

Vermont Housing &
Conservation Board

VERMONT FARM & FOREST
VIABILITY PROGRAM

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



A LETTER TO LEGISLATORS

Dear Members of the General Assembly:

Adaptation is a core principle for Vermonters, and our farm and forest business owners are no exception. Since 2020, these Vermonters have shown remarkable resilience in meeting challenges from market instability to supply chain disruptions and extreme increases in operating costs. They are at the forefront, facing ongoing threats posed by climate change and the acceleration of intergenerational business transitions. These factors are compounded by community-wide challenges such as the lack of affordable housing and limited childcare options.

Vermont's farmers and forest entrepreneurs consistently return to the drawing board to adapt to each new "normal." Our work at the Vermont Farm and Forest Viability Program is to help these essential members of our communities not only survive, but plan for and realize a future where they are thriving. With additional state and federal funding in FY2022, the Viability Program has been able to expand our in-depth business coaching to support long-term business resilience as well as respond to urgent needs like assisting organic dairies, helping producers navigate pandemic relief programs, and creating plans to weather exponential increases in costs of production. In 2022 we served 154 businesses in our holistic business planning program, increasing participants' business management skills and enterprise profitability. We have also collaborated closely with VHCB's conservation program to support beginning farmers with accessing land and retiring farmers with business transitions.

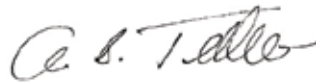
The Viability Program also continues to invest in rural economic development and a vibrant working landscape through other state-funded initiatives: our Water Quality Grants program, which supported 19 new projects to improve agricultural water quality, and the Rural Economic Development Initiative, which helped 27 rural communities secure more than \$3 million in grant funding for critical community development projects.

We thank you for your support in strengthening our communities and working landscape.

Sincerely,



Executive Director Gustave Seelig
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board



Secretary Anson Tebbetts
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets



Commissioner Michael Snyder
Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation





Viability Program staff and service providers with Janet and Tim Taylor of Crossroads Farm

OUR MISSION:

To enhance the economic viability of Vermont farm, food, and forest products enterprises.

OUR NETWORK OF SERVICE PROVIDERS:



OUR IMPACT IN 2022

The Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program, a program of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB), serves to strengthen Vermont’s working lands sector. Since 2003, the program has grown to lead a variety of initiatives that further VHCB’s mission to “maintain for the benefit of future generations the essential characteristics of the Vermont countryside,” complementing investments in housing, conservation, and historic preservation that enhance quality of life across Vermont.

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

- 154 farm, food, and forest enterprises engaged in holistic business and transition planning
- 70% of clients reported increased gross sales
- 61% of clients reported increased net income



ADDRESSING EMERGING ISSUES

- Supporting 38 organic dairies with finding new markets and planning for the future
- Advancing cross-sector initiatives that provide quality housing for farmworkers
- Providing ongoing pandemic recovery services to businesses and support organizations



FOREST HEALTH & CONNECTIVITY

- In-depth succession planning services to forest landowners to reduce or prevent forest fragmentation



GRANT PROGRAMS:

- 39 grants, totaling more than \$797,000 and leveraging an additional \$3.4M, will advance clean water goals and improve long-term business viability



RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

- \$200,000 in REDI funds provided capacity to 27 small communities to apply for grants, resulting in more than \$3.1M in awards



PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

Vermont’s farm and forest businesses are foundational to our communities, and the Viability Program works to ensure their longevity and sustainability. Entrepreneurs work directly with Viability Program business advisors to create plans to achieve their goals, build financial, management, and marketing skills, access capital, improve production, embark on complex business transitions, and navigate challenges.

Land access and successful transitions are core to the work of VHCB’s Viability and Conservation Programs, which support beginning farmers with accessing affordable farmland and help established farms transition to new ownership or enterprises. Improving land access for new farmers is critical to the future of agriculture in Vermont, and in 2022, Viability Program funds

helped to expand land access services led by Northeast Farmers of Color Land Trust for BIPOC land stewards and the Vermont Land Trust.

The Viability Program and VHCB also work with partner organizations to help address emergent issues such as the loss of markets for many organic dairies and ongoing support with navigating volatile markets, improving the quality of farmworker housing, and ongoing pandemic recovery.

In Fiscal Year 2022, 154 farm, food, and forest enterprises engaged with the Viability Program for business advising (see p.12 for a map of FY22 graduates). These businesses generate a significant economic footprint, providing an estimated 462 jobs (FTEs) and realizing more than \$34.7M in annual gross sales.



- CLIENTS IMPROVED SKILLS IN:**
- ✓ Financial Analysis
 - ✓ Identifying Financing
 - ✓ Strategic Planning
 - ✓ Marketing & Sales

- CLIENTS IMPROVED SATISFACTION WITH:**
- ✓ Work-Life Balance
 - ✓ Generating Income from Business
 - ✓ Defining Direction for Business

“Our advisors were so knowledgeable about the financial side of farming and how to improve our grazing and soil health. And when we made the transition to a new milk buyer, the support with mapping out a plan for success and creating spreadsheets that can guide us in our future business decisions was huge for us.”

– Geordie & Emery Lynd, Northwind Farm



NORTHWIND FARM

WALDEN

GEORDIE & EMERY LYND

First-generation dairy farmers, Geordie and Emery Lynd own an 80-cow hill farm on 290 acres in Walden. Since they began farming in 2010, they’ve transitioned to organic production, conserved their land with Vermont Land Trust, and navigated the hurdles of aging infrastructure. Working with their advisors, Silene DeCiuicis and Sarah Flack at the Center for an Agricultural Economy, the Lynds received support with implementing financial management software, responding to the loss of their milk contact, securing a contract with Stonyfield Organic, and increasing profitability by improving milk production per cow. They received a \$10,000 Implementation Grant to build a barn addition that will increase cow comfort, create labor efficiencies, and support their long-term goals.

