

# Vermont Apple and Grape Report VT House Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry

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TERENCE BRADSHAW, PH.D.  
UVM EXTENSION FRUIT SPECIALIST

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# Vermont Apples: 2<sup>nd</sup> Largest Specialty Crop

Apples are grown on 1700 acres in VT

- \$18.5 M direct farmgate sales 2017.
- Est. \$30 M total revenue with value-added
  - ~60 orchards active with VTFGA
- Orchards located in every county but Essex

Year	bearing acres	yield/ acre (bu)	total production (bu)	utilized production	utilized price/ bu	value of utilized production \$1,000	% util
2009	2800	340	952	881	9.94	8760	92.5%
2010	2800	298	833	786	12.99	10210	94.4%
2011	2800	286	798	631	12.75	8044	79.1%
2012	2800	217	607	571	18.21	10405	94.1%
2013	1600	507	810	738	18.93	13970	91.1%
2014	1700	412	700	671	17.09	11470	95.9%
2015	1700	507	862	855	18.14	15517	99.2%
2016	1700	376	640	636	28.77	18293	99.4%
2017	1700	350	595	593	31.16	18477	99.7%

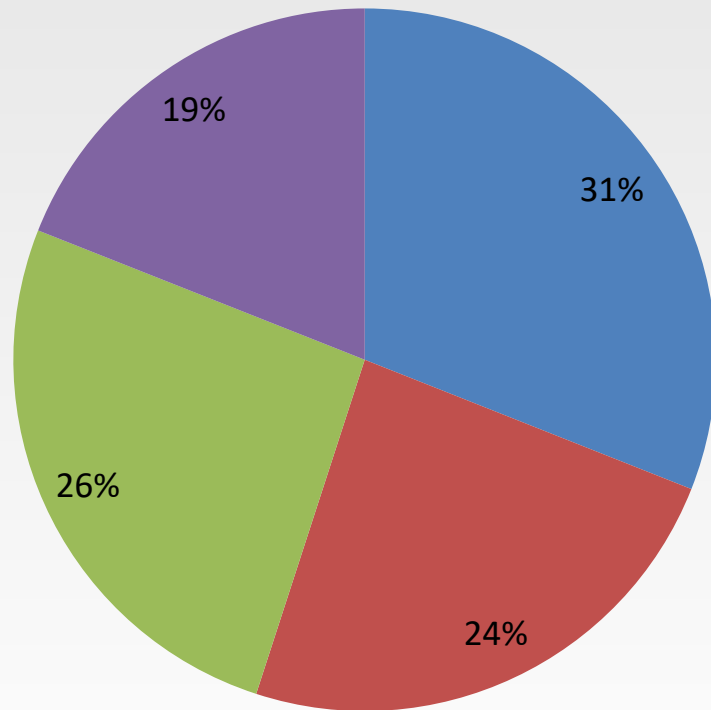
Source: NASS New England Fruit and Vegetable Report  
USDA Agriculture Census

# Vermont Apple Production Trends

## Annual Production (bu)

(percent of VT orchards within range, 2011)

■ <500 ■ 501-5,000 ■ 5,001-25,000 ■ 25,000+



Approximately 50% of Vermont's apple crop is produced by less than 10 farms

50% of Vermont apple orchards are small (< 5000 bushel), direct-market farms

VT's apple industry is *diverse*, encompassing large, wholesale farms and small, direct market / PYO operations

# Future (Present?) Growth in the VT Apple Industry

61% of VT Orchards planned to pass the farm on to the next generation

97% of farms plan to increase or maintain acreage or production in the next 5 years

14% plan to increase acreage, *but*

- 56% plan to increase production (bushels)

Bradshaw, T. (2013). Strategic Planning for the Vermont Apple Industry: Planning for Success in the 21st Century. Retrieved from <http://www.uvm.edu/~orchard/2013VermontAppleIndustryStrategicPlan.pdf>



