

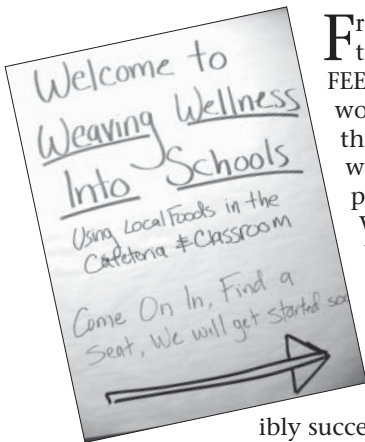


# Growing FEED

The Network Newsletter of VT FEED Schools

Vermont Food Education Every Day (VT FEED) is a community-based approach to school food system change in a rural state through a collaboration of three Vermont nonprofits: Food Works, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, and Shelburne Farms.

## Hittin' the Road with Farm to School



From November 2006 to March 2007, VT FEED hosted six regional workshops throughout the state. The workshops were a partnership project of VT FEED with VT Dept of Education, VT Agency of Agriculture, and Southern VT Area Health Education Center (AHEC), which proved to be incredibly successful. The workshops, titled "Weaving Wellness into Schools: Using Local Foods in the Cafeteria and Classroom," were designed to help schools and child care centers in communities statewide improve

their food and nutrition environments and make connections to local food sources. A broad representation of the public attended, including farmers, food service employees, teachers, parents, students, and school wellness committee members. The workshops provided the first opportunity for people to gather by region in the state of Vermont to discuss how to create "farm to school" programs. Workshops were hosted in Chester, Manchester, Orleans, St. Albans, Vergennes and Barre. Attendance grew



Joseph Kiefer of Food Works and teachers prepare root sticks for dipping in bean dip. At each workshop, participants prepared a community dinner together.

In 6 regional workshops, VT FEED took its message to **400** people from more than **100** communities.

with each workshop, and the final workshop in Barre had the largest group of over eighty people.

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## Governor Douglas signs "Rozo's Law": Farm to School Grants become permanent program

All the students, teachers and visitors gathered in the Hartland Elementary School multi-purpose room on May 16, 2007 to watch Gov. Douglas sign a bill into law. "Rozo's Law" was enacted to establish state-funded farm to school grants as a permanent program available to Vermont schools.

"This is an incredible moment," Dana Hudson, VT FEED coordinator, said as she spoke to the

crowd that had gathered. "Rozo would be so proud!" In honor of Rep. Rosemary McLaughlin of South Royalton, who passed away last fall, the permanent farm to school program was named in respect to her dedication as a champion of the original farm to school legislation.

During the 2006 legislative session, Rep. McLaughlin along with some fellow outstanding legislators worked with VT

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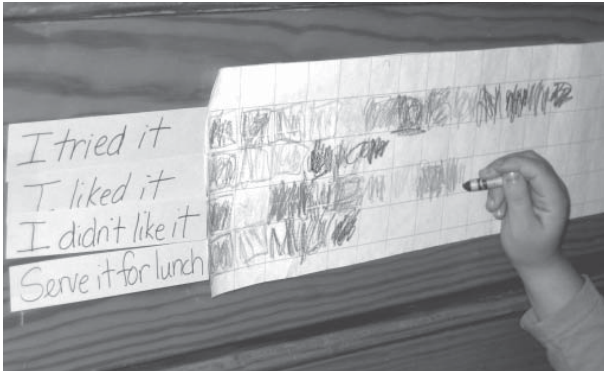
The late Rep. Rosemary "Rozo" McLaughlin of South Royalton (1952-2006), was a champion of farm to school



## Notes from the Field

Farm to School projects have taken on many forms this past year! Here are just a few of the ways schools are incorporating food, farm, and nutrition into their cafeterias, classrooms and communities.

**Johnson, Cambridge, and Winooski** featured local food lunches with The Abbey Food Service Group. They focused



their meal around Cinco de Mayo, the celebration of Mexican Independence. These lunches included homemade tortillas, local products such as: ground beef, cheese, greens, salsa, and an apple dessert. Some of the farmers came to share in these bountiful lunches and talk about their farms with the students.