“We knew the sawmill was outdated and that there were funds out there to help us make the large investment that was needed, but we didn’t know where to start. Thanks to Chris’ knowledge in business planning and the grant process, we received a Working Lands Grant that will allow us to expand production, meet the high demand for local wood, and allow us to run a smoother and safer operation.”

– Tim & Janet Angell, White Rock Farm & Sawmill



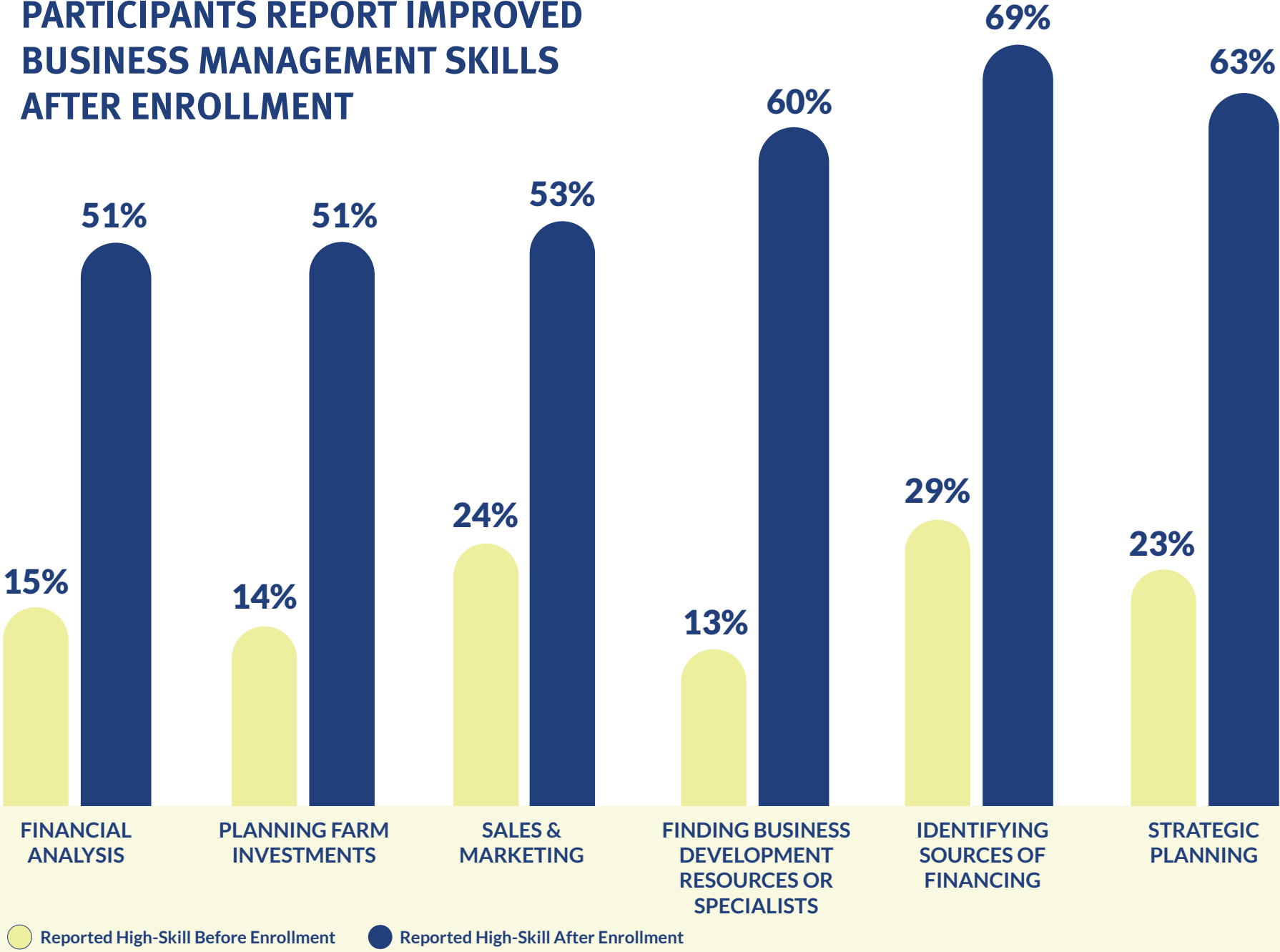
WHITE ROCK FARM & SAWMILL

RANDOLPH & ROYALTON

TIM & JANET ANGELL

White Rock Farm in Randolph has been in Janet Angell’s family since 1791. Today, it’s run by Janet, her husband, Tim, and their two sons, Joe and Matt. They diversified the dairy by purchasing a sawmill in Royalton, which processes hundreds of thousands of board feet of local wood annually. The Angells enrolled in the Viability Program in 2013 to bring the younger generation on as business partners. They returned to the program in 2021 and worked with their advisor Chris Lindgren at UVM Extension to update their business plan and successfully apply for a \$250,000 Market-Level Working Lands Grant to expand and upgrade their sawmill. They are also working with UVM Extension advisor Betsy Miller to complete the transition of the farm to the next generation.

2022 VIABILITY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS REPORT IMPROVED BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS AFTER ENROLLMENT



“There are all of these moving parts. It can get very complicated, and Sam has been great navigating all of our family members’ wants and needs. We’re now able to articulate our vision of the farm and figure out how it fits in with my parent’s vision so we can successfully transfer ownership. It’s a complex process, but now we have a plan in place to move the pieces over the next few years.”

– Jenna Baird, Baird Farm



BAIRD FARM

CHITTENDEN

JENNA BAIRD & JACOB POWSNER

For over 100 years, four generations of the Baird family have farmed in Chittenden. Expanding from their dairy operation roots, the third generation, Bob and Bonnie, focused on maple, and the fourth generation, Jenna Baird and her partner Jacob Powsner, have expanded production, value-added products, and agritourism since 2015. After Jenna and Jacob had been at the helm for a few years, they enrolled in the Viability Program and worked with the Intervale Center’s Sam Smith to navigate the transition of the maple business to the next generation, manage growth, and successfully apply for a \$24,999 Working Lands Grant.