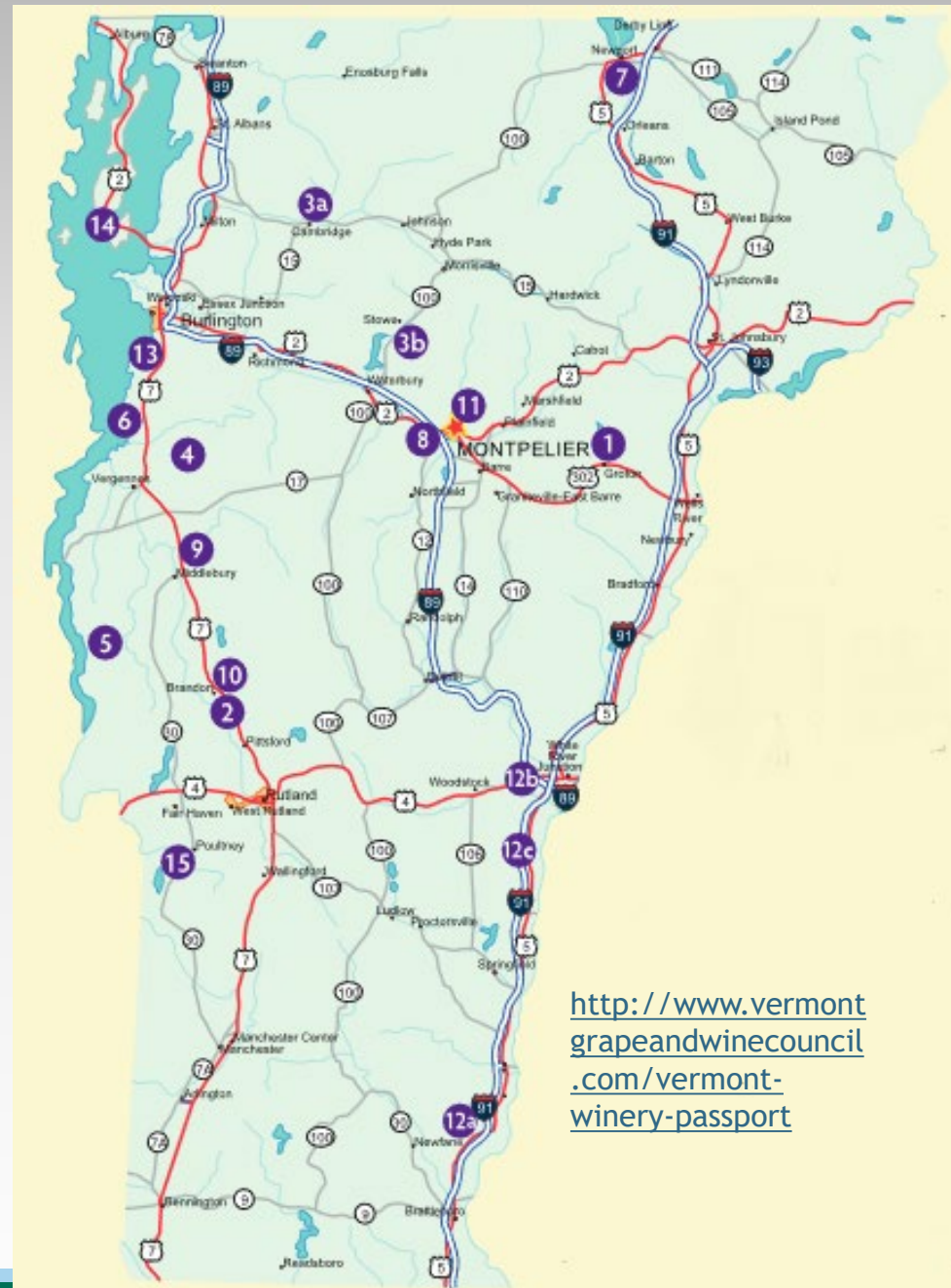
# 2000s: Increasing Viability of Grape Production

- New, cold-hardy cultivars developed that survive in VT, produce high-quality wine
- 2007: Formation of VT Grape & Wine Council by act of VT Legislature
- New Growers need technical support- UVM Fruit program conducts IPM trials, cultivar evaluations
- Industry grows, by 2016:
  - 160 acres grapes
  - ~\$700k direct grape value
  - ~\$3.3 million wine value



# Vermont Vineyards and Wineries, 2023

- ~175 acres grapes
- 29 (grape) wineries
- ~\$4-5 million gross sales  
(*TB estimate*)

