meet all of the following:

- Registered with Vermont Secretary of State and have been in business for over 1 year, with an address indicating substantial activity in Vermont
- Have 3+ wholesale accounts
- 50%+ of offerings or components from Vermont and/or if product is transformed, is transformed in Vermont

**Contact**

Kristen Wirkkala
kristen.wirkkala@vermont.gov
(802) 522-3742

https://agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/tradeshow
Purpose and Legislation: The working landscape forms the backbone of Vermont’s heritage and economic viability. The “working landscape” consists of agriculture, food system, forestry, and forest products based businesses. Approximately 20 percent of Vermont’s land is used for agricultural purposes and 75 percent as forestry. In 2009, the Council on the Future of Vermont published Imagining Vermont: Values and Vision for the Future. This report presents the results of a multi-year effort to poll Vermonter's on their visions for the future of the state. One critical area stood out: over 97 percent of Vermonters said they value the working landscape. The 2012 legislative session brought a renewed commitment to Vermonter's values by passing The Working Lands Enterprise Initiative, Act 142. This legislation created the Working Lands Enterprise Fund (WLEF) and the Working Lands Enterprise Board (WLEB) in 2012. The Working Lands Enterprise Initiative (WLEI) manages and invests roughly $1 million annually into agricultural and forestry-based businesses, depending on the appropriation for the program.

Program Leadership: The WLEB is made up of 20 private sector members throughout the supply chains of agriculture and forestry, and staff from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation, Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, Vermont Economic Development Authority, and Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund. In 2015, amendments to legislation added a policy role to the Board.

Overview

The Working Lands Enterprise Initiative (WLEI) offers funding opportunities to a variety of business structures encompassing forest, farm, and food enterprises. These include producer associations, farms, food cooperatives, business assistance provider organizations and more. The amount of funds available is determined each year through the state's annual budget cycle. See The Working Lands Funding Opportunity Cycle Calendar.

Working Lands Funding Opportunities: Standard Business Grants; Meat Slaughter and Processing Grants; Supply Chain Impact Grants; Market Level Infrastructure Impact Grants; Producer Association Grants; Service Provider Grants; Service Provider Contracts; Trade Show Assistance Grants

General Business and Applicant Resources: Goals, Performance Measures, and Outcomes; Business Plan Template; FAQ - Act 250 and applying for Working Lands Funds

Contact

Lynn Ellen Schimoler  
Agr.WorkingLands@vermont.gov  
(802) 622-4477

Working Lands Enterprise Initiative  
94 Harvest Lane,  
Williston, VT 05495

https://workinglands.vermont.gov
The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC), hosted by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, is one of four USDA Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives (DBII) in the nation. The NE-DBIC launched in February of 2020 and serves a ten-state region which includes all New England states, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

The NE-DBIC provides support to dairy businesses through projects that promote the development, production, marketing, and distribution of dairy products. Projects target dairy farms and processors while providing additional support through market research and technical assistance. The Center’s investment and project strategy promotes innovation and resiliency for regional production of dairy products.

To date, $12.72 million has been awarded to the Vermont-based NE-DBIC for projects extending through 2024. Half of the federal funding awarded for the NE-DBIC is granted to dairy farmers and value-added processors.

Funding for the NE-DBIC was made possible by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service through grants AM190100XXXXG081, AM200100XXXXG003, and 21DBIVT1004-00. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the USDA.

To view grants, events, educational opportunities, dairy consumer preferences, dairy market appeal, grazing practices, health and safety projects, supply chain opportunities, and technical assistance and research for dairy farmers and processors, view the website: https://agriculture.vermont.gov/dbic

Northeast DBIC Staff
Laura Ginsburg, Center Lead
laura.ginsburg@vermont.gov
(802) 522-2252

Kathryn Donovan, Center Coordinator
kathryn.donovan@vermont.gov
(802) 585-4571
DMC continues to offer protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed price (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer.

Apply by March 25th and pay annual coverage fee of $100 and receive catastrophic coverage.

Apply at your local FSA Office.

At a milk margin minus feed costs of $9.50 or less, DMC payments are possible depending on the level of coverage chosen by the dairy producer.

- Select a coverage level ranging from $4.00 to $9.50 per cwt, in $0.50 increments.
- Select a coverage percentage of the dairy operation’s production history ranging from 5 percent to 95 percent, in 5 percent increments.
- Producers have the choice to lock in coverage levels until 2023 and receive a 25 percent discount on their DMC premiums.

Find your local FSA Service Center:
https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=vt&agency=fsa

View the Program Website:
https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/dairy-margin-coverage-program/index

FSA State Office
356 Mountain View Drive
Suite 104
Colchester, VT 05446
Phone: (802) 658-2803
Fax: (855) 794-3676
Technical Assistance is available for Dairies and other Livestock Producers from a network of providers including The University of Vermont, Vermont Dairy Business Innovation Center, Natural Resources Conservation Districts, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, which includes the Dairy Herd Management Technical Assistance (DHMTA) Program, Pasture and Surface Water Fencing (PSFW) Program, Dairy Grazing Cohorts, and others.

**Opportunities**

- Support for small scale and pasture-based cow, goat and sheep dairies and farmstead creameries
- Support for medium and large dairy farms
- Grazing planning
- Sourcing grant funding
- Enrolling farms in programs that provide payments for rotational grazing and protecting waterways
- Support for herd health, herd record analysis, calves and heifers, cow comfort, milk quality, farmstead processing, and raw milk sales

**Advisors**

Tony Kitsos  
Farm Business Educator, Water Quality Business Analysis Program Coordinator, UVM Extension, Saint Albans Office  
Tony.Kitsos@uvm.edu  
1-800-639-2130 ext. 440  
Business support for medium and large scale cow dairy operations

Whitney Hull  
Dairy Herd Management Educator, UVM Extension, Morrisville Office  
whitney.hull@uvm.edu  
Business support for medium and large scale cow dairy operations

Kelsie Meehan  
Dairy Herd Management Educator, Center for Sustainable Agriculture, UVM Extension  
Kelsie.meehan@uvm.edu (518) 810-6431 Statewide technical assistance for cow, goat, and sheep dairies. Small-to-mid sized producers, including pasture-based and organic dairies.

UVM Extension Dairy Herd Management  
www.uvm.edu/extension/sustainableagriculture/dairy-herd-management-technical-assistance

See also: UVM Extension Grazing and Livestock Program
The Pasture and Surface Water Fencing (PSWF) Program provides pasture management technical assistance and financial assistance to Vermont farmers to improve water quality and on-farm livestock exclusion from surface waters statewide.

Apply Year-Round

Technical & Financial Assistance

Eligibility

• Pasture land poses a water quality concern.

• Water quality will benefit from implementation of improved pasture management and eligible and/or necessary conservation practices.

• Operator must have ownership or land control for the term of the agreement (10 years).

Practices

• Fence
• Pipeline
• Water Source Development
• Water Tanks
• Improved Permanent Water Area
• Stream Crossings
• Electric Fence Chargers

Mary Montour,
Agricultural Water Quality Program Coordinator
(802) 461-6087
mary.montour@vermont.gov
https://agriculture.vermont.gov/pswf
**Food Animals Concerns Trust (FACT)**

**Fund-A-Farmer Grant**

We (FACT) believe that all food-producing animals should be raised in a humane and healthy manner, and that everyone should have access to safe and humanely produced food. Since 1982, FACT has been leading the charge to make that vision a reality. We provide critical resources to help farmers adopt humane practices, advocate for food safety, and guide consumers in making healthy food choices. Our impact is powerful and growing. Since 2012, FACT has awarded more than $590,000 in Fund-a-Farmer grants for projects that improve animal welfare.

Apply in Fall of 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant must be a United States-based farm or an independently owned or recognized Tribal-Entity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed projects must impact at least one of these species: Beef cattle, bison, broiler chickens, dairy cows, ducks, geese, goats, laying hens, pigs, sheep and/or turkeys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms must already raise animals. Only 1 application per year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does not include:
- Non-profit organizations
- Schools
- Farm Sanctuaries
- Aquaculture
- Apiaries
- Alpacas
- Horses
- Rabbits
- Raw milk
- Slaughter
- Certification Fees
- Purchase of livestock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum award: $3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Projects improving animal welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Projects related to marketing, sales, or distribution of welfare-certified products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pasture expansion or transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Applicant does not need to hold or be seeking welfare certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Applicant may combine multiple projects together</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Larissa McKenna, Humane Farming Program Director
grants@foodanimalsconcerns.org
https://FoodAnimalsConcernsTrust.org
The University of Vermont (UVM) Extension Grazing & Livestock Program

UVM Extension Grazing & Livestock Programming teams are here to help new farmers who are seeking to get started on grass farming right, and experienced farmers looking to convert or improve their grass-based operations. Our staff work across three teams throughout Vermont to be the go-to resource for all your grazing needs. Contact Us - We are here to answers all questions you may have.

New and Beginning Producers
- Resources for learning from other Farmers
- Business Planning
- Grazing Books & Guides

Grazing Technical Assistance Resources
- Grazing Planing
- Improved Grazing
- Contract Grazing and Leasing Land
- Livestock Management
- Land Management
- Soil, Manure & Forage Testing
- Business Planning and Profitability
- Infrastructure
- Identifying Your Support System

Pasture & Profitability Technical Assistance

Center for Sustainable Agriculture
Juan Alvez - jalvez@uvm.edu 802-656-6116.
Extension Research Associate, Sustainable agriculture and environment, grazing management, agroecology, ecosystems services, conservation and green markets.