“The value of the program is pretty amazing. When we started the program, we were at a critical point and it was really nice to have support to update our business plan, make sure the operation is healthy, and to keep us focused on our goals.”

– Morgan & Chad Beckwith, Ice House Farm



ICE HOUSE FARM

GOSHEN

MORGAN & CHAD BECKWITH

Morgan and Chad Beckwith milk 64 pasture-raised goats to produce yogurt, kefir, and goat cheese at Ice House Farm. After nearly doubling their herd in 2019, they enrolled in the Viability Program to plan for business growth. Working with their advisor Bill Cavanaugh at NOFA-VT, they developed a plan for critical capital investments, improved accounting systems, and worked with mentors in the field. With a \$6,000 VHC Implementation Grant, they upgraded their milking parlor, doubling the amount of goats they can milk at one time. Milking has become much more efficient, the goats are more comfortable, and the quality of their products has improved.

GRANT PROGRAMS

The Viability Program makes grant awards through two programs that help businesses invest in water quality improvements and implement goals identified through their business planning process.
IN FISCAL YEAR 2022, 39 WORKING LANDS ENTREPRENEURS RECEIVED AWARDS TOTALING \$797,108.

WATER QUALITY GRANTS

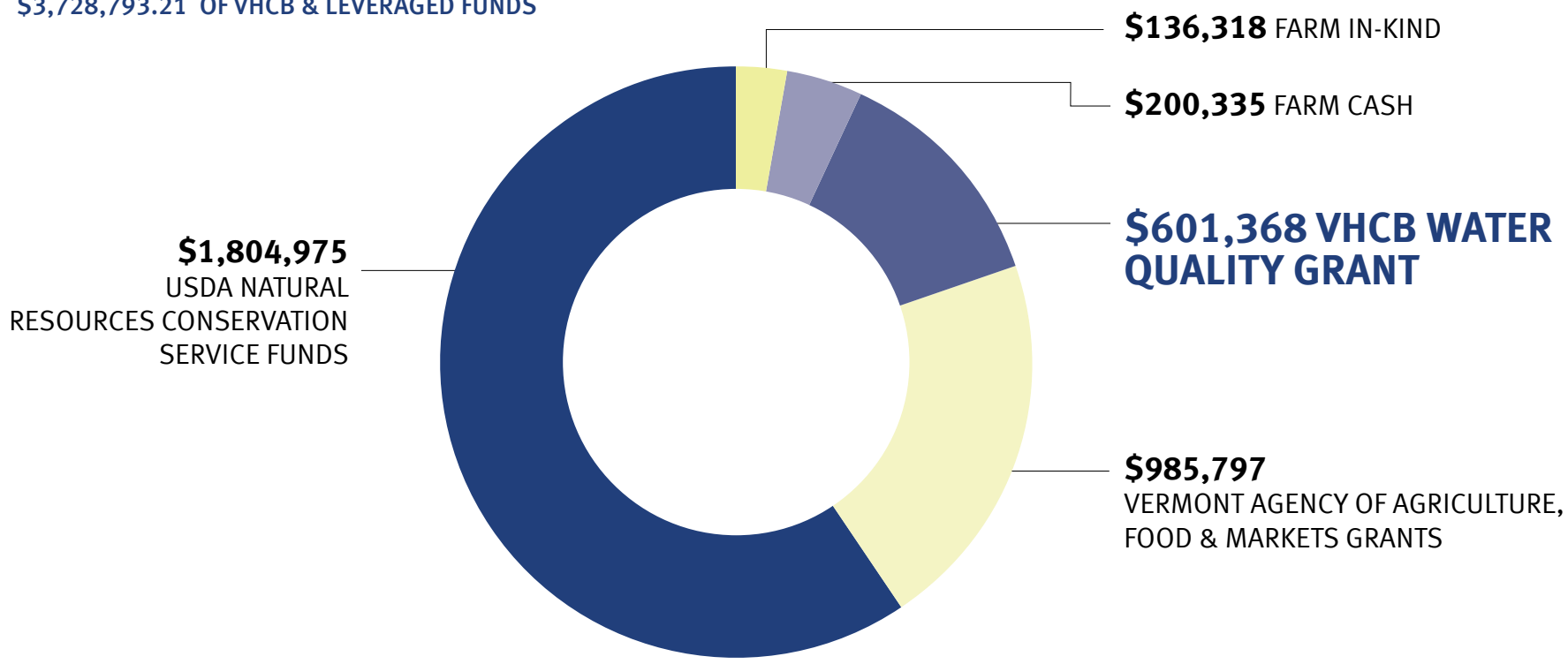
This year, 19 farmers were awarded a total of \$601,368 to invest in capital improvements that enhance water quality. These projects will reduce runoff, improve soil health, and ultimately support long-term success of farm enterprises. VHCB’s Water Quality Grants are funded through Vermont’s Capital Construction and State Bonding Act and they complement federal and state investments from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM). Since 2017, the program has awarded more than \$3.7 million in Water Quality Grants.

BUSINESS PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

These grants are designed to help recent graduates of our business planning program implement key projects defined through their planning process. In 2022, we made 20 awards totaling \$195,740 to a variety of working lands businesses including livestock, dairy, and diversified produce farms, food processors, and forest products businesses.

FUNDING SOURCES FOR FY22 WATER QUALITY PROJECTS

\$3,728,793.21 OF VHCB & LEVERAGED FUNDS



“The new injection equipment is allowing us to reach our short- and long-term business goals of increasing efficiencies, improving sustainability, and bringing the next generation into the farm business. No-till planting means the soils are less compacted and this will help our farm be more viable in the long run.”