**Three Brattleboro schools** along with Café Services food service staff are doing five monthly taste tests featuring spring spinach in their salads, and a variety of melons, peppers, and tomatoes in the Fall. They also are taking their students to the farms that are growing the products they will taste.

Middle school students in **Burlington** created food lessons that they taught to elementary

classrooms. They made salad and hummus wraps with the students to highlight what is available on the sandwich bars of the middle and high school.

At **Jay/Westfield** Elementary in Franklin County the afterschool program students are using new recipes to create snacks for the whole school the following school day. Squash muffins were a big hit. These experiences include learning about nutrition, what makes a healthy snack, and how the foods are produced.

Students at **Sharon** Elementary have made herbal first aid kits, learned about wheat and bread-making, analyzed food marketing and advertisement, prepared taste tests, and more as they culminate their 3rd year of school-wide food system change.

## “Schools think globally, snack locally”

By Molly Walsh, published in the Burlington Free Press January 10, 2007. Excerpted here and used with permission.

When Alison Forrest wanted students at Brewster Pierce Elementary School in Huntington to eat Vermont-grown parsnips, she brought the pale white root vegetables into classrooms for a taste test before she introduced them in the lunch room.

Over the years the school food service director has found that students will gobble up fresh Vermont veggies and fruits if they get a chance to sample them before they show up in the cafeteria.

Forrest, who is passionate about getting more Vermont food on school lunch trays, also has found that students are much more likely to eat fresh-tasting local produce than watery lettuce shipped in from the West Coast. “They are actually eating it,” Forrest said. “They are not

just taking it on their plate and throwing it in the garbage.”

As part of the effort to bring healthy local food into the Burlington schools, students visit farms and farmers visit schools -- including the ones their own kids attend.

“They actually are able to serve their own kids, in their own schools, their own food. Which just a couple of years ago seemed so foreign,” said Doug Davis, director of food service for Burlington schools.

For years, farmers, conservationists and nutritionists have lobbied to get more Vermont food into schools. They argue that doing so will help replace fattening hot dogs and Tater Tots with fresher, healthier fare while expanding the market for Vermont farmers.

Although many people believe more Vermont food is landing on students’ plates, it remains a small portion of the total food served in Vermont schools. No more than 5 to 10 percent of the millions Vermont schools spend annually on food goes to Vermont farmers, according to Dana Hudson, coordinator of Vermont FEED.

Forrest shops smart to keep costs manageable. Sometimes farmers who grow primarily for restaurants and markets will give her discount prices on seconds -- a batch of fresh tomatoes with slight splits, for example. She’s eliminated processed food that requires less labor to serve but is often more expensive to buy than local products. “We don’t serve any hot dogs or chicken nuggets or fish sticks,” Forrest said.



## Vermont Farm to School 2006 grant recipients



The team of grant recipients from Rumney Memorial School in Middlesex all attended the VT FEED regional workshop on March 8, 2007.

In 2006, Vermont passed its first Farm to School Bill, now Act 145, to increase nutrition education and use of Vermont products in schools. This Bill provided \$125,000 in funding through farm to school grants. In the fall of 2006, schools from across the state submitted their proposed projects. The grant review team included representatives of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, the Vermont Agency of Human Services, the Vermont Department of Health and the Vermont Heart Asso-

ciation. An amazing 62 grant applications were received, with close to 100 schools involved in these funding requests. On Thursday, January 18, 2007 VT FEED hosted a Community Forum in the State House cafeteria, the first event to honor schools that received farm to school grant funding. The legislation for the grants asked State Agencies involved to ecommend further strategies to increase use of locally grown food in Vermont Schools, regulated child care programs and state agencies. This forum provided an opportunity for Vermonters to give input on this legislation and promoted conversation and ideas surrounding expanding Farm to School efforts in Vermont. Close to 100 legisla-

tion. An amazing 62 grant applications were received, with close to 100 schools involved in these funding requests.

On Thursday, January 18, 2007 VT FEED hosted a Community Forum in the State House cafeteria, the

On January 1, 2007, 12 farm to school grant recipients were announced. Each school has until December 1, 2007 to complete their Farm to School related activities.