Kelsie Meehan - Kelsie.meehan@uvm.edu (518) 810-6431.
Dairy Herd Management Educator, Statewide technical assistance for cow, goat, and sheep dairies. Small-to-mid sized producers, including pasture-based and organic dairies.

Amber Reed - Amber.Reed@uvm.edu (802) 535-5562. Pasture Technical Assistance, Grazing technical assistance statewide on any type of livestock, managing a dairy grazing cohort, assisting with VAAFM's Pasture and Surface Water Fencing Program

Farmer Funding and Grant Resources
- State
- Regional
- Federal

Program and Contact Information
UVM Extension Grazing & Livestock Program
https://www.uvm.edu/extension/grazing

Andrew May, Grazing & Livestock Coordinator
(802) 476-2003
Andrew.May@uvm.edu

Northwest Crops and Soils Program
Sara Ziegler - Sara.Ziegler@uvm.edu 802-524-6501. Crops and Soils Coordinator, grassfed dairy, annual livestock forage trials, milkweed, nutrient management planning

Champlain Valley Crop, Soil and Pasture Team
Cheryl Cesario - Cheryl.Cesario@uvm.edu (802) 388-4969 ext. 346. Grazing Outreach Specialist, UVM Extension, Middlebury Office. Grazing technical assistance, dairy, beef, small ruminants, Addison, Rutland, Bennington, Chittenden, and Franklin Counties
The Environmental Mediation Center is a nonprofit organization that provides free mediation services to the agricultural community. The EMC utilizes a roster of highly trained mediators experienced in agricultural mediation. The EMC works on a variety of agricultural disputes.

**Example Mediation Services**

- Adverse Decision Letters
- Compliance Issues with Farm Programs
- Restructuring Farm loans
- Foreclosures
- Debts to Unsecured Creditors, such as Feed and Equipment Dealers
- Wetlands Determinations
- Pesticide Issues

**Process**

- After a party requests mediation, the mediation program will contact all parties to get details and provide education on the mediation process.

- Mediation is a process where the parties meet with an impartial person to assist them with negotiation of their differences. Mediation is voluntary. Mediation is confidential and mediators cannot impose a resolution.

**Contact Information**

Matt Strassberg, Director of the Environmental Mediation Center
(802) 583-1100 ext 101
matts@emcenter.org

https://emcenter.org/
Farm Service Agency (FSA)
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Enrollment

In exchange for a yearly rental payment, farmers enrolled in the program agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and plant species that will improve environmental health and quality. Contracts for land enrolled in CRP are from 10 to 15 years in length. The long-term goal of the program is to re-establish valuable land cover to help improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. Signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in 1985, CRP is one of the largest private-lands conservation program in the United States. Thanks to voluntary participation by farmers and landowners, CRP has improved water quality, reduced soil erosion, and increased habitat for endangered and threatened species.

General Enrollment
Apply by March 11th

Rental payments for conservation cover, with cost-share up to 50% for cover establishment. There is a climate-smart incentive payment of 3%, 5%, or 10% for CRP practices increasing carbon sequestration and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

- Producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to March 11th, 2022, unless land was acquired upon the death of the original land owner, ownership change occurred due to foreclosure, or circumstance presents adequate assurance to FSA that the new owner did not acquire the land for the purpose of enrollment into CRP.
- Land must be in cropland in agricultural commodity for at least 4 years between 2012 and 2017 and be capable of being planted. Perennial grasses and legumes in a rotation not to exceed 12 years are also eligible.
- Land must have a weighted erosion index of 8 or higher, be expiring, or be located in a priority area.

Find your local FSA Service Center:
https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=vt&agency=fsa

View the Program Website:

FSA State Office
356 Mountain View Drive
Suite 104
Colchester, VT 05446
Phone: (802) 658-2803
Fax: (855) 794-3676
In exchange for a yearly rental payment, farmers enrolled in the program agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and plant species that will improve environmental health and quality. Contracts for land enrolled in CRP are from 10 to 15 years in length. The long-term goal of the program is to re-establish valuable land cover to help improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. Signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in 1985, CRP is one of the largest private-lands conservation program in the United States. Thanks to voluntary participation by farmers and landowners, CRP has improved water quality, reduced soil erosion, and increased habitat for endangered and threatened species.

**Continuous Enrollment**

Signup Incentive Payment of 32.5 percent of the first full year annual rental payment is paid at contract approval on all newly enrolled Continuous CRP contract acreage. A Practice Incentive Payment of up to 50 percent is paid for installing the practice.

Annual rental payments at a rate of 90 percent of the existing rate to eligible CRP continuous participants based on per acre cropland and marginal pasture land rental rates, plus a 10 percent “inflationary” adjustment, determined by FSA. The per-acre annual rental rate may not exceed the calculated rate or $300/acre. Producers may elect to receive a rental rate amount less than the maximum payment rate.

Climate-Smart Practice Incentive: FSA provides an incentive of 3, 5, or 10 percent for CRP practices that will increase carbon sequestration, reduce GHG emissions, and otherwise are climate smart practices. The incentive amount is based on the estimated benefits of each practice.

Water Quality Incentive: FSA provides a 20 percent rental rate incentive for CRP water quality practices that will improve water quality by reducing sediment loading, nutrient loading and harmful algae blooms.

Cost-Share Assistance: Cost-share of up to 50 percent of the re-reimbursable cost of installing the practice is provided by FSA. Cost-share assistance is not available for any management activity.

Find your local FSA Service Center:
https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=vt&agency=fsa

View the Program Website:

FSA State Office
356 Mountain View Drive
Suite 104
Colchester, VT 05446
Phone: (802) 658-2803
Fax: (855) 794-3676
The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) helps landowners, land trusts, and other entities protect, restore, and enhance wetlands, grasslands, working farms, and ranches through conservation easements. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps American Indian tribes, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) and Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM) also work with land trusts purchase land or development rights.

Land eligible for agricultural easements includes private or Tribal land that is agricultural land, cropland, rangeland, grassland, pastureland and nonindustrial private forest land. NRCS will prioritize applications that protect agricultural uses and related conservation values of the land and those that maximize the protection of contiguous acres devoted to agricultural use, including land on a farm or ranch.

Eligible Land Types and which also meets one of the four following land eligibility criteria:

1. Parcels enrolled to protect Prime, Unique, or Other productive soil.
2. Parcels enrolled to provide protection of grazing uses and related conservation values.
3. Parcels containing historical or archeological resources.
4. Land that furthers a state or local policy consistent with the purposes of ACEP-ALE.

If you are interested in applying, contact a Land Trust, as these easements are entity-held.

View the NRCS Agricultural Land Easement Website
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail//?cid=nrcseprd416633

View the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets Farmland Conservation Website
https://agriculture.vermont.gov/land-use-renewable-energy-0/farmland-conservation

View the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Farmland Conservation Website
https://vhcb.org/our-programs/conservation/farmland-conservation

View the Vermont Land Trust Website
https://vlt.org

Duxbury Land Trust
PO Box 56
Waterbury, VT 05676
(802) 244-7512

Greensboro Land Trust
PO Box 135
Greensboro, VT 05841
(802) 533-7723

Learn more from the American Farmland Trust
https://farmland.org

Vermont Land Trust
8 Bailey Ave
Montpelier, VT 05601
(802) 745-6301
The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) helps landowners, land trusts, and other entities protect, restore, and enhance wetlands, grasslands, and working farms and ranches through conservation easements. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps American Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands. The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) and Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM) also work with land trusts purchase land or development rights.

Permanent Easements – Permanent easements are conservation easements in perpetuity. NRCS pays between 90% and 100% of the appraised easement value for the purchase of the easement. Additionally, NRCS pays between 75 to 100 percent of the restoration costs.

Obe Racicot  
NRCS Assistant State Conservationist - Programs and RCPP Coordinator  
Obiediah.Racicot@usda.gov

Jim Eikenberry  
NRCS Wetlands Specialist  
James.Eikenberry@usda.gov

Vermont Land Trust  
8 Bailey Ave  
Montpelier, VT 05601  
802.745.6301

Duxbury Land Trust  
PO Box 56  
Waterbury, VT 05676  
802.244.7512

Greensboro Land Trust  
PO Box 135  
Greensboro, VT 05841  
802.533.7723

View the NRCS Wetland Reserve Easement Website  
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/vt/programs/easements/acep/?cid=nrcs142p2_010534

View the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets Farmland Conservation Website  
https://agriculture.vermont.gov/land-use-renewable-energy-0/farmland-conservation

View the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Farmland Conservation Website  
https://vhcb.org/our-programs/conservation/farmland-conservation

View the Vermont Land Trust Website  
https://vlt.org
The Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA) helps agricultural producers use conservation to manage risk and address natural resource issues through natural resources conservation. NRCS administers the AMA conservation provisions, while the Agricultural Marketing Service and the Risk Management Agency implement other provisions under AMA.