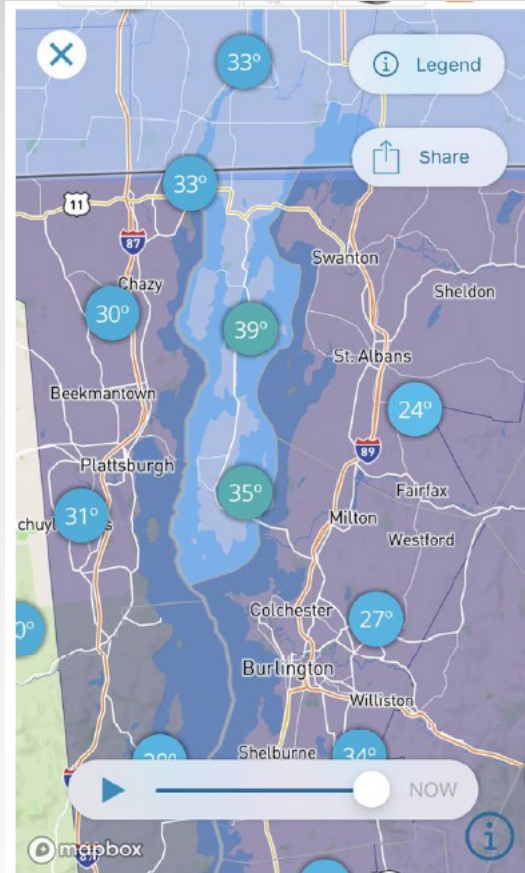


<http://www.vermontgrapeandwinecouncil.com/vermont-winery-passport>

# *Spring 2024 freeze*

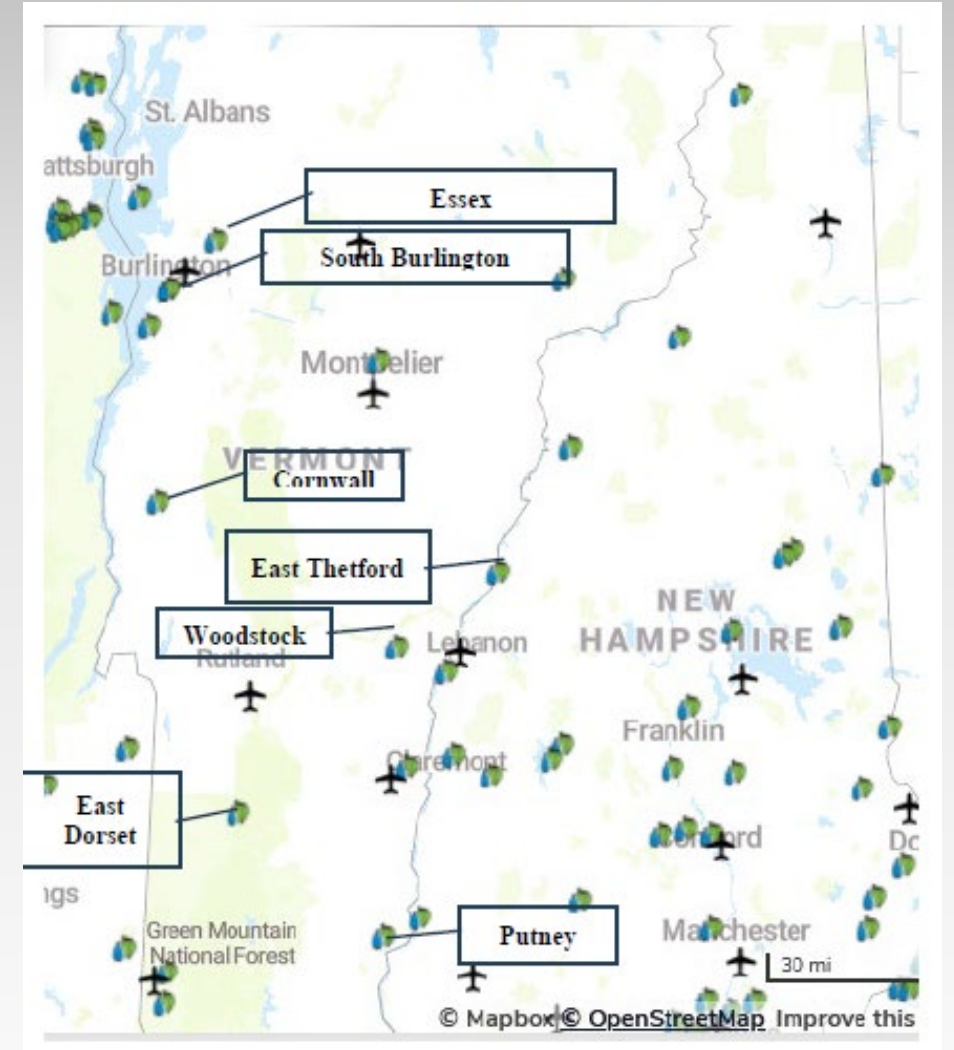
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# May 18, 2023



South Burlington	29.1
Bennington	31.3
Cornwall	29.8
East Dorset	27.2
East Thetford	24.8
Putney	24.4
Essex	25
Woodstock	22.9

Figure 2. Low temperatures observed in Vermont orchards the morning of May 18, 2023, as reported in NEWA.