These communities/schools were:

- Woodstock Union Middle & High School
- Brattleboro Academy, Oak Grove & Green Street Schools
- The Washington Village School
- Ferrisburgh Central School & The Walden Project of Vergennes Union High School
- Bingham Memorial School, Cornwall
- The Orleans-Essex North Supervisory Union, Jay/Westfield Elementary, Holland Elementary & Lowell Graded Schools
- Blue Mt. Union School, Wells River
- Hartland Elementary School
- Rumney Memorial School, Middlesex
- Winooski Elementary, Middle & High Schools
- The Salisbury Community School
- Barre Town Middle & Elementary Schools

tors and community members attended. The event was a wonderful celebration for an exciting year for farm to school work in Vermont!

## What is happening nationally with Farm to School?

Ten years ago the idea of getting local food into schools was barely getting off the ground. Since then, the Farm to School movement has made incredible progress. Based on data from the National Farm to School website, across the country over 400 school districts in 22 states have active farm to school programs. And, this number is growing every day!

What does it take to make a national movement work? With increased focus on childhood obesity, agriculture viability, and the subculture movement

from global to local economies, getting local food into schools has been a positive multi-objective strategy to respond to all these issues.

Farm to school looks different in different parts of our country. Climate, school structure, curriculum constraints, cafeteria staffing and equipment, and distribution networks are a few variables that need to be considered in the design of a farm to school program. In **Florida**, a farmer cooperative started selling to one school in 1997 and by 2003 was selling to 15 school

districts in 4 local states; In **Kentucky**, the State Department of Agriculture facilitates the communication between farmers and schools and many schools are starting to link it to a wellness curriculum for 5th, 7th and 9th graders; In Santa Monica, **California** each school has a farmer's market salad bar stocked daily with products purchased at their year-round farmer's markets.



For more about farm to school work in Vermont and nationally, visit: [www.farmtoschool.org](http://www.farmtoschool.org)



# Apple Poetry

## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can we use our senses to explore food?

## MATERIALS

- cutting boards
- knives
- plates
- a variety of local apples (*or other local produce, depending on the season*)
- small slips of paper
- paper bags

## GRADE LEVEL

Best for grades 2-6, requires writing. May be adapted for younger students as a taste test using descriptive words.

## OBJECTIVE

Students will sharpen their observation and identification skills through a food poetry exercise. They will also have the opportunity to use all of their senses to explore food.

## EXTENSIONS

1. Students can learn about different varieties of fruits and vegetables.
2. Make a map of where the varieties of produce they ate where grown.
3. Students can discuss how this food was harvested, then visit a local farm (or the school garden) and harvest!
4. The class can observe seeds from the food they tasted and plant the seeds in the school garden.
5. Students can discuss what vitamins are in this food.
6. The class can discuss how different cultures use and grow this food.

## ACTIVITY

1. Place each apple at its own station throughout the room. Place the small slips of paper at each station, along with a paper bag. You should have enough slips of paper so that each student has one slip per station.
2. Explain to the students that food has inspired artists in their work. Read aloud some poetry about different foods (see examples). Discuss with the students that poetry doesn't always have to rhyme and that it can be written creatively as a group.
3. Explain to the students that they will be visiting each station around the room and will be writing a group poem. Ask the students to write a single word or short phrase on a slip of paper and place it in the adjacent paper bag. Encourage them to record whatever stands out about that apple- perhaps something it reminds them of, or its color, shape, or smell. The most important rule is that the students do not write the name of the apple that they are writing about.
4. When everyone has had a chance to visit and write about each apple, divide students into small working groups. Give each group a bag. Explain that they will be using the words and phrases inside the bag to create a poem about their apple. Request that each word or phrase be used, even if it was written more once. From their writing, the rest of the class must guess which apple they are describing.
5. Have the students present their poem to the group. After all poems are read students can sample the apples and have a taste test.

**Fun Fact:** In 1999, the Vermont legislature designated the apple as the state fruit, and the apple pie as the state pie.

**Good Vermont Apple Website:** <http://www.vermontapples.org/varieties.html>

**This Is Just to Say**  
by William Carlos Williams

I have eaten  
the plums  
that were in  
the icebox

and which  
you were probably  
saving  
for breakfast

Forgive me  
they were delicious  
so sweet  
and so cold

**Vegetables**  
By Shel Silverstein

Eat a tomato and you'll turn red  
(I don't think that's really so);  
Eat a carrot and you'll turn orange  
(Still and all, you never know);  
Eat some spinach and you'll turn green  
(I'm not saying that it's true  
But that's what I heard, and so  
I thought I'd pass it on to you).