For 2022, Vermont's AMA priorities include high tunnels and irrigation practices. Apply by December 31st (Confirm with Your Local Field Office)

Up to 75 cost-share, with a funding cap at $50,000 per year

To Apply, Contact Your Local NRCS Field Office. You can find your field office at the following website: https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?agency=nrcs

Eligibility

- Be an agricultural producer
- Have an interest in the farming operation associated with the land being offered for AMA
- Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract
- Be in compliance with the provisions for protecting the interests of tenants and sharecroppers, including the provisions for sharing AMA payments on a fair and equitable basis within appropriate payment limitation requirements

View the NRCS Agricultural Management Assistance Website

Find your local NRCS Field Office
https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?agency=nrcs

USDA NRCS VT State Office
356 Mountain View Drive, Suite 105
Colchester, Vermont 05446
Ph: (802) 951-6796
Fax: (855) 794-3677
Conservation Innovation Grants are competitive grants that stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies while leveraging Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection, in conjunction with agricultural production. Under CIG, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds are used to award competitive grants to non-Federal entities.

CIG enables NRCS to work with other public and private entities to accelerate technology transfer and adoption of promising technologies and approaches to address some of the nation’s most pressing natural resource concerns. CIG will benefit agricultural producers by providing more options for environmental enhancement and compliance with Federal, State, and local regulations. NRCS administers the CIG program which requires a 50-50 match between the agency and the applicant. CIG is offered as both a nationwide and a state program. The CIG National Component offers eligible entities the opportunity to apply for grants. The CIG State Component offers eligible entities the opportunity to apply for grants up to $175,000. This competition is limited to single and multi-year projects, not to exceed 3 years, for projects with a direct nexus to the state of Vermont.

Applicants can apply to the National program, the State program, or both. Applicants may apply year-round.

Projects or activities under CIG must:

- Comply with all applicable federal, tribal, state, and local laws and regulations throughout the duration of the project; and use a technology or approach that was studied sufficiently to indicate a high probability for success;
- Demonstrate, evaluate, and verify the effectiveness, utility, affordability, and usability of natural resource conservation technologies and approaches in the field;
- Adapt and transfer conservation technologies, management, practices, systems, approaches, and incentive systems to improve performance and encourage adoption;
- Introduce proven conservation technologies and approaches to a geographic area or agricultural sector where that technology or approach is not currently in use.

Technologies and approaches that are eligible for funding in a project’s geographic area using an EQIP contract for an established conservation practice standard are ineligible for CIG funding, except where the use of those technologies and approaches demonstrates clear innovation. Farms interested in research may want to explore partnering with a business or university. The Table of Contents of this guide contains Directories for organizations.

For the FY 2022 CIG award process, at least 10 percent of the total funds available for CIG are set aside for proposals from historically underserved producers, veteran farmers or ranchers, or community-based organizations comprised of or representing these entities. The regulatory definitions of a historically underserved producer and a veteran farmer or rancher may be found at 7 CFR 1466.3.

Learn more about the Program: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/cig/
Whether you are looking to improve grazing conditions, increase crop resiliency, or develop wildlife habitat, NRCS can custom design a CSP plan to help you meet those goals. NRCS can help you identify natural resource problems in your operation and provide technical and financial assistance to solve those problems or attain higher stewardship levels in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. For example, NRCS can look at ways to address the amount of soil lost; mitigate the impact of excess water; reduce the contribution of agricultural operations to airborne soil particles and greenhouse gas emissions; improve the cover, food, and water available for domestic and wildlife species; or promote energy efficiencies for on-farm activities.

Grasslands Conservation Initiative

This new initiative assists producers in protecting grazing land uses; conserving and improving soil, water and wildlife resources; and achieving related conservation values by conserving eligible land through grassland conservation contracts. Eligible lands are limited to cropland for which base acres have been maintained under FSA’s ARC/PLC and were planted to grass or pasture, including idle or fallow, during a specific period. Enrolled acreage must be managed consistently with a grassland conservation plan. Producers will have a single opportunity to enroll eligible land in a five-year contract.

Comprehensive Conservation Plan

The 2018 Farm Bill includes a new conservation activity for producers to develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) as part of their CSP contract. A CCP is a conservation plan that meets or exceeds the stewardship threshold for each priority resource concern identified by NRCS across all land uses included in the operation. NRCS will administer CCPs similar to the conservation activity plans (CAPs) under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and require producers to use a technical service provider (TSP) to develop the plan. NRCS may provide a minimum annual payment of $1,500 in any year the total contract amount is below a rate NRCS determines equitable based upon the effort required by a participant to meet contract requirements.

Enhancements & Bundles

Through CSP, producers have the opportunity to further improve their conservation efforts with conservation activities called “enhancements.” Enhancements allow a producer to address additional levels of conservation beyond what the minimum conservation practice standard requires. Select from about 140 enhancements to address resource concerns. Some enhancements work together to provide increased conservation benefits when they are implemented as a group. Producers may consider adopting these enhancement groups or “bundles” on their operation. Bundles receive a higher level of financial assistance to encourage the holistic approach to generate additional conservation benefits.
Vermont’s Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a voluntary program designed to reduce sediment runoff and improve water quality by removing land from agricultural production and establishing vegetative buffers. State and federal funds are used to compensate landowners for the loss of productive agricultural land through upfront incentive payments and annual rental payments based on the total acreage dedicated to vegetated filter strips, forested buffers, or grassed waterways.

Apply Year-Round

Incentive Payments $415- $2005 per acre (between state + federal) + Implementation cost-share up to 100% + Annual payments $80 - $200 per acre per year for 15 years

Eligibility:
- Applicants must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to enrollment (may be waived by County Committee)
- Land must be in agricultural use
- Land adjacent to a perennial stream or river that lacks shade, vegetative buffers and/or has water quality impacts.
- Wetland restoration on cropland
- Buffers around ponds or lakes
- Minimum buffer width of 35 ft

Why CREP?
- Perennial vegetation provides shade which reduces water temperature and increases oxygen, promoting aquatic life
- Provides wildlife and pollinator habitat
- Promotes water infiltration, reduces soil loss and fertilizer/amendment runoff
- Increases stability of stream banks, improving flood resilience

Can I harvest this land?
No

How long is the agreement?
15 Years

How long of a buffer is 1 acre?
1,245 linear ft
35 ft buffer width

Ben Gabos, CREP Coordinator, VAAFM
(802) 461-3814
ben.gabos@vermont.gov

Apply Online
Agriculture.Vermont.gov/crep
The Farm Agronomic Practices (FAP) Program utilizes state funding to help Vermont farms implement soil-based agronomic practices that improve soil quality, increase crop production, and reduce erosion and agricultural waste discharges. The FAP program also provides education and instructional activity grants to support outreach regarding the impacts of agricultural practices on water quality and current state agricultural water quality regulations.

### Cropping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Payment Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cover Crop</td>
<td>$30 per acre (broadcast or interseed) by October 01st, $45 per acre (drilled) by October 15th. Must be seeded at highest recommended rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crop to Hay</td>
<td>$35 per acre, or $45 per acre with nurse crop. 1-time payment for perennial species only. Nurse crops must be at the highest recommended rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Tillage</td>
<td>$12 per acre. Cover crop must be drilled. 20% of soil surface must be covered immediately following cover crop planting. No burning of previous crop is allowed. No full-width soil disturbance between crop harvests. No harrowing, chisel plowing, cultivating, tandem disking, or vertical tillage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-till Hayland Renovation</td>
<td>No-till drill only. Seeding rate must provide full coverage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manure Injection</td>
<td>$25 per acre. Subsurface injection. No aeration. Must follow RAPs. Can include disk, shank, grassland injection below soil surface with a single implement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Apply by August 1st**

Up to $8,000 per farm per year

### Rotational Grazing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Payment Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rotational Grazing</td>
<td>$25 per acre. Must be rotated at least 2x week and excluded from surface water. 3&quot; of vegetation must be maintained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-till Pasture Renovation</td>
<td>No-till drill only. Seeding rate must provide full coverage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Apply by June 15th**

Up to $8,000 per farm per year

### Contact Information

- Apply Online: [agriculture.vermont.gov/fap](http://agriculture.vermont.gov/fap)
- Phone: (802) 828-2430
- Email: AGR.Helpdesk@vermont.gov
The Grassed Waterway and Filter Strip (GWFS) Program can provide technical and financial assistance to Vermont farmers for in-field agronomic best practices to address critical source areas, erosion, and surface runoff. The Program’s goal is to reduce soil erosion and improve soil and water quality on cropland that contributes a disproportionately high level of nutrients in runoff. Such areas of cropland are considered “Critical Source Areas” (CSAs), representing a small proportion of the landscape yet a high proportion of nonpoint source pollution loads.

**Assistance**
- **Apply Year-Round**
- Implementation incentive of $500 per acre & cost-share up to 90% of installation cost

**Eligibility:**
- Annual cropping history within 5 years
- Land is adjacent to surface waters and/or ditches
- Operator must have ownership or control of the land for the term of the agreement

**Practices**
- Establishment of perennial grassed waterway
- Filter strip establishment
- Critical source field area seeding
- Associated infrastructure (erosion or grade control structures)

**Definitions**
Grassed Waterway: A shaped or graded channel that is established with suitable vegetation to convey surface water at a non-erosive velocity using a broad and shallow cross section to a stable outlet.

