



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.

## WEAVING WELLNESS INTO SCHOOLS CONFERENCE

This past November, Governor Douglas kicked off the Weaving Schools into Wellness Conference, hosted by VT FEED and Vermont Action for Healthy Kids, by outlining his commitment to improving the health of all Vermonters through wellness initiatives. The conference goal was to inspire participants and empower them to take action in

their own communities to create nutritious and active school environments.

Marion Kalb, National Farm to School Program director, was the morning keynote speaker who described the national scene: what is happening with national legislation to support farm to school efforts, and what other states are doing to improve the nutrition of children and youth. The lunchtime keynote, Su-



One workshop highlighted successful partnerships between farmers and school food service.

san Davis, the Nutrition Education Coordinator for Hartford, CT public schools, presented research demonstrating the current poor nutrition and physical health of children, what it is costing society, and what parents and community can do to improve children's health.

Workshops throughout the day included how to write a wellness policy and organize a wellness council; stories from schools about successful nutrition or fitness

programs; the role of the community in childhood wellness; school food changes and partnerships with farmers; physical activity outside PE classes; even food and art. The food served at lunch included some local foods and were all recipes that are currently being tried out in school cafeterias.

With over 300 people attending, many stakeholders were represented: teachers, students, parents, food service staff, farmers, administrators, and interested community members. One participant commented, "Wow, so much progress in so many different geographic areas around the US. Experiencing a common commitment to wellness, nutrition, and exercise, shared by a diverse group was validating and energizing." And another participant appreciated "having actual information to use in my school after the conference."

Many thanks to our conference sponsors: American Cancer Society-VT Chapter, Blue Cross Blue Shield, National Action for Healthy Kids, New England Dairy and Food Council, Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, Northfield Savings Bank, VT Agency of Agriculture, VT Dept. of Education, VT Dept. of Health, Vermont Dietetic Association, Vermont Housing Conservation Board – Argosy Foundation, and VT FEED Partners.

## VERMONT FARM-TO-SCHOOL BILL ONE OF THE FIRST IN THE NATION

VT House Bill 456, which connects the health of Vermont children with the health of Vermont agriculture, is making its way through the legislative process. This bill will advance Vermont farm-to-school efforts community by community. We believe that if schools purchase food from local farms and educate about

agriculture and healthy foods, children will improve their eating behaviors. And, when farmers can connect to their local community, the local food system is strengthened.

The bill proposes \$270,000 in state funds for the following activities:

- Mini-grants for schools to purchase Vermont products; acquire cafeteria equipment to process fresh product; provide materials and professional development

for teachers in food, farm and nutrition; take trips to farms.

- Training food service staff on how to purchase and prepare VT product in school meal programs.
- Training farmers on how to sell product to schools and other government agencies.
- One-time funding for a Vermont food processor to process locally grown product for schools and institutional markets or for equipment for farmers to process product.
- Researching strategies to increase use of locally grown products in VT schools and state agencies.

For the text of the The Vermont Farm to School bill, visit the Vermont state government web site: [www.leg.state.vt.us](http://www.leg.state.vt.us) and select "text of bills." To show your support for this bill, call your legislators (phone numbers are listed on the web page).



## THE BURLINGTON SCHOOL FOOD PROJECT

In Burlington, our "Queen" city, food is being addressed as a priority issue. The Vermont FEED partners have been collaborating with many local Burlington organizations on a large multiyear effort: the Burlington School Food Project.

In the fall of 2003 a Burlington Food Council was established to examine the farm to school food system and food, farm, and nutrition education in the city. The Food Council created a School Food Action Plan, based on the Council's completed Community Food Assessment.



Students at Edmunds Elementary show off the pesto they made from fresh basil harvested at an Intervale Farm.

and the food we eat. Workshops and trainings for teachers, parents, afterschool staff, and food service staff have offered hands-on strategies to integrate food education into lessons.

Simultaneously and in full partnership to the above efforts, there has been a dramatic increase of local and fresh product in the cafeteria. Through growing contracts with local farmers and weekly requests of local produce from distributors, many new things have been added to the school meal menu. Minestrone soup, baked potatoes, homemade granola, zucchini-carrot bread, cherry tomatoes, chicken caesar salad, and yogurt parfaits have all been successful additions. Local fresh vegetables have been added to the salad and sandwich bars in the fall. And the ever popular pesto has made its way in as a sandwich spread, on lasagna, on pizza, and in hummus! None of these foods would have been added to school meals if staff, volunteers and students had not organized and run taste tests for these new products prior to introducing them on the menu.