Adapted from Shelburne Farms' Project Seasons activity, "Posy Poetry."



# Chicken Noodle Soup with Dill

EATING WELL Magazine and four UVM students from the Food Science Program tested EATING WELL recipes with the YMCA after-school program at Founders Memorial School in Essex. Because children are more likely to eat (and like) foods that they are vested in, the students were involved in every aspect of the project, including preparing the recipe in the school's kitchen, producing marketing materials to promote the recipes, and serving the snacks to their peers. The recipes we prepared were "Chicken Noodle Soup with Dill" and "Creamy Dill Ranch Dressing with fresh veggies." The experience, and the response to both foods was overwhelmingly positive. The kids never knew they liked dill! The recipe below was contributed by Lisa Goselin of EATING WELL Magazine and adapted by Amy Davidson of Wolcott and Abbie Nelson of VT FEED.

## INGREDIENTS

- 4 ½ quarts chicken broth, homemade or reduced-sodium canned
- 1 lb. carrots, diced (*available locally all winter and spring*)
- ½ lbs. celeriac, diced (*Celeriac is a storage root locally available in winter and spring. In summer and fall, replace with celery.*)
- ½ c. grated fresh ginger (*or ¼ cup dried ginger, but fresh ginger gives the soup a 'sparky' taste*)
- ½ c. garlic, minced
- 12 oz. dried egg noodles
- 3 lbs. shredded cooked skinless chicken
- 4 oz. chopped fresh dill (*or 2-3 oz. dried dill. Fresh dill gives the soup a very fresh taste and is locally available in late May in Vermont.*)
- 2 oz. lemon juice, or to taste

## INSTRUCTIONS

*Labor-saving tip: use a food processor for the dicing and mincing.*

1. Bring broth to a boil. Add carrots, celeriac, ginger and garlic; cook, uncovered, over medium heat until vegetables are just tender, about 20 minutes.
2. Add noodles and chicken; continue cooking until noodles are just tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in dill and lemon juice.

Storage: Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

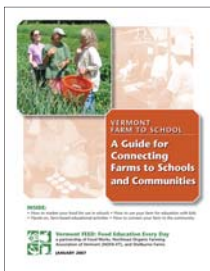
## NUTRITION INFORMATION

| Amount per Serving     |         |
|------------------------|---------|
| Calories               | 191 cal |
| Protein                | 24g     |
| Carbohydrate           | 14g     |
| Fat, Total             | 4g      |
| Saturated Fat          | 2g      |
| Monosaturated Fat      | 1g      |
| Cholesterol            | 64g     |
| Dietary Fiber, Total   | 1g      |
| Sodium                 | 182mg   |
| Percentage of Calories |         |
| Fat, total             | 53.0%   |

Makes 24, one-cup servings

## Vermont Farm to School Tool Kit Now Available!

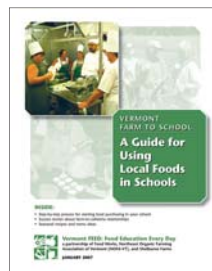
### A Guide for Connecting Farms to Schools and Communities



This resource is designed to help farmers, teachers and others interested in how to use farms

for education and for sourcing local food. It includes strategies to market local food to the schools, and over 45 hands-on, farm-based educational activities. The guide had input from over ten Vermont farmers who have hosted educational visits on their farms for years.

### A Guide for Using Local Food in Schools



This step by step guide is filled with strategies for purchasing food from local farms, suc-

cess stories of farm-to-cafeteria relationships, and seasonal recipes tested in the kitchens of 12 Vermont food service employees and already enjoyed by thousands of students! Ideal for school food service, it is also for any school staff looking to build relationships with farmers to use local food in the cafeteria.

### Grow Up Fresh Vermont Farm to School DVD



This inspirational video is filled with stories from schools

and farms in Vermont. Hear farmers, teachers, parents, principals, doctors, and students share the success of farm to school efforts across the state. It is the best spent 23 minutes and leaves viewers charged and ready to take action! It is the only video of its kind for the state of Vermont!