Filter Strip: A strip or area of herbaceous vegetation that removes contaminants from overland flow.

Critical Area Planting: Establishing permanent vegetation on sites that have, or are expected to have, high erosion rates, and on sites that have physical, chemical, or biological conditions that prevent the establishment of vegetation with normal seeding/planting methods.

Mary Montour, VAAFM  
(802) 461-6087  
Mary.Montour@vermont.gov  
https://agriculture.vermont.gov/gwfs 

How long is the agreement?  
10 Years

Can I harvest this land?  
Yes
This program will provide performance-based payments to Vermont farmers for reductions in phosphorus (P) losses from their agricultural fields. Reductions represent improvements in farm management from the management assumed in the Lake Champlain Basin Total Maximum Daily Load (LCB TMDL). Enrolled farms will receive payment for annual net reductions from these historic base loading assumptions, above a threshold set by the program. Most current payment programs pay cost-share for practices. The VPFP is unique because it pays for the outcomes of those practices: it recognizes that the conservation of soil and water generates value to the public and directly compensates farms for that value. In this approach, farmers have the flexibility to implement whichever conservation practices they know will work for their own operations each year.

Eligibility

- Be a Farm as defined in the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) operating within Vermont
- Manage crop or hay land
- Farm business is registered with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) and all managed land is mapped and in compliance with federal Highly Erodible Land and Wetland regulations.
- Have an up-to-date Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) that meets the RAPs for their farm size, including recent soil (and in most cases manure) tests.
- If you are not registered with FSA, do not have soil or manure tests, or do not have an up-to-date Nutrient Management Plan that meets the RAPs for your farm size, you must work to obtain meet those requirements PRIOR to application. Your local Conservation District and/or FSA office can help you with this process.

Practices

- Crop Rotation
- Manure Injection
- Cover Crops
- Buffers
- Grassed Waterways
- No-till and Reduced-till

Payment

- One time data entry into FarmPREP. Planned rate: $15/acre, max $4000

If Selected for Program:

- $100 per pound of phosphorus reduced beyond a 40% reduction threshold up to an annual cap of $50,000 per farm
The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program provides free technical and financial assistance to landowners, managers, tribes, corporations, schools and nonprofits interested in improving wildlife habitat on their land. Since 1987, we have helped more than 60,000 landowners restore more than 7 million acres of forest, prairie, wetland and stream habitat for wildlife.

Apply Year-Round  Technical & Financial Assistance  Contact the Vermont State Coordinator

Process

A biologist will consult with landowners to help them conserve and improve wildlife habitat at no cost through planning, design and supervision of restoration projects. Services also include identification of other funding sources, and offering permitting guidance.

Landowners continue to own and manage their land while they improve conditions for wildlife.

Many Partners for Fish and Wildlife projects take place on working landscapes such as forests, farms and ranches. USFWS focuses on upland forests, wetlands, native prairies, marshes, rivers and streams. Migratory birds as well as endangered, threatened and at-risk species are considered.

Example Projects

- Livestock exclusion fencing
- Improved aquatic connectivity
- In-stream aquatic habitat
- Streambank stabilization
- Invasive species control
- Native tree and shrub planting
- Wetland restoration/enhancement
- Riparian reforestation

Contact

Vermont State Coordinator
Chris E. Smith
11 Lincoln Street, Door 7
Essex Junction, VT 05452
(802) 872-0629 ext. 20
Chris_E_Smith@fws.gov
https://www.fws.gov/program/partners-fish-and-wildlife
Includes Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB)

Farmland Conservation Program

Established in 1987, the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board remains the forerunner in the nation in pioneering a comprehensive approach to affordable housing and community development linked with land conservation and historic preservation. The Board's enabling statute is: The Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund Act, 10 V.S.A. Chapter 15, §§302-325a. Programs include Housing, Conservation, Vermont Farm & Forest Viability, Healthy & Lead-Safe Homes, VHCB AmeriCorps, Rural Economic Development Initiative, Leadership, Farmland Access, Water Quality, Energy Efficiency and Food Access and Affordable Housing. The farmland conservation program ensures some of Vermont's most productive farmland will remain undeveloped and available for farming in the future. The program ensures that farms are not isolated by residential development.

Overview

The Board evaluates farmland applications in a two-step process:
Pre-applications are submitted by an eligible entity (typically a land trust), and reviewed by a committee comprised of staff from VHCB, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, and land trust partners.

If the project meets VHCB’s eligibility criteria, it is approved for VHCB cost-share of an appraisal to determine the value of the conservation easement. Applications for funding are developed for those projects that have been approved as pre-applications, and submitted for consideration at one of the Board’s regularly scheduled meetings. Board evaluation is based upon soil quality, location, farm infrastructure, management, and other resources brought to the project.

There is a funding cap of $550,000 per application, and $4,200 per acre.

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board
58 East Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 828-3250
info@vhcb.org
https://vhcb.org
Three active design and implementation block grants provided by Natural Resources Conservation Council (NRCC), Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC) and Watersheds United Vermont (WUV) are available. The funding requirements are the same for all entities, though the application and grant administration process may vary somewhat. All eligible entities can apply through any grant holder and WUV, NRCC and MARC will coordinate on grant rounds, project applications, and remaining funding.

General Information

- Up to $50,000*
- Contact your local Conservation District, Watershed Organization, or Regional Planning Commission
- Generally, Applications open in the summer

Eligible Projects: Engineering design and implementation projects for water quality improvements in a variety of landscaping settings.

Partners

Natural Resources Conservation Council (NRCC) / Vermont Association of Conservation Districts
https://www.vacd.org; connect@vacd.org

Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC)
https://marcvt.org; (802) 674-9201

Watersheds United Vermont (WUV)
(802) 585-3569; info@watershedsunitedvt.org

Please check the DEC Website throughout the year for 2022-2023 updates.
Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District (FCNRCRD)

Signs of Conservation

Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District uses simple roadside signs and social media to raise awareness and appreciation for all the ways that farmers in Vermont build soil health, improve water quality, and create other benefits besides the food they grow. Our campaign was founded in Franklin County, but signs are available statewide.

No cost for signs  Contact your local Conservation District

Ten signs are available to producers!
Connect with your local Natural Resources Conservation District about assistance with installing and maintaining signs, or to learn more about support for practice implementation. There is a Directory of Natural Resources Conservation Districts at the end of this guide. You can also find a directory at https://www.vacd.org/.
The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements.

RCPP combines the authorities of four former conservation programs - the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program, the Cooperative Conservation partnership Initiative, and the Great Lakes Basin Program. Assistance is delivered in accordance with the rules of EQIP, CSP, ACEP, and HFRP; and in certain areas the Watershed Operations and Flood Prevention Program.

Contact your local NRCS office or the Lead Partner as listed in the table above. Refer to the Table of Contents to navigate to a Directory of NRCS Field Offices.
Regional Organizations
Tree Plantings

Natural Resources Conservation Districts, as well as Watershed Organizations such as Watersheds United Vermont, have access to funding to implement tree planting projects. Planting trees along stream banks helps reduce erosion, improve water quality, and provide habitat for fish, birds, and other wildlife. Reaching out to Natural Resources Conservation Districts and Watershed Groups directly is the best way to determine how to get trees planted on your land. These organizations can also refer you to other programs and organizations that offer support for your specific tree and shrub planting goals on your land, such as the NRCS and Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. Each program has different requirements and criteria. A service provider at a Natural Resources Conservation District or Watershed Group can facilitate matching you to the best program for your objectives.

General Information

- Funding will be announced with Request for Applications (RFA)
- To Apply, contact your local Conservation District or Watershed Group
- In general, applications open in the fall

Conservation Districts help coordinate project scoping and grant applications. They source and procure plant materials, organize and perform installation and maintenance; the grant covers the cost of materials and labor. Land owners may inform Natural Resources Conservation Districts of species preference and be involved in planting and maintenance. Natural Resources Conservation Districts welcome connection with land owners interested in stewardship opportunities any time of year.

Why install a buffer?

- Perennial vegetation provides shade which reduces water temperature and increases oxygen, promoting aquatic life
- Provides wildlife and pollinator habitat
- Promotes water infiltration, reduces soil loss and fertilizer/amendment runoff
- Increases stability of stream banks, improving flood resilience

Find your local Watershed Group
https://WatershedsUnitedVT.org

Find your local Conservation District
https://www.vacd.org
Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCD) Agricultural Support

Natural Resources Conservation Districts can assist Small Farm Operations, Certified Small Farm Operations, Medium Farm Operations, and Large Farm Operations with Nutrient Management Planning, water-quality related workshop coordination, event hosting, and provide referrals to additional assistance. Capacity for support ranges from one NRCD to another. Please reach out to your local NRCD for additional information. View the Table of Contents for their Directory, or go to https://www.vacd.org/

General Information

Some NRCDs offer equipment rentals

Contact your local Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCD)

Support is available year-round

Services May Include:

- Soil Sampling
- Manure Sampling
- Equipment Rentals
- Land Treatment Planning, Nutrient Management Planning, understanding the RAPs
- Program & Technical Assistance Referrals & Support
- Workshop Coordination and Hosting

Small Farm Operations and Certified Small Farm Operations can take UVM Extension's *Digging In – Nutrient Management Course for Farmers* at no-cost when assisted by a NRCD. This course is available in the winter, offers a foundation in best management practices, and provides a strategy for producers to manage all their compliance records while planning for healthy and bountiful crops.