As the Council has developed, growing attention has been given to food, farm, and nutrition education in classrooms, afterschool programs, and in summer camps. It is exciting to see all the valuable work being done in Burlington to connect students to their food. Cafeteria taste tests, school gardens, school food and wellness committees, the teen-run "Healthy City" farm, and many other initiatives are under way to try to build a stronger connection between the food we grow

### Burlington School Food Project partners:

- The Burlington School District
- The Burlington Legacy Project
- The Intervale Foundation
- The University of Vermont
- The Sustainable Schools Project
- The Burlington Food Council
- Vermont FEED:
  - Food Works
  - NOFA-VT
  - Shelburne Farms

The Council has 30 active members and more than 60 other supporters, including farmers, parents, school district employees, students, researchers, and health and nutrition experts. The Council's primary goals are: building food knowledge and experience; building food appreciation and access; and building local food systems.

VT FEED is a partnership of three nonprofit organizations: Food Works, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, and Shelburne Farms. The VT FEED team is:

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artwork courtesy of Bonnie Acker

## VT FEED SERVICES 2006

As interest has grown in improving access to local, fresh food in our school cafeterias and integrating food, farm, and nutrition education into the curriculum, VT FEED has expanded in an attempt to serve as many Vermont schools as possible. We continue to offer teacher and food service professional development workshops, farmer/food service relationships facilitation, and in-school mentoring for teachers and food service staff. We now offer consultations in the development of taste test programs and the facilitation of food/wellness committees. These services may be offered in conjunction with other schools in the same district, or with individual schools.

The first step to apply for VT FEED services is to fill out our application, preferably as a school food and wellness, health, or nutrition committee. Once submitted, VT FEED will schedule a meeting with the committee, school, or district to review the application, needs of the school(s), and discuss the services that best address those needs. This first visit is free of charge. After that we have full and half day rates for consultation, classes, and mentoring. We have found that when we work with a school team representing classrooms, the cafeteria, and the community, that the support and guidance VT FEED offers, sustains after FEED services are provided.



## SHARON SCHOOL INTEGRATES FOOD



Sister and brother at Sharon Elementary school share soup made by students for a Learning Fair in February.

With over 8 years of providing professional development opportunities for teachers, food service staff and farmers, VT-FEED has learned that with any innovation, participants need ongoing support in order to sustain the change.

Today, schools are under more pressure than ever with the Federal "No Child Left Behind" legislation. Many focus solely on these tests to ensure that their students are meeting the standards. Unfortunately, this leaves little time to address the health, diet and wellness concerns of our children. We know that a hungry child will have problems performing academically, emotionally and

physically. Data show that children growing up in poverty perform lower on these high stakes tests. The better the diet the better the academic, emotional and physical performance of children.

With this in mind, many Vermont

schools are looking to integrate food education into existing curricula, like science, literacy, social studies, health, and math. We have seen how students become motivated when food is used as a tool for hands-on learning.

Sharon Elementary School, under the leadership of its principal, Sheila Moran, has embarked on a year-long journey to integrate food into their overall school culture. The teachers began by starting a FEED graduate course this past summer. Over the school year, FEED staff has been providing in-class mentorship to assist teachers in the hands-on applications of food in their curricu-

lum. Simultaneously, FEED has been working with the school on taste testing methods in the cafeteria to increase student exposure to locally grown foods. It has also linked classes and the cafeteria to local farms to help students understand where their food comes from. This year-long approach, less intensive than FEED's 10-week program, is finding better ways to put food education onto an already full plate. The results have been tremendous.

In early February the school hosted a Learning Fair to showcase students' work with food. Students from each class led hands-on lessons for parents and community members on preparing, cooking, and eating healthy foods. A parent survey revealed that 100% of them value food education as part of the school curriculum. Plans are in the works for school gardens, composting, local purchasing, and redesigning the menu with more local foods.

The teachers are planning to spend additional professional development time this summer to integrate food into their seasonal units of study. We are learning that the pace and rhythm of change is critical to ensure that food continues as a key ingredient in a school culture.