To purchase this tool kit, see the enclosed order form.

After years of hard work, collaboration, and community input, VT FEED is excited to offer a "tool kit" to help spark and support your farm to school initiatives! The tool kit's three resources are an invaluable investment for your school and community.



Hittin' the Road with Farm to School - *continued from p.1*

Each workshop allowed participants to meet and collaborate with others they often never see in their community. For instance, farmers met teachers from the school across the street, and parents met food service staff at their children's school. This time also gave schools that received Farm to School grants the chance to explore opportunities for their grant-funded projects (see more about the Farm to School Grants on p.3). The workshops included an overview of what Farm to School looks like in Vermont, followed by a panel of community members that shared their experiences with such work. Panels varied with every unique community, but usually comprised of a teacher, farmer, food service employee and health professional.

A variety of mini-workshops followed, the first being a "peer workshop" providing attendees a chance to address questions relating to their specific profession. Farmers discussed the challenges and benefits of selling



Anders Proft, son of farmer-presenter Scout Proft, displays fresh veggies for dinner at the VT Feed workshop in Manchester, VT.

locally to schools. Food service employees discussed how to set up purchasing contracts with farmers, how to cook with local foods, use seasonal recipes, and how to combine commodity food with local food. Teachers discussed how to integrate food, farm, and nutrition education into existing curriculum goals, and health professionals discussed their role in school food change.

One participant said of the experience, "In my ten years as an educator, this is the first professional development

workshop that was worthwhile. You're the first to practice what you preach!" The rest of the afternoon focused on a variety of other "choice workshops" including: Hands-On Food Education, Taste Testing, Local Purchasing Options, and Hunger, Obesity and Food Preference. A highlight for many was the opportunity to help prepare a community meal, which was enjoyed by all attending at the closing of the day. Using fresh local produce and

recipes tested in schools, everyone attending was able to chop cabbage, grate cheese and see first hand what it would be like as a student eating local food in a school. Dishes prepared by the group were: a harvest salad, local root sampling, Vermont vegetable rice pilaf, and a yummy apple-cranberry crisp. At the close of the night, discussions during the community meal focused on "action steps" to walk out the door with, empowering all to keep the momentum and excitement propelled by the workshop!

"Rozo's" Law - *continued from p.1*

FEED to craft language for the groundbreaking legislation called ACT 145. This allowed schools to apply for up to \$15,000 toward efforts to purchase local products for school cafeterias and expand food and farming education efforts for students. In this first pilot year, over 62 applicants representing over 100 Vermont schools applied for funding. There was only funding for 12 grantees.

ACT 145 was a one time only program, basically to gage the level of interest in the communities. With a third of Vermont

schools applying in the first year, it was evident that the interest was overwhelming. So during the 2007 legislative session, work began to make the farm to school granting program a permanent opportunity that schools could apply for annually to initiate and support their efforts.

"Not only are we seeing the interest and demand around Vermont, I have received calls from all over the



Sharon 3rd graders celebrating farm to school legislation at the state house.

country from states working on similar legislation. We have become a model for others, it's wonderful!" Dana adds.

**Read more about the farm to school grant recipients on p.3.**



## Recent Awards and Recognition

This spring VT FEED and the Burlington School Food Project partner, Bonnie Acker, received UVM's "Vermont Campus Compact Engaged Partner Award" for "meaningful and committed engagement with a higher education partner for mutually beneficial results." For about three years Bonnie and Abbie Nelson of VT FEED have worked with groups of UVM students enrolled in a "Service Learning" course. Projects have been carried out with various teachers, school to parent coordinators, and school food service providing hands-on learning for UVM students, as well as a service to the Burlington School District.

Projects have varied. For one project, students taught nutrition lessons about healthy snacks in the Edmunds Family and Consumer Science (FACS) classes. The snacks (apple and cheddar cheese quesadillas, English muffin pizzas, and broccoli and dip) were highlighted at the FACS class dinner last spring.