Contact your local NRCD any time of year if you are interested.

Not sure of your farm size? Call your local NRCD or check out https://agriculture.vermont.gov/sfo

Learn more about the course at: https://www.uvm.edu/extension/nwcrops/soil-health-and-nutrient-management

To sign up, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation District.

There is a Directory in the Table of Contents.

You can also find your local NRCD on the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts Website: https://www.vacd.org/
The goal of the Required Agricultural Practices (RAP) Online Quiz is to provide an accessible, informative tool for livestock farmers to raise awareness of the RAPs and water quality improvement practices available for Vermont Farmers while providing them with water quality credits.

What You'll Learn:

- How the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) apply to your farm
- Specific on-farm examples
- Impact of management practices on water quality
- Links to additional resources

Take the RAP Quiz

www.vacd.org/rapquiz

Farm Size Classifications


RAP Summary


View the Nutrient Management Standard

Updated November 2021


View the Required Agricultural Practices


Questions? Need Help?

Reach out to your local Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCD)
View the Table of Contents for their Directory, or go to www.vacd.org

www.vacd.org
The Vermont Family Farmer of the Month Fund makes a financial award to a Vermont family farmer each month. Awards recognize farmers whose businesses are contributing to a resilient Vermont agricultural landscape, and demonstrate environmental stewardship through sustainable practices. Funding for the Vermont Family Farmer of the Month comes from a generous, anonymous, charitable gift fund. It is administered by the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont in partnership with VHCB Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program, Shelburne Farms, and the Vermont Grass Farmers Association.

Innovative projects that will improve the viability of the enterprise. An example of an eligible project could be an upgrade or construction of a farm stand or wash and pack station, improvements in on-farm energy efficiency or integration of renewable energy, infrastructure design or construction for a new farm product, or an investment in soil or animal health. In order to apply, you must meet the following conditions:

- You/your farm are a NOFA Vermont Member or a certified Vermont Organic Farm
- You have not received this award in the past
- You are a resident of Vermont

**Eligibility**

$10,000 - $12,000

**Award Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November through February Awards</th>
<th>Applications due by: September 28th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March through June Awards</td>
<td>Applications due by: January 26th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July through October Awards</td>
<td>Applications due by: May 28th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOFA Vermont**

PO Box 697, Richmond, VT
05477 Phone: (802) 434-4122
Fax: 802-329-3033
Email: info@nofavt.org
https://nofavt.org/
The Fruit Guys
Small Farm Micogrant

Each year, The Fruit Guys award grants ranging from $2,000-$5,000 for projects that align with one or more of the core ideals detailed in their Sustainable Farming Manifesto, which can be read on their website, FruitGuysCommunityFund.org

**Assistance**

- **Deadline:** January 2023
- **Award:** $2,000 - $5,000

**Eligibility**

Applicant is an owner/operator of the farm or has long-term, legal access to the land. If farming on leased land, a letter of support from the landowner specifying length of the lease agreement must be provided with the grant application.

The applicant farm must be an established working farm that is looking to improve operations.

Applicant has not been previously awarded a FruitGuys Community Fund grant. We are not currently funding past grantees.

We welcome farms to re-apply for the same project or a different one if you have not been funded.

Farm is small to medium-sized as determined by acreage in agricultural production. Farms with more than 300 acres in agricultural production are ineligible to apply.

Farmers will engage in community outreach, education, or policy advocacy surrounding sustainable agriculture. Engagement must be described in the grant proposal. Up to 10% of the total grant amount awarded may be used to support efforts for community outreach, education, and/or advocacy.

FruitGuysCommunityFund.org
info@fruitguyscommunityfund.org
The Eric Rozendaal Memorial Award is given annually to a farmer who honors the legacy of Eric Rozendaal — a thoughtful, creative, and entrepreneurial farmer. The award fund was created through contributions from Eric’s family and friends and is managed by the Vermont Land Trust. The first Eric Rozendaal Memorial Award was given in 2019 to Corie Pierce of Bread & Butter Farm. Thanks to a generous donor, there were two awardees in 2020: Amanda Andrews of Tamarack Hollow Farm and Tom Gilbert of Black Dirt Farm. The 2021 award went to Christine Bourque of Blue Heron Farm in Grand Isle.

### Assistance

- **June 30th**
- **$5,000**

### Eligibility

The awardee must:

- Be a resident of Vermont
- Be actively managing or working on a commercial farm operation in Vermont
- Have not received the award in the past.

The applicant does not have to own a farm. Current VLT staff, VLT board members, members of the Selection Committee and the immediate family members of VLT staff, VLT board members and members of the Selection Committee are not eligible to apply.

### Criteria

**Land stewardship:** A demonstrated commitment to building healthy soils and protecting natural resources

**Giving back:** A commitment to giving back to the community and to fellow farmers. This could be through mentorship, community engagement, or other activities.

**Entrepreneurism:** A demonstrated entrepreneurial approach to farming. This could include introducing new farm products or developing new markets.

**Use of the funds:** A clear description of recent or planned project(s) on the farm related to the award criteria that the funds can support.

Vermont Land Trust

vlt.org/eric

info@vlt.org

(802) 223-5234
The Vermont Farm Women’s Fund provides stipends and scholarships to help women farmers build thriving businesses and to participate in agricultural policy development. Since 2009, the fund has made 71 awards totaling over $36,000.

Overview

Scholarships can be used to defray registration fees for educational conferences, courses and classes. The key to a successful proposal will be explaining how the education relates to improvements you are considering on your farm.

VFWF targets its scholarship awards to women who own, operate and/or work on Vermont farms, and who earn a majority of their income from farm-related activities.

VFWF will contribute up to 75 percent of class/course/conference registration fees. Except in cases of extreme financial hardship, the maximum scholarship amount will be $150. VFWF reserves the right, at its discretion, to award less than the full amount an applicant requests or no amount.

In selecting scholarship recipients, we are seeking individuals who:
Have specific plans to use the skills, information and knowledge they gain at the conference to implement successful farming practices on their own farm in the next 6-12 months, and/or who intend to share what they learned with other farmers in the 6-12 months; Agree to submit a written report about the education they received within six weeks of the event, and to respond to follow-up surveys from the VFWF. Award decisions will also consider the applicant’s financial situation.

To be eligible for funding, applications must be submitted to the Vermont Farm Women’s Fund least 10 days before the event that you want to attend. VFWF reviews and awards scholarship requests on a first-come, first-served basis as funds are available. Applicants are notified within 10 days of receipt of the application. If your proposal is not selected, you can resubmit it for a future round of funding. Rather than simply resubmit the original proposal however you might consider ways to revise and strengthen your proposal.

If you receive an award from the VFWF you will need to wait 2 years before applying again. This is to ensure that the funds are spread out and help as many individuals as possible.
The Bird-Friendly Maple Project is ready to give you and maple-lovers everywhere a way to support and promote sugarbush management that’s good for Vermont’s birds, forests, and forest-based economy.

The project is building on the national award-winning Foresters for the Birds partnership between Audubon Vermont biologists and Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation foresters and expanding to include a new partner: leaders from the Vermont maple industry that includes the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association.

A biologist will come visit your sugarbush, perform a survey and evaluation of your stands as they relate to bird diversity and abundance as well as forest health and habitat quality. You will receive a report indicating many aspects of forest health, and where your sugarbush fits in. The Bird Friendly Maple Project can be part of your overall Forest Management Plan and is also a way to support your business marketing endeavors.

Steve Hagenbuch, Audubon Conservation Biologist
shagenbuch@audubon.org

Forest Management Plan Resources from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Department of Forests- Parks and Recreation
https://fpr.vermont.gov/forest/managing-your-woodlands/forest-management-plans
You can also view the Table of Contents to navigate to a Directory of County Foresters in Vermont

Learn more about the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program, which may assist with Forest Management Plans

Find your local NRCS Office
You can also view the Table of Contents to navigate to a Directory of NRCS Offices in Vermont
The State of Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources Department of Forests - Parks and Recreation offers multiple resources for loggers.