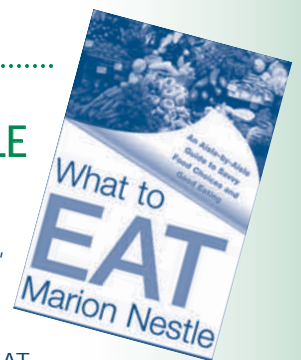


## FEED QUILT

This handmade quilt made by Bonnie Acker, an artist and VT FEED partner, has been under construction for two years and is making its debut at Sharon Elementary School. Pictured here are the third graders in teacher Keenan Haley's class. Keenan is currently weaving food, farm, and nutrition into his curriculum all year long, as well as working with the food service on taste tests, and with the community on garden-building and composting. This quilt will eventually tell its own story as it travels Vermont and is shared by schools who are working with VT FEED.

## MARION NESTLE

Vermont FEED is excited to welcome Marion Nestle, the nation's leading nutritionist, for a book signing and discussion highlighting her recently published consumer's guide to food shopping, *WHAT TO EAT*. Marion Nestle is a Professor of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health at New York University and the author of numerous books on nutrition including *SAFE FOOD* and *FOOD POLITICS*. This event is a fundraiser for VT FEED and will be held Monday, June 5, 4:00-5:30 at the Coach Barn at Shelburne Farms.



**Marion Nestle  
Book Signing &  
Discussion**  
Monday, JUNE 5  
4:00 - 5:30 PM  
Shelburne Farms  
DONATIONS ACCEPTED  
AT THE DOOR.



## LOCAL PURCHASING OPTIONS

School Food Service programs in Vermont are expanding their local purchasing through a variety of arrangements outlined below.

### Wholesale Distributors

Distributors are the link to virtually every institutional food service operation in Vermont and a true resource for farms that do not have transportation or storage infrastructure. Vermont is fortunate to have a number of distributors who look for and showcase local products. When purchasing from a distributor, whether you have a contract or purchase occasional items, ask how much of the food they distribute is locally produced, and don't hesitate to ask if they can increase that amount. Request local food products whenever possible, and the names of the farms they purchase from — it makes the distributors more aware of customer demand.

### Direct Purchasing

Some schools purchase bulk food products at wholesale prices directly from a farmer. Food service staff call farmers directly, or a farmer may contact food services. Working

with individual farmers can take some getting used to, especially if you're accustomed to one distributor supplying everything from food to cleaning supplies. Working with several local farmers means multiple ordering and invoices (unless you have another payment arrangement). While at first this may appear like additional paperwork, with time, the extra step can fit in with other administrative

tasks. Here are some direct purchasing options:

### CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) Arrangement

CSA subscribers receive weekly shares of a farm's harvest, while paying farmers upfront for operating costs. If it's a good harvest, subscribers benefit. If the harvest is slow, subscribers may not receive as much product. As a subscriber, a school can be a part of a farm harvest, which is an opportunity for classroom education. CSAs are a good alternative for smaller schools that can work with a rotating array of farm products. They may be perfect to supplement produce for harvest dinners and classroom taste testing. Many farms offer summer, fall and winter CSA shares and work with schools on the payment. Parents and businesses also can donate CSA shares to schools.

### Contract Growing

In some school districts farmers and school food service staff sit down together each spring to identify foods the kitchen can use for the coming school year. Both sides agree on a price for a given amount of product. Contract growing can save your program money because if farmers can secure a market for their products ahead of time, you can negotiate a better cost per pound. Both contract growing and CSA shares require discussion and planning between food service staff and farmers and each party assumes a little risk.

### Grow a Row

Innovative teachers and food service staff have experimented with "grow a row for the school kitchen." Students plant a particular crop at a farm they visit in the spring. The following fall, the class harvests the crop and brings it to the school to be stored or processed and frozen for later use. To date, carrot and pumpkin crops have been tried, but why not corn, onions, and potatoes?

### Marketing Cooperative

Some farmers work together to share in the distribution, marketing,

processing, selling or billing of their products. The benefit of buying from a cooperative like this is that it's easier for farmers to get their products to your kitchen and easier for you to call just one number. In Vermont, Deep Root Organic is an example of a regional marketing cooperative. In Central Vermont, "Farm to Table" is a cooperative program for schools, senior centers, and daycares. And in Randolph, Randolph Area Family Farms (RAFF) coordinates the ordering, purchasing and delivery of local produce for four area schools.