In another project, students worked with "Food Ambassadors" to run taste test and food lessons in several Burlington Elementary classrooms. The "Food Ambassadors", who are 7th and 8th graders from the Navigator Team at Edmunds Middle School, introduced hummus and vegetable wraps (now a highlighted choice on

the sandwich bars in some of the Burlington schools), and surveyed students and teachers about the success of the program.

Vermont Dietetic Association is giving it's 2007 "Vermont Pyramid Award" to Rep. Mitzi Johnson, the late Rep. Rozo McLaughlin and Abbie Nelson of VT FEED for "your hard work and dedication to the Farm to school initiative. The award is given annually to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the health of Vermonters by promoting healthy eating habits, but who may not be members of VDA or not active in VDA."

Congratulations to all!

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## Websites and Resources

[www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/meal\\_appeal.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/meal_appeal.pdf) "Meal Appeal". Team Nutrition. USDA

This site contains a handbook that focuses on promoting fruits and vegetables to attract students to healthy meals. There is also information about presenting foods, promoting school meals with a special emphasis on fruits and vegetables and delivering customer services. It emphasizes students' input through taste tests, planting of school gardens, buying locally and linking nutrition with the classroom.

<http://panen.psu.edu> State Nutrition Action Plan (S.N.A.P.)

Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network. The Pennsylvania State University. 2001-2006.

SNAP agencies encourage vegetable intake, emphasizing local grown, through materials developed for 18 vegetables currently. These pages cover nutrition, health benefits, growing, preparation, and shopping guide. They are provided in easy-to-download PDF files.

**The Visual Food Encyclopedia** QA International. Wiley Publishing, NY, 1996.

This book covers more than 1,000 foods from vegetables and fruits to grains, meats, fish and herbs. It includes detailed colorful pictures of the foods, origins, nutrition highlights, and preparation ideas. This will unlikely be on a bookstore shelf, but can be ordered. It costs about \$50, but is a lifelong resource. ISBN: 0-02-861006-7.

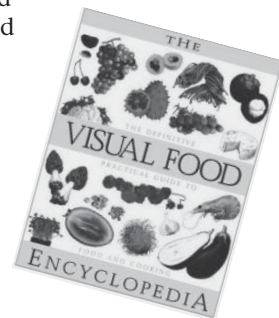
**The Healthy Body Cookbook**

Joan D'Amico & Karen Eich Drummond, John Wiley & Sons, New York, NY

This child-friendly cookbook is filled with over 50 fun recipes and activities, good for use in a classroom or home.

**How to Teach Nutrition to Kids.** Connie Liakos Evers. 24 Carrot Press, Portland, OR, 2006.

This book is divided into sections that make it very easy for teachers to implement nutrition with other subjects. Activity-based nutrition and food lessons as well as activities to connect kids to their school nutrition programs.



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 Food Education Every Day!

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 64 Main Street • Montpelier, VT 05602  
 802-223-1515

**Northeast Organic Farming Association  
 of Vermont** (NOFA-VT)  
 P.O. Box 697 • Richmond, VT 05477  
 802-434-4122

**Shelburne Farms**  
 1611 Harbor Road • Shelburne, VT 05482  
 802-985-8686 x25

**Mission:**

VT FEED works with schools and communities to raise awareness about healthy food, the role of Vermont farms and farmers, and good nutrition. We act as a catalyst for rebuilding healthy food systems, and to cultivate links between the classrooms, cafeterias, local farms, and communities.

**VT FEED  
 believes:**

- All children and members of their community should have access to safe, affordable, healthy, nutritious foods
- Healthy diets positively and directly impact students' academic performance
- School food policy must make local, healthy, and nutritious foods available to students
- Children will make healthy choices because of their involvement with food as part of school curriculum
- Local agriculture is important historically, and for the future
- All communities should be invested in their school food system: from the farms, to the cafeterias, to the classrooms
- Food literate children will impact and change family purchasing, cooking, and eating patterns
- Through growing, harvesting, and preparing foods, children gain confidence, develop critical thinking skills, and feel a sense of power and control over their own health and food choices

**Supporters:**

The work of Vermont FEED has been made possible by the generous support of the Argosy Foundation, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board – Farm Viability Program, CSREES-USDA Community Food Projects Award #00-33800-9807, The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Vermont Department of Education, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Ben and Jerry's Foundation, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, and the generous donations on individual supporters.