### Training
- LEAP: Vermont Logger Education to Advance Professionalism Program
- Manual for Mechanized Logger Training
- Northeast Master Logger Certification Program

### Resources
- The AMP Manual & App. The App is available online and offline and
- Market Assessments
- Management Practices
- Wetland Rules and the Silvicultural Allowed Practices

### Rentals
- Skidder Bridges
- I-Beam Bridges
- Truck Bridges

### Contact
Dave Wilcox, Watershed Forester
(802) 793-0265
David.Wilcox@vermont.gov
https://www.fpr.vermont.gov
Vermont County Foresters

The list of County Foresters is maintained on Department of Forests- Parks and Recreation Website:
https://fpr.vermont.gov/forest/list-vermont-county-foresters

Addison County Forester
Chris Olson 23 Pond Lane, Suite 300 Middlebury, VT 05753 Work Phone: 802-388-4969 x333
chrisolson@vermont.gov

Bennington County Forester
Cory Creagan 271 North Main Street, Suite 215 Rutland, VT 05701-2423 Work Phone: 802-505-0068
cory.creagan@vermont.gov

Caledonia/Essex County Forester
Matthew Langlais 374 Emerson Falls Road, Suite 4 St. Johnsbury, VT 05819 Work Phone: 802-751-0111
matt.langlais@vermont.gov

Chittenden County Forester
Ethan Tapper 111 West Street Essex Junction, VT 05452-4695 Work Phone: 802-585-9099 ethan.tapper@vermont.gov

Franklin/Grand Isle County Forester
Nancy Patch 278 South Main Street, Suite 2 St Albans, VT 05478 Work Phone: 802-917-2711
nancy.patch@vermont.gov

Lamoille County Forester
Emily Potter 29 Sunset Drive, Suite 1 Morrisville, VT 05661-8331 Work Phone: 802-622-4230
emily.potter@vermont.gov

Orange County Forester
Dave Paganelli 118 Prospect Street, Suite 102 White River Junction, VT 05001 Work Phone:
802-461-5304 david.paganelli@vermont.gov

Orange/Windsor County Forester
A.J. Follensbee 118 Prospect Street, Suite 102 White River Junction, VT 05001 Primary Phone: 802-595-2429 Alternate Phone: 802-281-5262
allen.follensbee@vermont.gov

Orleans County Forester
Jared Nunery 1162 North Craftsbury Road (Mail: P.O. Box 62) Craftsbury Common, VT 05827 Work Phone: 802-595-5754 jared.nunery@vermont.gov

Rutland County Forester
Kyle Mason 271 North Main Street, Suite 215 Rutland, VT 05701-2423 Work Phone: 802-595-9736
kyle.mason@vermont.gov

Southern Windsor County Forester
Hannah Dallas 118 Prospect Street, Suite 102 White River Junction, VT 05001 Work phone: 802-622-4169
hannah.dallas@vermont.gov

Washington County Forester
Robert Nelson 5 Perry Street, Suite 20 Barre, VT 05641-4265 Work Phone: 802-636-7203
Robert.Nelson@vermont.gov

Windham County Forester
Sam Schneski 130 Austine Drive, Suite 300 Brattleboro, VT 05301 Work Phone: 802-380-8916
sam.schneski@vermont.gov
The Forest Legacy Program (FLP) is a federal grant program to protect forestlands from conversion to non-forest uses. The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation working in conjunction with the USDA Forest Service is the State Lead Agency for Vermont’s Forest Legacy Program. The FLP provides funding to further conservation of important forestland properties. The program is entirely voluntary. Landowners who wish to participate may either sell the property as fee simple title (all rights), or only a portion of the property rights and retain ownership of the land. The use of conservation easements allows the land to remain in private ownership and ensures that important public values such as wildlife habitat, natural areas, forest resources, and outdoor recreation opportunities are protected.

Overview

The Forest Legacy Program provides for up to 75 percent of the costs of a conservation easement or fee-simple acquisition, including the costs of appraisals, surveys, closing costs, title work and insurance, and other associated costs. The remaining 25 percent must be matched by either the landowner or an assisting entity, such as a non-profit organization or non-federal governmental entity.

Landowner Responsibilities

Landowners who participate in the Forest Legacy Program will be required to manage their property according to the terms of the resulting conservation easement. As required for the Forest Legacy Program, a management plan or forest stewardship plan must be developed for each property. A management plan encourages long-term stewardship by assisting private landowners with the active management of their natural resources. Plans can be amended periodically to account for changes in landowner objectives, land ownership, or other factors which may not have been apparent originally.

Michael C. Snyder, Commissioner
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3801
michael.snyder@vermont.gov
Vermont’s UVA Program enables eligible private landowners who practice long-term forestry or agriculture to have their land appraised based on the property’s value of production of wood or food rather than its residential or commercial development value. The Department of Taxes, Division of Property Valuation and Review (PV&R) is the lead agency, but the Division of Forestry with County Foresters help to administer the Forestry Use Value Appraisal portion of the program.

Eligibility

- Parcels must contain at least 25 acres that will be enrolled and be managed according to a forest plant approved by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
- For most forestland on productive soils (Site I, II and III), the primary forest management objective must be long-term production of forest products in accordance with established forest practices. Wildlife habitat, aesthetics, recreation, watershed protection, etc. are acceptable objectives when consistent with and complementary to timber management. Significant wildlife habitats, special places and sensitive sites, miscellaneous inclusions of one acre or less, and Ecologically Significant Treatment Areas (ESTAs) may also qualify without timber production.
- Open/idle agricultural land (not eligible for Agriculture Use Value) that is not to be reforested within two years may also be enrolled but cannot exceed 20% of total enrolled qualifying acreage (open/idle ag land plus forested acres on productive soils)
- Site I land: Also called non-productive soils; land having soils incapable of growing a minimum amount of wood. There is no limit on Site IV enrollment.
- Not Eligible:
  - House sites and land under other private or commercial developments
  - A minimum of two acres surrounding dwellings including houses, camps and mobile homes
  - Land used for commercial mining or removal of gravel
  - Other non-conforming uses such as lawns, recreational ponds, cell phone towers, etc
  - Any forested areas where the landowner chooses not to harvest trees, unless enrolled as an ESTA.
  - Any utility right-of-way in excess of two acres and wider than 40 ft
  - Any land where vegetation is not under the legal control of the landowner may not be enrolled

For more information regarding forestland enrollment, please contact your County Forester.

For information regarding enrollment of agricultural land, Current Use Program
Division of Property Valuation & Review
PO Box 1499
Montpelier, VT 05601-1499
Phone: (802) 828-5860
https://tax.vermont.gov/property-owners/current-use
tax.currentuse@vermont.gov

If you have questions about the process, please contact the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation Current Use Division at (802) 828-5860
Resources for Trail Stewardship

Landowners who host specific types of recreation trails on their property may qualify for trail corridor management labor from local trail organizations. Organizations such as non-profits, municipalities and governmental entities can apply for funding related to maintenance and construction of public recreational trails, trail linkages, trailhead facilities and parking areas, trail rehabilitation, and easements. If you are interested in installing a trail, or seeking maintenance on a current trail, please reach out to your town conservation commission or Vermont Trails and Greenways Council to find organizations who operate in your area.

The Vermont Trails and Greenways Council (VTGC) is an independent advisory body that works with the Vermont Agency of Forest Parks and Recreation (FPR) to support Vermont Trails and Outdoor Recreation. The Council was founded as a nonprofit made up of a wide range of Vermont trail organizations. Our primary mission is to ensure that people will always have access to the trails and landscape of Vermont. This mission is driven by a commitment to trails as critical infrastructure for Vermont communities in ensuring better health, sustainable economies, and an increased commitment to conservation.

Early in its development, VTGC took on some important statutory responsibilities. The Council formally serves in an advisory capacity for FPR with a focus on three primary advisory roles:

1. Supporting the allocation of federal funds through the Recreational Trails Program of the Federal Highway Department;

2. Overseeing the Vermont Trail System with a focus on making recommendations about membership, trails standards and how to best maintain, build and advocate for trails in Vermont; and

3. Encouraging and supporting educational programs about Vermont trails and outdoor recreation.

The Council is organized around a core Board with outreach to a broader group of trails-related stakeholders throughout the state, including individuals, towns, nonprofits and some for-profit businesses. The current membership includes organizations responsible for more than 100,000 volunteer hours, over 70% of our public trails, and the infrastructure for outdoor recreation as one of our most important industries, providing more than 50,000 jobs in Vermont.

Vermont Trails and Greenways Council
26 VAST Lane
Barre, VT 05641
https://vermonttgc.org

Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3801
Lands Administration and Recreation: (802) 272-4156
Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

- Know your ash. Identify them and mark their location. Learn the signs and symptoms of EAB. Develop a response plan with your forester. Learn to identify EAB and report suspicious findings at www.VTInvasives.org.
- Consult your forester about protocols regarding relocating ash wood from affected areas. October 1st to May 31st, or the non-flight period, is the best time to conduct forest-related activities on ash.
- Keep firewood local. If you are inside the Infested Area, do not sell ash firewood outside of the Infested Area unless it has been heat treated. If heat treatment or buyers within the Infested Area aren’t available, it may be best to leave ash firewood on your property. If you are outside the Infested Area, do not buy ash firewood that came from within the Infested Area unless it has been legitimately heat treated. Talk to your dealer to ensure that the firewood you are buying has been handled according to the Slow the Spread Recommendations and doesn’t pose a threat to the ash in uninfested areas.
- A copy of Ash Processing Options to SLOW THE SPREAD of Emerald Ash Borer can be provided to you by the Department of Forests- Parks and Recreation. It is also available at VTinvasives.org/eab

Spongy Moth
Hand Removal: Egg masses can be removed from trees between August and May to reduce infestations in forthcoming years. Use a scraper to carefully remove the masses and submerge them into a container with soapy water or alcohol so that they can be destroyed (not onto the ground where they may still hatch).
Chemical Control: Btk (Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki) is a biopesticide can be applied by a registered pesticide application company or by homeowners who have carefully read application instructions. Btk is a product that affects the digestive system of caterpillars and should only be applied between May and early June, when spongy moths are still in the larval stage and are small (1/2 to 3/4 inch). Two spray applications are usually required for effective control. Application of Btk after mid-June is not an effective way to manage this pest.
Trapping: Caterpillars can be trapped using burlap. Start by wrapping an 18-inch wide strip around the tree at chest height. Tie a string around the center and fold the top portion down to form a skirt, with the string acting as a belt. Pick off the caterpillars daily and dispose of them by submerging them into a container with soapy water or alcohol.