### District Purchasing Cooperative

School districts that hire or find a part-time purchasing director/coordinator (such as a motivated parent with business experience) are able to find significant savings by arranging for sale prices on behalf of their school. This idea has been explored in Vermont and has worked in communities throughout the U.S. Several districts can share the cost of hiring a purchasing director who can then be a central broker and schedule orders, deliveries or trainings for food service professionals shifting to local food.



Egg roll production for district celebration

Winooski School District celebrated the Chinese New Year by working with the local Vietnamese and Chinese community to create a traditional meal. Winooski schools contract their food program with the Abbey Group. This Vermont company is starting to purchase local produce, conduct taste tests, and host local lunches and other cultural events. 30% of Vermont school food programs are run by companies contracted to manage them on behalf of the school or district.

When studying the different local purchasing options, a few ideas may help you:

- 1) Have partners: food service directors and managers could work with the school parent group or faculty to advertise the use of local foods or raise money for food processing equipment.
- 2) Taste tests are a great way to introduce students to new or local foods like carrots: students can taste the freshness.
- 3) Visiting the farms the foods come from, or inviting the farmers in to meet students, is a powerful experience.
- 4) Consider the product and labor costs to ensure your program is sustainable in the long run.



## FOOD JOURNALING : SNACK OR MEAL MONITORING LESSON

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

What do you eat?

### MAJOR CONCEPTS:

Healthy Choices

### STANDARDS MET:

Healthy Choices 3.5e

### GRADE EXPECTATIONS:

For all grade levels: HE 2b

### MATERIALS:

- various paper and cardboard or cardstock
  - yarn
  - markers
  - old magazines
  - stickers
  - glue
  - crayons...
- all kinds of journal-making goodies

### EXTENSIONS:

Incorporate exercise into journal for a well-rounded nutrition and fitness unit.

### BACKGROUND:

Food Journaling is a great way to document what you eat on a daily basis. Many people aren't aware of the amount and the types of food they actually eat. Most of us are aware of the Food Pyramid and how much food we are "supposed" to eat, but do we know if we are actually eating it? By keeping a food journal you can match what you eat on a daily basis with that of the food pyramid. Using food journals in the classroom can create an awareness of students food choices, preferences and behaviors. There are many different types of journals you can use. Your journal could be shaped like a pyramid. Students can add stickers to the pyramid for each food item they eat in a day. You could also have a journal just for snacks. Students could write down the snack and recipe. Your students could also document what they eat by listing breakfast, lunch and dinner on each page. Another strategy to use in food journaling is reflection. Have your students look back on what they ate and make goals for eating healthier.

### ACTIVITY:

**PRE-ACTIVITY:** Have students list what they ate the day before. Keep a big list in front of the classroom. You could also introduce the Food Guide Pyramid and ask students if they think they ate from the Food Guide Pyramid.

**OPENING CIRCLE:** Ask students what they ate yesterday. Discuss whether or not they remember. Ask them if they think it is important to be able to remember. How could they remember better?

### MAIN ACTIVITY:

1. Review the Food Guide Pyramid. Have a large Food Guide Pyramid on the wall. Ask students what they ate and put a sticker on the pyramid. Discuss how we could track what we ate so we were sure to eat healthier.
2. Make Journals with students. Have them decorate the journal.
3. Do the first entry together.
4. Discuss the journal entry.
5. Make goals for improving eating habits.
6. Throughout the journaling be sure to make healthy snacks and food items. Discuss vitamins and minerals and the Food Guide Pyramid. Whenever you make a healthy snack or food with your class fill in the journal with them to model how to complete entries.

**WRAP-UP:** Did we meet our goals? What did we learn?

## CRANBERRY OAT BARS for the school cafeteria

Makes 500 2"x 3" bars

### MIX DRY INGREDIENTS:

- 22 ½ cups Oats (preferably local)
- 11 ¼ cups Flour
- ½ cup + 2 Tbsp cinnamon
- 5 Tbsp baking powder
- 4 tsp salt
- 3 ¾ cups sunflower seeds

### BLEND WET INGREDIENTS:

- 15 eggs
- 3 ¾ cups canola oil
- 5 Tbsp vanilla
- 22 ½ cups applesauce
- ¾ cup + 1 Tbsp brown sugar

### TOPPING INGREDIENTS:

- 22 ½ cups cranberry "sauce" (jelly)
- currently a USDA commodity
- 7 ½ cups oats
- ¾ cup + 1 Tbsp brown sugar

Stir together dry and wet ingredients. Press into buttered or oiled pan so that bars are about ½" thick. Spread cranberry sauce evenly over whole mixture. Combine the remaining two toppings ingredients (oats and brown sugar) and sprinkle over batter. Bake at 325°F for 40-45 minutes (until edges are brown and cranberry sauce is very firm). Cool before cutting into squares and then enjoy!