– Chanin Hill, Four Hills Farm

“Our woodchip pad barnyard has significantly reduced feed waste, improved herd health, and helped us streamline labor. It’s allowed us to be responsible stewards of the land and waterways of the customers we directly serve – all while working towards creating a viable farm business, allowing us to grow and support our family.”

– Mark Dill, Chandler Pond Farm

“These upgrades will help our business expand, enable four-season produce packing, and improve the sustainability of our operations through water and energy efficiencies – it’s an essential component of our planned growth. We also won’t have to worry about our water supply freezing and it will create a better work environment to bring on a full-time employee.”

– Patrick Helman, Sandy Bottom Farm



\$40,000 WATER QUALITY GRANT FOR A MANURE INJECTION SYSTEM



\$7,726 WATER QUALITY GRANT FOR A WOODCHIP BARNYARD



\$10,000 IMPLEMENTATION GRANT FOR A FOUR-SEASON WASH-PACK FACILITY

FOUR HILLS FARM

BRISTOL
THE HILL FAMILY

Three generations of the Hill Family work together to operate the Four Hills Farm Partnership, a dairy encompassing thousands of acres in Bristol, Vermont. They milk 2,300 cows, grow much of their own feed, and work hard to manage land and water resources sustainably. With VHCB Water Quality Grant, NRCS EQIP, and VAAFM CEAP funds, the Hills secured a system to inject rather than spread manure in their fields. This has allowed them to use farm labor, tractor fuel, and soil nutrients more efficiently all while reducing manure runoff.

CHANDLER POND FARM

SOUTH WHEELOCK
MARK, DAHLIA, CHUCK & LISA DILL

Two generations of the Dill Family manage Chandler Pond Farm, a diversified beef and berry operation on land conserved with the Vermont Land Trust. Stewardship is critical to the Dills’ mission and this spurred them to take action to protect their watershed. With support from UVM Extension, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, and a VHCB Water Quality Grant, the Dills were able to replace their earthen barnyard with an innovative woodchip barnyard that prevents nutrients from entering waterways and protects their pasture during winter.

SANDY BOTTOM FARM

ISLE LA MOTTE
PATRICK HELMAN & MARY CATHERINE GRAZANIO

Patrick Helman and Mary Catherine Grazanio are the farmer-owners of Sandy Bottom Farm, a certified organic, diversified produce farm in Isle La Motte. Since launching in 2018, they’ve experienced high demand and have maximized the capacity of their 1.25 acres. With a \$10,000 Implementation Grant, they will upgrade their wash-pack station to be operational year-round, supporting their goals to grow the business to sustain their family.

