



More Vermont-farmed Food for Vermonters



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House Agriculture Committee Testimony



Farm to Community

- ▶ Level the field
 - ▶ Market favors larger, more industrial farms
 - ▶ Small farms with a genuine VT product don't have resources – challenging economics
- ▶ Vermont “brand”
 - ▶ Small state
 - ▶ Statewide solidarity
 - ▶ Leverage Vermont identity
- ▶ Protect local
 - ▶ Provide more Vermont-farmed food to more Vermonters
- ▶ Distribution and merchandising
 - ▶ Shared infrastructure and resources

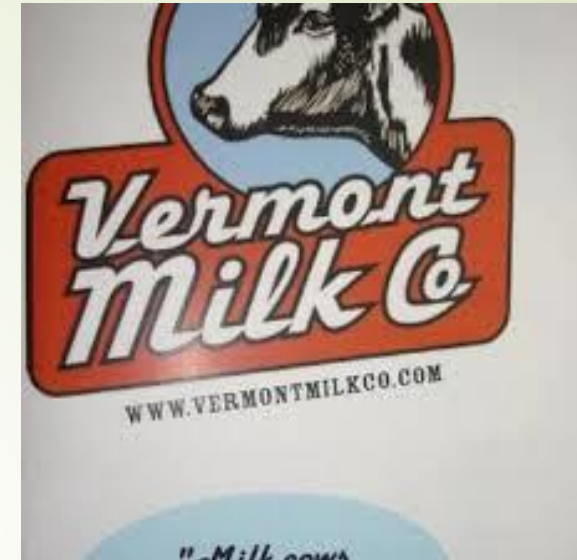
Level the Field

- Support antitrust legislation
- Agribusiness Merger Moratorium and Antitrust Review Act of 2018, is aimed at the unprecedented concentration in the agriculture and food sectors, which is squeezing small family farmers, driving down wages for workers, and hurting rural communities.



Vermont Brand

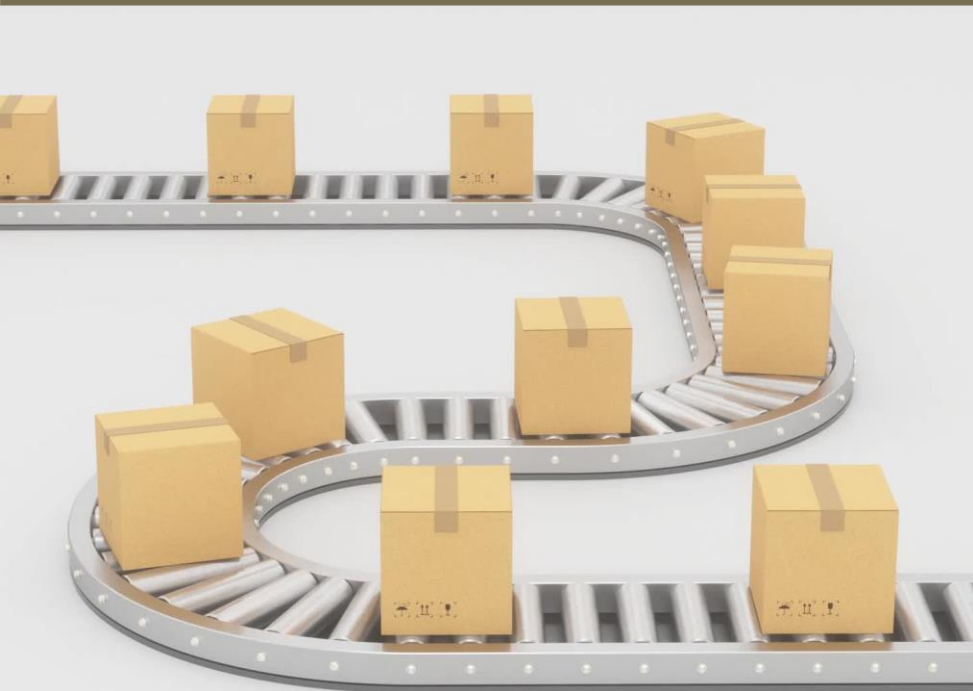
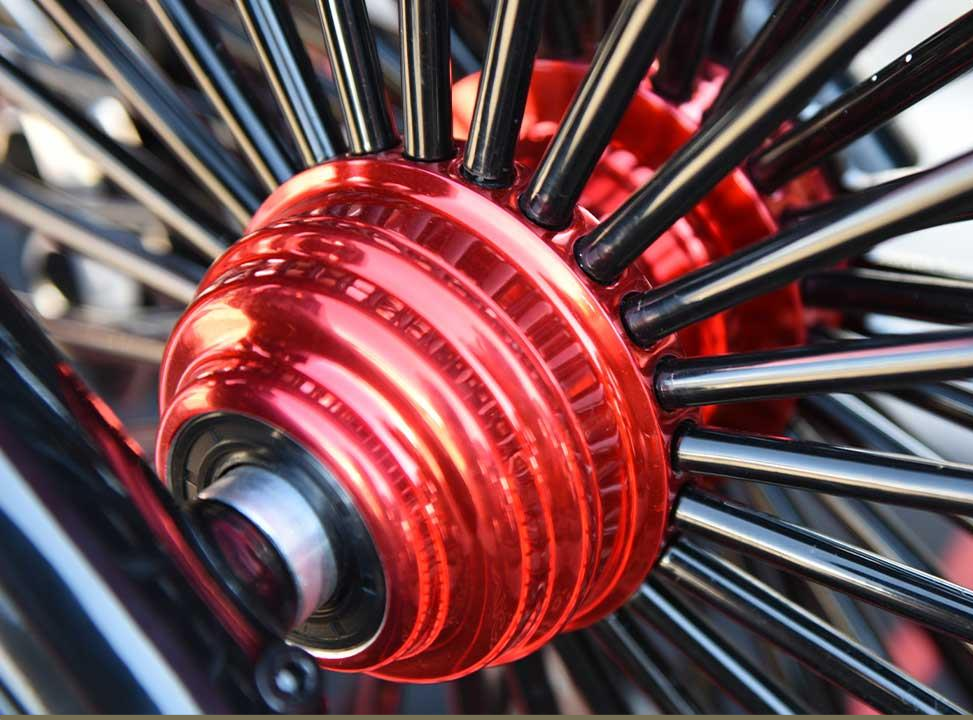
- What qualifies as a “Vermont Local” product?
 - Percentage of ingredients produced in state
 - Best Practices (use of chemicals, synthetic ingredients)
 - Authenticity
 - Certification
 - Existing Information (inspections, licensing, certification)
- Learn from past failures
 - VT Milk Company
 - VT Seal of Quality





Protect Local

- Create a definition
- Hold stores accountable
- Enforce the meaning
- Incentivize stores who sell a minimum threshold of local food
- Limit competition for local producers



Distribution

- Hub and spoke model
- VT Food Hub Collaborative and for-profit local distributors
- Share resources and coordinate routes
- Grant support for cross docking
- Grant support for infrastructure and equipment



Marketing and Merchandising

- ▶ Launch a VT Local Merchandising Team
- ▶ Build relationships with producers, distributors and buyers
- ▶ Stock shelves and ensure optimal inventory
- ▶ Monitor product placement
- ▶ In-store demos
- ▶ Consumer education
- ▶ Support small producers in gaining shelf space in large grocery chains



Build Relationships and Work Collaboratively

- Across value and supply chains
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Producers
- Distributors
- Stores and Buyers