Other invasive species to be aware of and report:
- Ash Yellows
- Asian longhorned beetle
- Basilsam wooly adelgid
- Beech bark disease
- Beech leaf disease
- Butternut canker
- Chestnut blight
- Dutch elm disease
- Elongate hemlock scale
- Hemlock wooly adelgid
- Jumping worm
- Oak wilt
- Pear thrips
- Red pine scale
- Sirex woodwasp
- Spotted lanternfly
- Thousand cankers disease
- White pine blister rust
- Winter moth
The University of Vermont (UVM) Extension
Forest Business Education & Planning Assistance

Our Forest Business program is funded by The UVM Extension and the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board and provides businesses in Vermont’s forest product sector with management resources, skills development, and one-on-one planning services. We aim to support the development of a sustainable forest economy in the Northeast by working with a diverse set of businesses including loggers, foresters, processors, mills, woodworkers, wood manufacturers, and timber framers.

One-On-One Business Planning Assistance
Over the course of a year participants can focus on projects including development and implementation of in-depth business plans, honing of finances, enterprise analysis planning, and creation of new marketing plans.

Business Clinics
Short, one-on-one meetings planned for a specific purpose such as a check-up to review progress with a business plan, a brief cash flow analysis or budget review, preparation for a loan application, or a job-level cost analysis. Find out more & register here: https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/agbizcoaching

UVM Extension Forest Business Roundtable
After a successful launch in 2021, the Forest Business Roundtable is back. A peer advisory cohort for forest and wood products businesses to share challenges and opportunities, hone business management skills, and develop leadership skills with a varied group of industry peers. 2nd cohort began May 2022 and includes monthly meetings with 10 to 12 business owners and managers including: Timber Harvesters, Mills, Wood Manufacturers, Foresters, Artisans, Value Added Producers, and Maple Businesses, joining an informal board of directors’ atmosphere. Participants can explore a variety of business skills and disciplines, learn from industry professionals invited to meetings based on interest of the group, network with operators in the forest economy, develop relationships, and do business.

Contact
Chris Lindgren, Forest Business Program Manager; 1-800-281-6977 ext 274; Christopher.Lindgren@uvm.edu

Chris provides one-on-one business planning and coaching, as well as business skills workshops and training to Vermont’s forest products industry and businesses. He also works with the Maple Business Benchmark project managing data and developing business planning tools and resources. Chris has been working with Extension since 2013 when he collaborated on work with Farm Viability and the Carrot Project. Previously, he worked in small businesses for 25 years, focusing on finance and production management. He also has specific experience in sawmills, wood products manufacturing and timber framing. Chris grew up in Vermont, built a post and beam home on his family’s land and operates a small sugaring operation with his family. In his spare time he enjoys exploring the mountains and valleys of Vermont with his family. He holds a B.A. and M.B.A. from Marlboro College, as well as continuing education in accounting.
The UVM Extension Maple Program supports maple producers by providing research-based educational solutions for maintaining sustainable operations with above-average yields of high quality syrup.

Vermont Maple Minute

The Vermont Maple Minute is a podcast hosted by Mark Isselhardt, University of Vermont Maple Specialist, Proctor Maple Research Center. Listen to the podcast at:
https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/vermont-maple-minute-1

Maple Career Education

Learn about career development events for students at:
https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/maple-career-education

Maple Conference Recordings and Materials

Watch, listen to, and read materials related to past Maple Conferences:
https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/maple_conference

Annual Maple Statistics


Maple Regulations

Stay up-to-date on USDA Grade Standards, Canadian Regulations, Vermont Regulations, Vermont Laws and Inspection Procedures at: https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/maple-regulations

Business Resources

Find resources related to annual production and yield forecast, multi-year production yield, pricing and sales forecast, rental rates, sap pricing and hauling costs at:
https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/maple/bizmodules/maple-business-planning-modules

Special programs include:

- Businesses generating more than 100k in gross sales are eligible for the Maple Benchmark Program which offers a business financial analysis. Sign Up: go.uvm.edu/maplebench
- The Maple Sap Business Promotion Program offers plenty of tools to analyze your current or potential sap business https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Agriculture/agbusiness/factsheets/Maple_Sap_Business_Promotion_Program_Information_Resource_Sheet.pdf

For Maple Benchmarking, Mark Cannella
Mark.Cannella@uvm.edu, (802) 476-2003

For Maple Sap Business Promotion, Chris Lindgren
Christopher.Lindgren@uvm.edu, (802) 733-3349 ext 247

Mark Isselhardt, UVM Extension Maple Specialist
Mark.Isselhardt@uvm.edu (802) 899-9926
The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFM) offers funding assistance through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to organic producers and handlers of agricultural products who have received organic certification through a USDA-accredited certifying agent. Certified organic operations may receive reimbursement of up to 50% of their direct certification costs paid between October 1 and September 30 annually, not to exceed $500 per certification scope. There are up to four eligible certification scopes (crops, livestock, wild crops, and handling, which must be individually inspected for organic certification to be eligible for reimbursement. Please note that available funds for this program are reduced from previous years. Reimbursement is available on a first come, first served basis.

Eligibility
- Certified organic producers and Handlers who have paid certification fees to become newly certified or recertified for specific scopes under the NOP
- Crops
- Livestock
- Wild crops
- Handling

Costs
- Application fees
- Inspection fees including travel costs and per diem for organic inspectors
- USDA organic certification costs
- User fees/sale assessments
- Postage
- OCCSP state organic program fees

Learn more about organic certification:
Northeast Organic Farming Association-Vermont (NOFA-VT)
PO Box 697, Richmond, VT 05477
https://nofavt.org
(802) 434-4122

Terry Smith, Executive Assistant, VAAFM
Terry.Smith@vermont.gov
(802) 828-5667
OCIA Research and Education, Inc. was incorporated in 2002 and is a 501(c)(3) organization. OCIA R&E is led by a six-member board of directors and one OCIA staff member. OCIA Research and Education was formed by OCIA International members to fund organic farming research conducted around the world. Research results are presented to members during annual meetings and through quarterly newsletters. The mission of OCIA Research and Education is to support farmer driven research, on farm and at research institutions, including exploratory and demonstration projects. We facilitate connections between farmers, researchers, consumers and decision-makers, and educate organic producers and local and global communities regarding organic farming and foods.

2 deadlines per year: 
March 15th & November 15th

Minimum $500
Maximum $3,000

Apply by email: info@ocia.org

75% released upon acceptance of a proposal and 25% released when final report submitted

Eligibility

Eligible Practices:
- Educational resources related to organic agriculture for school-aged children.
- Research pertaining to organic agriculture

Examples include:
- Variety trials
- Grafting
- Weed control
- Transitioning to organic

Does not include: Equipment, infrastructure, labor costs, or community gardens

Organic Crop Improvement Association
International
info@ocia.org
(402) 477-2323
https://ocia.org
Since its founding in 1990, OFRF has awarded 337 grants to organic researchers and farmers, investing over $3M. All OFRF-funded research must involve farmers or ranchers in project design and implementation, take place on certified organic land, and include strong education and outreach components. All research results are freely available in our online database.

Eligibility

- Applicants should articulate how the proposed research project will foster the improvement or adoption of organic farming systems, as well as ways in which organic farmers or ranchers can use the project results in their operations.

- All research proposals MUST address the resiliency of organic systems to challenges like climate change and/or have economic and social considerations to complement on-farm research.

- Research projects MUST include strong education and outreach components and contain measurable outcomes. Projects should include expected impacts due to the results or outcomes of the projects.

Organic Farming Research Foundation
https://ofrf.org
(831) 426-6606
grants@ofrf.org
The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) helps farmers and ranchers to repair damage to farmlands caused by natural disasters and to help put in place methods for water conservation during severe drought. The ECP does this by giving ranchers and farmers funding and assistance to repair the damaged farmland or to install methods for water conservation.

**Eligibility**

FSA county committees determine land eligibility based on on-site inspections of damaged land and the type and extent of damage. Eligible land includes land used for:

- Commercial farming, ranching and orchard operations
- Growing nursery stock and Christmas tree plantations
- Grazing for commercial livestock production
- Conservation structures such as, waterways, terraces, diversions and windbreaks

*Conservation problems existing before the applicable disaster event are ineligible for ECP assistance*

**Payment**

- Up to 75% of the cost to implement approved restoration practices;
- Up to 90% of the cost to implement approved restoration practices for producers who certify as limited resource, socially-disadvantaged or beginning farmers/ranchers
- Limited to $500,000 per person or legal entity per disaster
- Available as an advance payment of up to 25% of expected cost-share, for only the replacement or restoration of fencing

**Practices**

- Removing debris from farmland (cleanup of wind- or water-deposited debris, such as woody material, sand, rock and trash on cropland or pastureland)
- Grading, shaping or leveling land (filling gullies, re-leveling irrigated farmland, and incorporating sand and silt)
- Restoring fences (livestock cross fences, boundary fences, cattle gates, or wildlife exclusion fence on agricultural land)
- Restoring conservation structures (waterways, terraces, diversion ditches and permanently installed ditching system)
- Providing emergency water during periods of severe drought

---

The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) is administered by FSA state and county committees and county offices. Producers should contact their local FSA county office regarding ECP enrollment periods and eligibility.