VIABILITY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

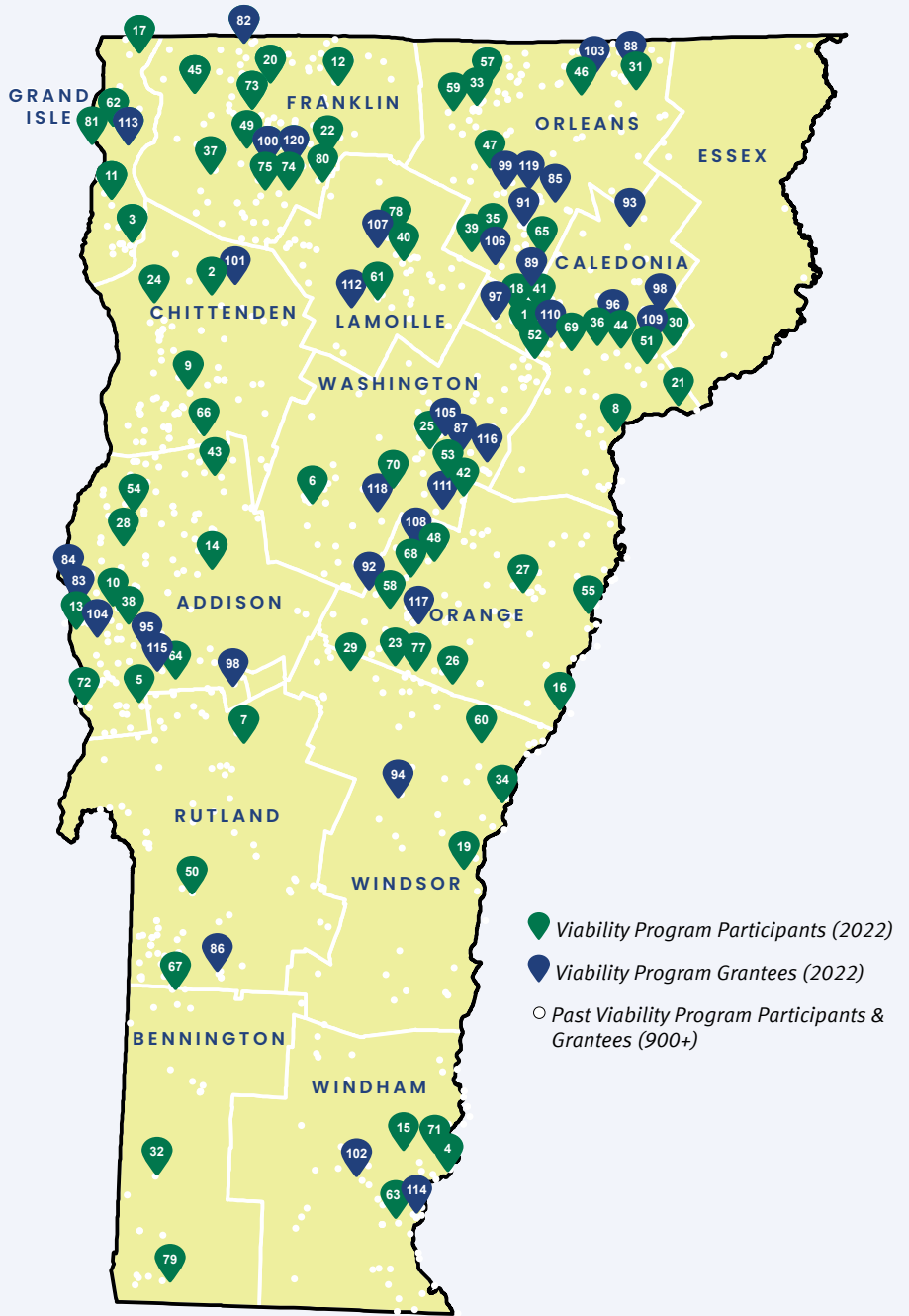
1. **Ackermann Dairy**, Hardwick
2. **Adams Turkey Farm**, Westford
3. **Allenholm Farm**, South Hero*
4. **Amandola Farm**, Putney
5. **Animal Farm**, Whiting
6. **Babette's Table**, Waitsfield
7. **Baird Farm**, Chittenden*
8. **Barnet Mtn Meats**, Barnet
9. **Blank Page Café**, Shelburne*
10. **Blissful Dairy**, Bridport*
11. **Blue Heron Farm**, Grand Isle*
12. **Boston Post Dairy**, Enosburg
13. **Bridport Creamery**, Bridport
14. **C&K Butler Beef, LLC**, Bristol*
15. **CE Maple**, Putney
16. **Cedar Circle**, Thetford*
17. **Champlain Islands Nursery**, Alburgh
18. **Clare-A-Den Farm**, Hardwick
19. **Cobb Hill Cheese**, Hartland
20. **Corey Farm**, Franklin
21. **Crooked Mile Cheese**, Waterford
22. **Crossroad Maple**, Bakersfield
23. **Conant Farm**, Randolph
24. **Dhaurali Goats**, Colchester*
25. **Fairmont Farm, LLC**, East Montpelier*
26. **Flying Dog Farm**, Tunbridge*
27. **Fort Waite Farm**, Corinth
28. **Gevry Firewood**, Addison
29. **Gilead Brook Farm**, Randolph
30. **Gingue Farm**, Waterford
31. **God's Country Farm**, Holland*
32. **Grateful Morning Farm**, Shaftsbury*
33. **Hard Climb Farm**, Newport City
34. **Henderson's Tree and Garden**, Hartford
35. **Hillside Homestead**, Albany*
36. **Hillview Farm**, Danville*
37. **Holyoke Dairy**, St. Albans Town*
38. **Iroquois Acres**, Bridport*
39. **Jones Farm**, Craftsbury
40. **Joneslan Farm LLC**, Hyde Park*
41. **Kingdom Creamery**, Hardwick
42. **LePage Farm**, Barre Town
43. **Lewis Creek Farm**, Starksboro
44. **Little Lynn Farm**, Danville
45. **Maple City Candy**, Swanton
46. **Maple Grove Farm**, Derby
47. **Maple Mountain Sugarhouse**, Irasburg
48. **Martin Family Farm**, Williamstown
49. **Moo Acres Farm**, Fairfield*
50. **Naga Bakehouse**, Middletown Springs
51. **NEK grains**, Waterford
52. **Northwind Farm**, Walden*
53. **Old Soul Farm**, Barre City*
54. **Otter Creek Custom Meats**, Panton
55. **Pierson Farm**, Bradford
56. **Pine Island Farm**, Colchester*
57. **Pothier Family Farm**, Newport City*
58. **Poulin & Daughters**, Brookfield*
59. **Randall Family Farm LLC**, Troy*
60. **Red Clover Cheese**, Norwich
61. **Rooney Farm**, Morrisville
62. **Sandy Bottom Farm**, Isle La Motte
63. **Scott Farm**, Dummerston
64. **Severy Farm, LLC**, Cornwall
65. **Shat Acres Highland Cattle**, Greensboro
66. **Sayre Fields Farm & Shrubby, LLC**, Hinesburg*
67. **South Wind Farmstead**, Rupert
68. **Sprague Ranch**, Brookfield*
69. **Square Deal Farm**, Walden
70. **Sugar Feather Farm**, Berlin
71. **Sweet Pickins Farm**, Putney
72. **The Russel Farm**, Orwell*
73. **This is Family Tree**, Sheldon
74. **Trudell Family Farm**, Fairfield*
75. **Vermont Willow Nursery**, Fairfield
76. **VT Woodworking School**, Cambridge
77. **White Rock Farm & Lumber**, Randolph
78. **Wild Kid Farm**, Hyde Park
79. **Wildstone Farm**, Pownal
80. **Williams Farm**, Bakersfield
81. **Z. Wines**, Isle La Motte

* Indicates Conserved Property

VIABILITY PROGRAM GRANTEES

82. **Bouchard Family Dairy LLC, Franklin***
\$10,314 for an injector toolbar
83. **Champlainside Farms, Bridport**
\$40,000 for milkhouse gray water reuse
84. **Chimney Point Farm LP, Addison***
\$40,000 for silage baling equipment
85. **Colburns Village View Maples, Glover**
\$40,000 for sacrifice pasture heavy use mitigation project
86. **Dorset Peak Jerseys Ltd Co., Danby**
\$38,500 for baleage equipment
87. **Fairmont LLC, East Montpelier***
\$6,500 for fertilizer equipment
88. **Green Valley Organic, Derby***
\$40,000 for a concrete storage facility
89. **Hill Farm, Greensboro**
\$25,838 for a milkhouse waste project
90. **Ice House Farm, Goshen**
\$40,000 for covered barnyard for goat dairy
91. **Ledgenear Farm, Glover**
\$38,675 for grazing infrastructure
92. **Poulin & Daughters Farm, Brookfield***
\$40,000 for a manure storage facility
93. **Rainbows Edge Farm, Sutton**
\$40,000 for a bedded pack facility
94. **Maple Valley Farm, Woodstock***
\$12,580 for rotational grazing infrastructure
95. **Severy Farm LLC, Cornwall**
\$31,966 for a manure management project
96. **Sheep Meadow Farm, Danville**
\$13,000 for farm road and culvert enlargement
97. **Snug Valley Farm, Hardwick**
\$40,000 for winter pig housing
98. **Speedwell Farms, Lyndon**
\$40,000 for a milkhouse waste project
99. **Sweet Rowen Farmstead, W. Glover***
\$23,995 for a farm waste water fertigation gun
100. **Moo Acres, Fairfield***
\$40,000 for a compost bedded pack
101. **Adams Turkey Farm, Westford**
\$9,500 for expanding a poultry processing facility