## FOOD EDUCATION WORKS

FEED's interview with Antonia Demas, PhD

president and founder of the Food Studies Institute, Trumansburg, New York

### Do you think classroom teachers

### should find ways to integrate food into their curriculum? WHY?

We have suffered tremendous consequences both in health and education by not including food in the curriculum. Children are growing up in a fast-food culture, detached from where food comes from, how it is produced, and how it affects their bodies and minds. The costs in physical and emotional health have been staggering. Food education can easily be integrated with academic subjects. Food is a perfect vehicle for sensory-based education integrated with the academic curriculum. Food education supports and enhances the other subject areas in a tangible real-life manner while at the same time, providing students with valuable lifeskills.

### How do teachers find the time to teach with food? (with all they already have to do)

It is important that learning have real life application, and food fits into all subject areas. For example, food can be used to demonstrate estimation and fractions in math class; principles of hydration and evaporation can be demonstrated with food in science class; cultures of the world can be appreciated through traditional recipes and customs. Students enjoy this type of hands-on education which has real-life application. This makes the teacher's

job easier because students become engaged in the learning process. An added benefit is that they take the information home to share with their families.

### What benefits have you seen when a teacher finds a way to use food to teach? How have teachers addressed the standards and the pressure of NCLB ("No Child Left Behind") testing?

The benefits to students of food based studies are tremendous. The sensory aspects of food reach students through all five senses rather than only through cognition. 75% of students learn best through sensory-based education yet this strategy is often not implemented in schools. Food education also addresses other learning styles, for example, a student who is a visual learner will have increased opportunities to excel with the journaling and art projects associated with a food-based curriculum. NCLB is focused on teaching for test scores rather than teaching for content. This has never been an effective approach to real learning. Students gain a conceptual understanding of the subject matter through experiential learning with a food-based curricular approach rather than trying to memorize abstract material for tests without a contextual focus.

### What ideas are there for transforming the way our schools look at food, the cafeteria, and overall nutrition and health of children?

It is critically important that students be allowed adequate time to eat and digest their food and that this food be nutrient-dense rather than calorie-dense. Students should go outdoors to exercise before eating, not after. Classroom teachers need to support health promoting foods by first educating students in the classroom about these foods so that students will become familiar in a positive way with those foods.

The cafeteria and classroom need to support one another so that the school meals can reflect contemporary knowledge about nutrition rather than serve as an outlet for fast foods that provide empty calories which do not promote health.

### What do you see as next steps for public schools to reorganize around food literacy, nutrition and health?

We are at a crossroads concerning school food because policy makers have now focused on food's role in degrading health. There is a wellness mandate now for all participating schools in the National School Lunch Program. By the end of 2006 each school must have a policy that specifically addresses school food. Though this is a very important step, it is crucial that oversight be in place to ensure compliance with recommendations. Over 53 million students eat in schools every day. Poor students depend on schools for daily breakfast and lunch. We have seen the greatest rise among these students in the diet-related chronic diseases. The health care costs of treating these diseases, never mind the human suffering caused, is tremendous.

Food connects us to nature on a very basic level. Students in urban areas often grow up completely detached from food sources. An understanding of how soil nutrition and human nutrition are connected is critical to our health. The general public is confused about nutrition and healthful eating. We must educate students at an early age about how to protect their health through positive education in the classroom. Currently the food industry is the main source of information students receive about food and nutrition. Public schools have a moral obligation to ensure that students get accurate information about food and nutrition in an unbiased manner. Food literacy not only improves the health, behavior, and academic

continued on next page.