FSA state office (802) 658-2803
The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA), provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops to protect against natural disasters that result in lower yields or crop losses, or prevents crop planting.

Eligibility

An eligible producer is a landowner, tenant, or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing an eligible crop and is entitled to an ownership share of that crop. An individual’s or entity’s average adjusted gross income (AGI) cannot exceed $900,000 to be eligible for NAP payments. Also, NAP payments received, directly or indirectly, will be attributed to the applicable individual or entity and limited to $125,000 per crop year, per individual or entity for crops with basic (catastrophic) coverage. Any NAP payments received directly or indirectly for crops with additional (buy-up) coverage, will be attributed to the applicable individual or entity and limited to $300,000 per crop year, per individual or entity. To learn more, visit fsa.usda.gov/limits.

Eligible crops must be commercially produced agricultural commodities for which crop insurance is not available and be any of the following:

- Crops grown for food
- Crops planted and grown for livestock consumption, such as grain and forage crops, including native forage; Crops grown for fiber, such as cotton and flax (except trees)
- Crops grown in a controlled environment, such as mushrooms and floriculture
- Specialty crops, such as honey and maple sap
- Sea oats and sea grass
- Sweet sorghum and biomass sorghum
- Industrial crops, including crops used in manufacturing or grown as a feedstock for renewable biofuel, renewable electricity or biobased products
- Value loss crops, such as aquaculture, Christmas trees, ginseng, ornamental nursery and turf-grass sod; and
- Seed crops where the propagation stock is produced for sale as seed stock for other eligible NAP crop production

Find your local FSA Service Center
https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?
state=vt&agency=fsa

View the Program Website:
https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-
services/disaster-assistance-program/noninsured-
crop-disaster-assistance/index

FSA State Office
356 Mountain View Drive
Suite 104
Colchester, VT 05446
Phone: (802) 658-2803
Fax: (855) 794-3676
The NOFA Vermont Farmer Emergency Fund is available to assist Vermont certified organic and NOFA Vermont member commercial farmers who are in financial need after having been adversely affected by natural and unnatural disasters such as income loss due to crop failure, field flooding, fire, barn collapse, etc. Farmers may request up to $2,500 in grants that do not need to be repaid.

Eligibility

The fund is available to certified Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF) who have been certified for at least one year or current NOFA Vermont commercial farmers who have been NOFA Vermont members for at least one year.

The fund may be used to help replace infrastructure, for example greenhouses barns, fencing, seed equipment, feed equipment, livestock equipment, and other losses caused by the disaster.

The fund may be used to help pay outstanding farm related bills and immediate needs such as loan and mortgage repayments.

The fund is not an alternative to insurance and does not cover losses that are covered by a successful insurance claim or losses covered by other sources.

The fund may not be used to cover projected income from crops lost from the disaster.

NOFA VT
(802) 434-4122
info@NOFAVT.org
https://nofavt.org
Farm Service Agency (FSA)
Field Offices

Addison County Farm Service Agency,
68 Catamount Park, Middlebury VT
05753
(802) 388-6748

Windham County Farm Service Agency
(Serves Bennington) 28 Vernon St.,
Brattleboro, VT 05301
(802) 254-9755

Caledonia County Farm Service Agency
(Serves Chittenden and Essex Counties)
481 Summer St., St Johnsbury, VT
05819, (802) 748-2641

Windsor County Farm Service Agency
(Serves Orange) 28 Farmvu Dr., White River
Jctn., VT 05001
(802) 295-7942

Chittenden County Farm Service Agency
(Serves Washington), 94 Harvest Ln.,
Williston, VT 05495
(802) 288-8155

Farm Service Agency State Office
356 Mountain View Dr.,
Colchester, VT 05446 (802) 658-2803

Franklin County Farm Service Agency
(Serves Grand Isle), 50 S. Main St., St.
Albans, VT 05478
(802) 527-1296 ext 110

Lamoille County Farm Service Agency
109 Professional Dr. Ste 2, Morrisville,
VT 05661
(802) 888-4935

Orleans County Farm Service Agency
59 Waterfront Plaza Ste 11, Newport, VT
05855
(802) 334-6090

Rutland County Farm Service Agency
(Serves Bennington) 170 S. Main St. Ste
4, Rutland, VT 05701
(802) 775-8034
Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCD)
Offices

Bennington County NRCD
170 South Main St, Suite 4 Rutland, VT 05701
Michael Fernandez, District Manager (802) 775-8034 ext 1432

Caledonia County NRCD
481 Summer St., Ste. 202, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
Emily Finnegan, District Manager (802) 424-3149

Essex County NRCD
5396 VT-105, Brunswick, VT 05905
Heather Johnson, District Manager, essexnrcd@gmail.com

Franklin County NRCD
50 South Main Street, Saint Albans, VT 05478
Lauren Weston, District Manager 802-528-4176

Grand Isle County NRCD
P.O. Box 212, North Hero, VT 05474
Molly Varner, District Manager (802) 372-8400

Lamoille County NRCD
109 Professional Drive, Suite 2, Morrisville, VT 05661
Peter Danforth, District Manager (802) 521-2004

Orleans County NRCD
59 Waterfront Plaza Newport, VT 05855
Sarah Damsell, District Manager (802) 334-6090 x 7008

Ottauquechee NRCD
28 Farmvu Drive, White River Junction, VT 05001
Sue Greenall, District Manager (802) 369-3166

Otter Creek NRCD
68 Catamount Park, Ste. B, Middlebury, VT 05753
Pamela Stefanek, District Manager (802)-388-6746 ext. 126

Poultney Mettowee NRCD
PO Box 209, Poultney VT 05764
Hilary Solomon, District Manager (802) 287-6880

Rutland NRCD
170 S Main Street Ste 4, Rutland, VT 05701
Nanci McGuire, District Manager (802)-775-8034 ext.117

White River NRCD
28 Farmvu Dr, White River Junction, VT 05001
Jennifer Byrne, District Manager (802) 369-3167

Windham County NRCD
28 Vernon Street, Suite 332 Brattleboro, VT 05301
Cory Ross, District Manager (802) 689-3024

Winooski NRCD
94 Harvest Lane, Suite 203, Williston, VT 05495
Remy Crettol, District Manager (802) 288-8155 ext. 104
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Field Offices

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Office
356 Mountain View Drive, Suite 105
Colchester, Vermont 05446
802-951-6796/Fax: 855-794-3677

Northwest Zone:
St. Albans NRCS Field Office, 50 South Main St, Ste B-20 St. Albans, VT 05478
802-527-1296

Morrisville NRCS Field Office, 109 Professional Dr., Ste. 2 Morrisville, VT 05661
802-888-4935

Northeast Zone:
Newport NRCS Field Office, 59 Waterfront Plaza, Ste. 12 Newport, VT 05855
802-334-6090

St. Johnsbury NRCS Field Office, 481 Summer St., Ste. 202 St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
T802-748-2641

White River Junction NRCS Field Office, 28 Farmvu Dr. White River Jct., VT 05001
802-295-7942

Central Zone:
Middlebury NRCS Field Office, 68 Catamount Park, Ste. B Middlebury, VT 05753
802-388-6748

Williston NRCS Field Office, 94 Harvest Lane, Suite 203 Williston, VT 05495-8997
802-288-8155

Berlin Field Office, 617 Comstock Rd., Ste. 1 Berlin, VT 05602
802-828-4493

South Zone:
Rutland NRCS Field Office, 170 S. Main St., Ste. 4 Rutland, VT 05701
802-775-8034

White River Junction NRCS Field Office, 28 Farmvu Dr. White River Jct., VT 05001
802-295-7942

Brattleboro NRCS Field Office, 28 Vernon St., Ste. 332 Brattleboro, VT 05301
802-689-3037
Organizations

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
Bruce Summers, Administrator
AMSAAdministratorOffice@usda.gov

Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
(802) 828-1556

Food Animals Concerns Trust (FACT)
(773) 525-4952
grants@foodanimalconcerns.org

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Northeast Region
10 Causeway St. Room 501
Boston, MA 02222-1069
(617) 565-6370

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
Information Hotline: (202) 720-2791

Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC)
Kathryn Donovan, Center Coordinator
kathryn.donovan@vermont.gov
(802) 585-4571

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA VT)
(802) 434-4122
info@nofavt.org

Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA)
(402) 477-2323
info@ocia.org

Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF)
(831) 426-6606
grants@ofrf.org

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)
Partners for Fish and Wildlife
Chris Smith, Supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist (802) 662-5303;
chris_e_smith@fws.gov

Rural Development - Vermont State Office
87 State Street Suite 324, P O Box 249
Montpelier, VT 05601
Sarah Waring, State Director (802) 828-6000

Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)
Beth Holtzman, State SARE Coordinator
(802) 476-2003
beth.holtzman@uvm.edu

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM)
(802) 828-2430
AGR.Helpdesk@vermont.gov

Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD)
Lindsay Kurrle Secretary (802) 828-3080
lindsay.kurrle@vermont.gov

Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA)
(802) 828-5627
info@veda.org

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB)
(802) 828-3250
info@vhcb.org

Vermont Land Trust (VLT)
(802) 223-5234
info@vlt.org