- 102. **Better Wheel Workshops, Newfane**
\$10,000 for climate controlled wood storage
- 103. **Maple Grove Farm, Derby**
\$10,000 for a farm utility vehicle
- 104. **Bridport Creamery LLC, Bridport**
\$10,000 for cheese processing equipment
- 105. **Fairmont LLC, East Montpelier***
\$10,000 for a retail space renovation
- 106. **Hillside Homestead, Albany***
\$9,740 for cow stall upgrades
- 107. **Joneslan Farm, Hyde Park***
\$10,000 for a heifer to goat kid barn conversion
- 108. **Martin Farm, Williamstown**
\$9,000 for electrical upgrades for the milking barn
- 109. **NEK Grains, Waterford**
\$10,000 for a 40" mill and farm store expansion
- 110. **Northwind Farm, Walden***
\$10,000 for a barn addition and covered laneway with automatic grainers
- 111. **Old Soul Farm, Barre City***
\$10,000 for a barn repair and farm store expansion
- 112. **Rooney Farm, Morrisville**
\$7,500 for a feed modernization project
- 113. **Sandy Bottom Farm, Isle La Motte**
\$10,000 for a four-season wash-pack station
- 114. **Scott Farm Inc., Dummerston**
\$10,000 for fruit packing equipment
- 115. **Severy Farm LLC, Cornwall**
\$10,000 for a barn expansion
- 116. **Shat Acres Farm, Plainfield***
\$10,000 for a barn addition
- 117. **Silloway Maple, Randolph**
\$10,000 for sugarhouse renovations
- 118. **Sugar Feather Farm, Berlin**
\$10,000 for hatchery upgrades and repairs
- 119. **Sweet Rowen Farmstead, W. Glover***
\$10,000 for distribution hub infrastructure
- 120. **Moo Acres, Fairfield***
\$10,000 for a milking parlor



RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (REDI)

The Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) helps Vermont's small communities access complex funding sources to advance the working lands sector, expand outdoor recreation, and support community revitalization. Many rural communities lack staff time, fundraising expertise, and knowledge of resources, creating a barrier to success for critical projects. REDI helps bridge this gap by providing targeted grant writing consulting and technical assistance.

Demand for these services grew significantly in 2022 with the release of a range of transformational federal funding opportunities. Increased support from the Legislature positioned VHCB to respond to the need and reach additional communities. VHCB also secured a \$150,000 USDA Community Facilities Technical Assistance & Training grant to increase REDI services.

In its fifth year, REDI provided assistance to 27 communities and businesses, securing more than \$3M in awards to date. Since REDI's inception, 51 communities have successfully secured grants totaling more than \$10M.

\$525,000 IN REDI FUNDS → **\$10,099,243** IN GRANTS TO COMMUNITIES

(LEVERAGED 18:1; \$198,000 AWARD AVG.)

SANBORN COVERED BRIDGE & RIVERFRONT PARK

LYNDONVILLE

Lyndonville's Sanborn Bridge is one of less than two dozen remaining Paddleford truss bridges in the U.S. and serves as the gateway into the community. However, significant structural repairs are needed to bring the bridge back into public use. Identified as a key community priority, this restoration would preserve the historic bridge and create a connection to the regional trail system, bringing community members together and driving traffic to local businesses. With support from REDI, the Town of Lyndon secured a \$350,000 Northern Border Regional Commission grant to rehabilitate the bridge and create a 1.5 acre riverfront park. Upon completion, the Sanborn Bridge will be a focal point, increasing downtown vibrancy and offering a space to gather, recreate, and access all the area has to offer.

"This was my first time working with a grant writer and it was so valuable to have an outside perspective and support with telling our story in a clear and compelling way. Diane was so detailed, kept us on track, and was instrumental in our success."

~ Nicole Gratton, Town of Lyndon



ARLINGTON COMMON



CURRIER FOREST PRODUCTS, DANVILLE



FUNDED PROJECTS IN 2022

CONFLUENCE OF HISTORY AND RECREATION IN LYNDONVILLE: The Village of Lyndonville will use a \$350,000 Northern Border Regional Commission grant to rehabilitate the historic Sanborn Covered Bridge, create a riverfront park, connect trails and waterways, and provide an attraction for residents and visitors.

GROWING MARKETS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST PRODUCTS IN DANVILLE: Currier Forest Products produces sustainably harvested, custom milled wood products on land stewarded by the family for nearly 200 years. With a \$220,600 USDA Value-Added Producer grant, the business will expand marketing, grow sales by 50%, and add an employee.

LANDSCAPE-SCALE RESTORATION IN BRADFORD: Juniper Chase in Bradford will use a \$75,000 Working Lands Supply Chain Impact grant to address the need for local planting stock to carry out restoration projects in uplands, wetlands, and riparian corridors.

TRAIL CONNECTION AND ACCESSIBILITY IN BETHEL: The Town of Bethel will use a \$331,809 Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) grant to develop an interconnected network of parks, greenways, and multi-use trails and increase accessibility through trail design and wayfinding.

LOCAL FOOD ACCESS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN HARDWICK: Awarded a \$191,575 Healthy Food Financing Initiative grant and a \$130,500 Working Lands Market-Level Infrastructure grant, Buffalo Mountain Co-op will expand operations in a new location and provide a larger market for local producers.