"The Food Studies Institute promotes the long-term health and education of elementary school children through curriculum development, multimedia publishing, teacher training, and consulting on the implementation of a unique curriculum integrating academic disciplines with experiential learning about food, nutrition, culture and the arts. As a nonprofit, tax exempt corporation, we also assist schools to incorporate low-fat, high fiber, nutritious entrees into school meals and to involve parents and guardians in their children's food education."

Dr. Demas is a friend and consultant for FEED.



## FEED IN CENTRAL VERMONT



This past fall VTFEED and Community Connections of Central Vermont with funding from PEP, a fitness and Nutrition grant, began a year-long course called HEALTHY EATING — Understanding Student Health and the Food System. Community Connections provides afterschool programs for schools and communities in both Washington Central School District and the Montpelier School District.

This course brings together teachers, para-educators, and food service professionals from two school districts with nine different schools. Twenty-two participants come once a month for a three-hour class at the U-32 campus. The course provides practical hands-on food and nutritional experiences that can be easily replicated in the classroom. It also brings together educators from two school districts to explore the serious issues relating to childhood health and wellness. The goal is to help integrate food (growing, cook-

ing, nutrition) into the classroom, cafeteria and local community on a site by site basis.

Each class begins with small groups making healthy snacks that connect to that class topic. All the snacks have previously been classroom-tested with students. The hope is that participants will re-create these snacks in their schools.

The class then moves to a discussion based on prior readings, journal writing and reflection papers. This gives the group a chance for critical discourse on some of the most pressing food, diet and health related concerns of our time. A community guest speaker follows, a professional who can share his or her particular expertise on food, farm and health issues. Lastly, participants experience easily replicable, food-based classroom activities to take back to their schools.

Some of the topics covered in this class are: Food Preferences, Locally Grown Foods, School Food Systems, Food Access, Childhood Nutrition, Food Media Messages, and Food Education in the Classroom.

In January our theme was “Childhood Nutrition” and our guest speaker was Sylvia Gaboreault, a dietician from Central Vermont Medical Center and director of the

new Central Vermont Diabetes Prevention Project. Sylvia spoke on the critical need for childhood nutrition and disease prevention, reviewing the key nutrients that children need such as proteins, iron, calcium, Vitamins A and C. She asked the group what they were seeing in their classroom and people responded: dark rings under the eyes, moody behaviors, lethargy, headaches in the morning, and lack of concentration. Sylvia used test tubes to demonstrate how much fat is in the food we eat, comparing red meat, chicken, fish and beans. Finally, she stressed how necessary it is for teachers to find ways to teach food and nutrition in their curriculum if we are to prevent the growing epidemic of diabetes in Vermont.

Overall, this year-long course has shown us how one can build community and foster deep conversations by working and learning with food. In the “classroom kitchen,” food becomes a tool to share stories, experiences and lessons. As with any group, the genius is in the alchemy of group conversation: learning how to listen and when to speak. The art of patience is practiced continuously as participants bring new questions and insights to each class. We trust that this is just the beginning of schools reaching out to find ways to integrate food, farming, nutrition and fitness into an emerging culture of life-long well-being.

### FOOD EDUCATION WORKS - continued from previous page.

performance of students and their families, it also improves the health of the environment. We need to incorporate food education into the overall curriculum and create dialogue between the cafeteria and classroom. Food and eating in schools needs to become a mindful activity appreciated by educators for the valuable contribution nutrients play in physical, behavioral, and academic health.

## WEBSITE RESOURCES

**Vermont FEED:** [www.vtfeed.org](http://www.vtfeed.org)

**National Farm to School:** [www.farmtoschool.org](http://www.farmtoschool.org)

**The Center for Ecoliteracy** – Rethinking School Lunch: [www.ecoliteracy.org](http://www.ecoliteracy.org)

**The Food Studies Institute:** [www.foodstudies.org](http://www.foodstudies.org)

**USDA new pyramid resources:** [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

**Vermont Dept of Education** – child nutrition programs: [www.state.vt.us/educ/nutrition/index.htm](http://www.state.vt.us/educ/nutrition/index.htm)

**Discovering the Food System** – teacher resource: <http://foodsys.cce.cornell.edu/>

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**Vermont FEED**  
 Food Education Every Day!

**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 STAFF IS:**



Joseph Kiefer  
Food Works



Abbie Nelson  
NOFA-VT



Dana Hudson  
Shelburne Farms

**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
- 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
- School food policy must make local, healthy, and nutritious foods available to students
- 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