Freeze damage at Shelburne Vineyard. Head Winegrower Ethan Joseph estimates the vineyard has lost at least 50% of its crop because of the hard freeze last week during the night of May 17-18. *Provided By Agency Of Agriculture*



*Agency and other officials seeking damage information from farmers after cold weather event last week*

#### ECONOMY

## Hard frost threatens crops and the farmworkers who tend them across Vermont

By Olivia Q. Pintair  
May 24, 2023, 7:02 pm

Environment

# Cold snap may have wiped out Upper Valley apple crop

New Hampshire Public Radio | By Frances Mize, The Valley News  
Published May 24, 2023 at 1:28 PM EDT



James M. Patterson / Valley News

Norah Lake, holding her daughter Fern, picks the central flower from a cluster on an apple tree to look for damage in the orchard at Sweetland Farm in Norwich, Vt., on Monday, May 22, 2023.

<https://www.nhpr.org/environment/2023-05-24/cold-snap-may-have-wiped-out-upper-valley-apple-crop>

## ENVIRONMENT - WEATHER

# A wine and cider shortage will grip America after freakish spring weather: 'We've never seen this kind of freeze event'

BY LISA RATHKE AND THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
June 14, 2023 at 2:43 PM EDT



Fredson Brissett, a migrant worker at Scott Farm Orchard in Dummerston, Vt., checks out some of the damage done to the apples after a recent frost, May 22, 2023.

<https://fortune.com/2023/06/14/wine-cider-shortage-vineyards-orchards-northeast-spring-frost-weather/>

FOOD + DRINK ▶ AGRICULTURE

## Apple Farmers Are Down — but Not Out — for This Year’s Harvest

By **RACHEL MULLIS**

Published August 22, 2023 at 1:49 p.m.



Nick Cowles at Shelburne Orchards

RACHEL MULLIS

<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/food-drink/apple-farmers-are-down-but-not-out-for-this-years-harvest-38946040>

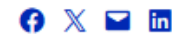
ENVIRONMENT

## Vermont leaders pursue federal disaster aid after orchardists face ‘heartbreaking’ losses in May freeze

With vulnerable farmers un- or under-insured to cover their losses from a devastating May freeze, Vermont Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts is pleading for federal help. But one USDA official told VTDigger he doesn’t “know the extent to which relief would be granted to the farmers.”

By Sarah Mearhoff and VTD Editor

June 8, 2023, 7:14 pm



Greg Burt of Burt’s Apple Orchard in Cabot estimates he has lost more than half of his crop to frost damage. He is hopeful that some of his crop can be salvaged. Photo by Glenn Russell/VTDigger

<https://vtdigger.org/2023/06/08/vermont-leaders-pursue-federal-disaster-aid-after-orchardists-face-heartbreaking-losses-in-may-freeze/>

Feb 28-29 survey of fruit growers  
23 respondents  
17 apple  
5 grape  
1 other

**Not the whole picture  
(many farms not represented)**

**Grape data does not reflect loss of *wine* value  
(multiply by 5-10)**

Row Labels	Sum of estimated total dollar (\$) loss for your farm from the May 18 freeze?	Avg % revenue lost from freeze
<b>Apples</b>	<b>\$ 3,653,113</b>	<b>70</b>
Addison	\$ 1,813,063	68
Bennington	\$ 660,000	89
Chittenden	\$ 215,050	48
Rutland	\$ 20,000	30
Washington	\$ 50,000	45
Windham	\$ 835,000	75
Windsor	\$ 60,000	100
<b>Grapes</b>	<b>\$ 112,255</b>	<b>49</b>
Addison	\$ 13,345	70
Chittenden	\$ 1,250	50
Rutland	\$ 89,000	18
Washington	\$ 6,660	72
Windsor	\$ 2,000	33
<b>Other tree fruit (peaches, plums, cherries, etc)</b>	<b>\$ 3,500</b>	<b>35</b>
Windham	\$ 3,500	35
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,768,868</b>	<b>64</b>

# Questions?