EXPANDING OUTDOOR RESOURCES IN LYNDONVILLE: Powers Park is a focal point for Lyndonville and the only public park in the Village. A \$40,000 Vermont Community Development Program grant will support essential pre-development work to enhance accessibility and pedestrian connectivity.

LOCAL MEAT PRODUCTION IN GLOVER: Vermont Rabbitry received a \$200,000 USDA Meat Processing Inspection Readiness Grant to make renovations necessary to gain certification that will enable market expansion to neighboring states.

RECREATION FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES IN ARLINGTON: The Arlington Common is a hub that strengthens the community through creativity, wellness, culture, and education. A \$250,000 Vermont Community Development Program Grant will support Wellness Center renovations, providing recreation programming for seniors, students, and other community members.

STRENGTHENING VERMONT'S MEAT PROCESSING SECTOR IN FERRISBURGH: Vermont Livestock Slaughter & Processing received a \$1,096,655 USDA Meat & Poultry Processing Expansion Program grant to maximize capacity and position the company to transition to the next generation.

CREATING A COMMUNITY HUB IN PITTSFORD: Pittsford Village Farm, a community gathering space comprised of an historic farm house on 20 acres, secured a \$60,000 Vermont Community Development Program grant to advance the development of a childcare center and expand all-ages programming.

DIVERSIFYING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES IN LUDLOW: The Town of Ludlow received a \$190,500 VOREC grant to redevelop Dorsey Skatepark, Vermont's oldest skatepark and provide opportunities for youth to engage in board sports.

VERMONT LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER & PROCESSING

FERRISBURGH

Carl Cushing is the owner of Vermont Livestock Slaughter & Processing (VLSP), a family-owned business that has served Vermont farms for nearly 50 years. VLSP has become an increasingly important resource as processing bottlenecks have grown more acute. However, an aging facility and outdated equipment have reduced capacity and increased production costs, threatening viability and impeding successful transition to the next generation. VLSP began working with Bio-Logical Capital to address these challenges and to plan for long-term success. REDI supported a feasibility study for large-scale renovation and equipment overhaul, which was necessary to apply to the USDA Meat & Poultry Processing Expansion Program's inaugural round. With a strong case to present against national competitors, the team secured \$1,096,655 to revitalize and modernize the facility, triple its throughput, and expand its range of value-added products. This transformation will support succession planning to ensure this critical infrastructure remains available to the region.

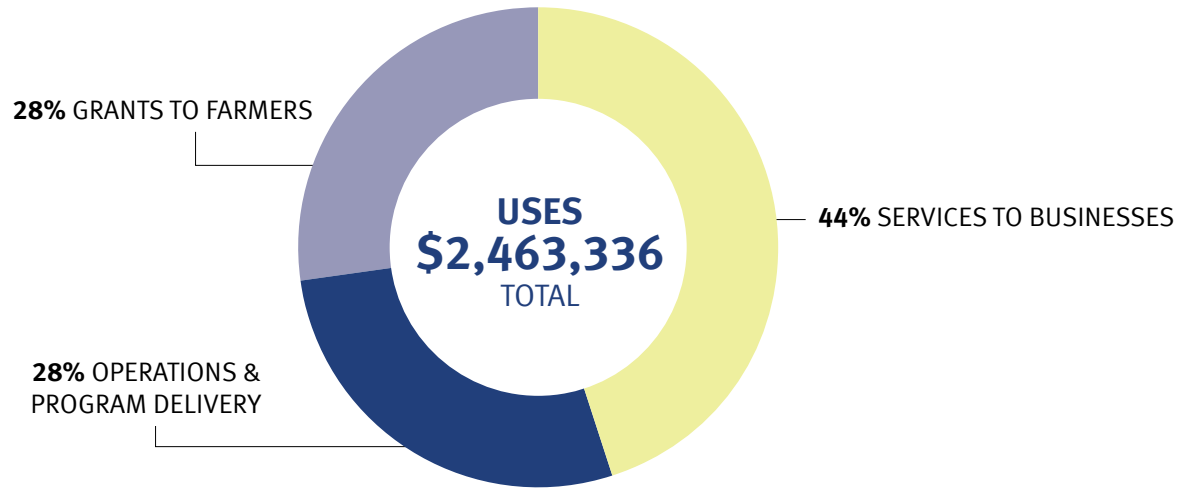
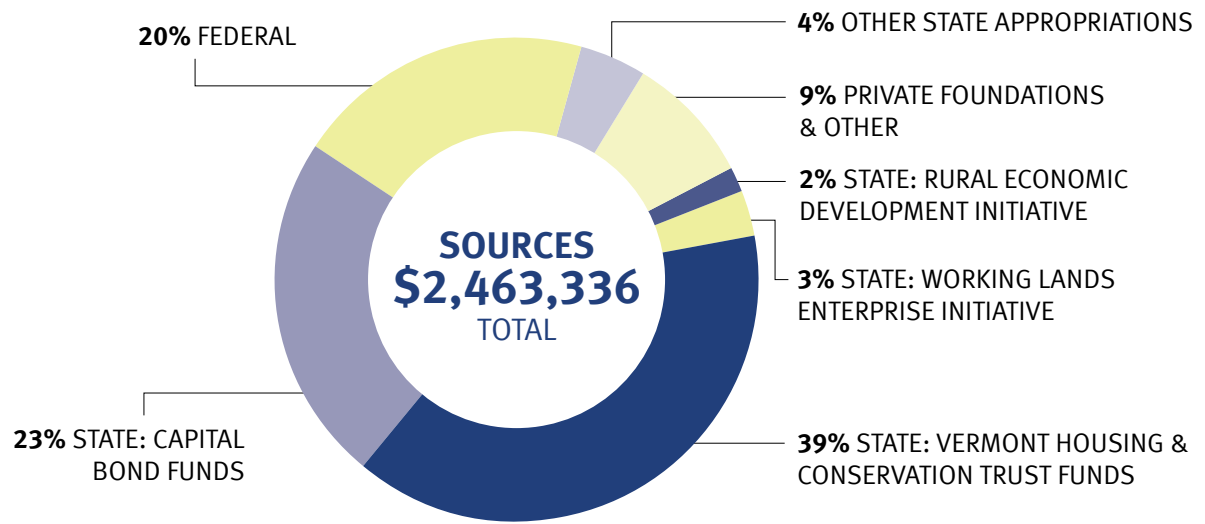
"The support that REDI provided with our feasibility study was completely invaluable. We wouldn't have been able to successfully apply to the USDA MPPEP grant without this key component and it was a really smooth process to get the help we needed."

~ Sarah Wilson, Bio-Logical Capital



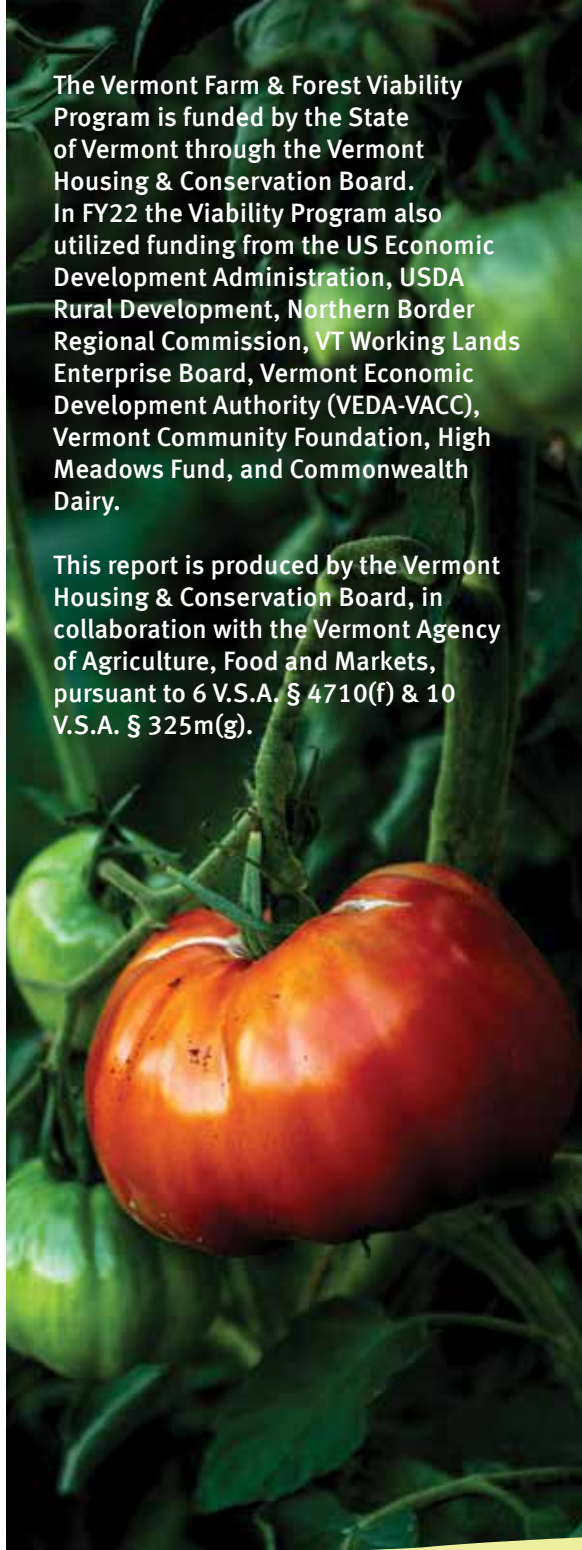
VIABILITY PROGRAM FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES – FY2022

In FY22 the Viability Program expended \$2.46 million, 28% coming from federal and private funding sources.



The Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program is funded by the State of Vermont through the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board. In FY22 the Viability Program also utilized funding from the US Economic Development Administration, USDA Rural Development, Northern Border Regional Commission, VT Working Lands Enterprise Board, Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA-VACC), Vermont Community Foundation, High Meadows Fund, and Commonwealth Dairy.

This report is produced by the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, in collaboration with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, pursuant to 6 V.S.A. § 4710(f) & 10 V.S.A. § 325m(g).



VERMONT FARM & FOREST VIABILITY PROGRAM ADVISORY BOARD

Alyson Eastman (Chair), Deputy Secretary, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Joan Goldstein, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Economic Development

Ashlyn Bristle, Rebop Farm

Norah Lake, Sweetland Farm

Colleen Goodridge, Goodridge Lumber

Jenna Koloski, Vermont Council on Rural Development

Dan Lerner, University of Vermont Extension

Fred Kenney, Addison County Economic Development Corporation

Sarah Isham, Vermont Agricultural Credit Corporation (VEDA/VACC)

Gustave Seelig, Vermont Housing & Conservation Board

Michael Snyder, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation

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Calley Hastings, Program Manager

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VISIT US ONLINE: VHCB.ORG/VIABILITY

PHOTO CREDITS:

Cover pages: Corey Hendrickson, James Chandler, Daniel Schechner

P.2: Corey Hendrickson

P.4: Daniel Schechner, Corey Hendrickson, Ben DeFlorio, Town of Lyndon

P.6: Corey Hendrickson

P.8: George Bellerose, Brooke Wilcox

P.10: Four Hills Farm, Chandler Pond Farm, Scott Cherhoniak

P.13: Arlington Common, Paul Hayes

P.14: Steve James

P.15: James Chandler

P.16: Corey Hendrickson



ROLLING BALE FARM, SHOREHAM



WHITE ROCK FARM & SAWMILL, RANDOLPH



BAIRD FARM, CHITTENDEN



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