

# Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)

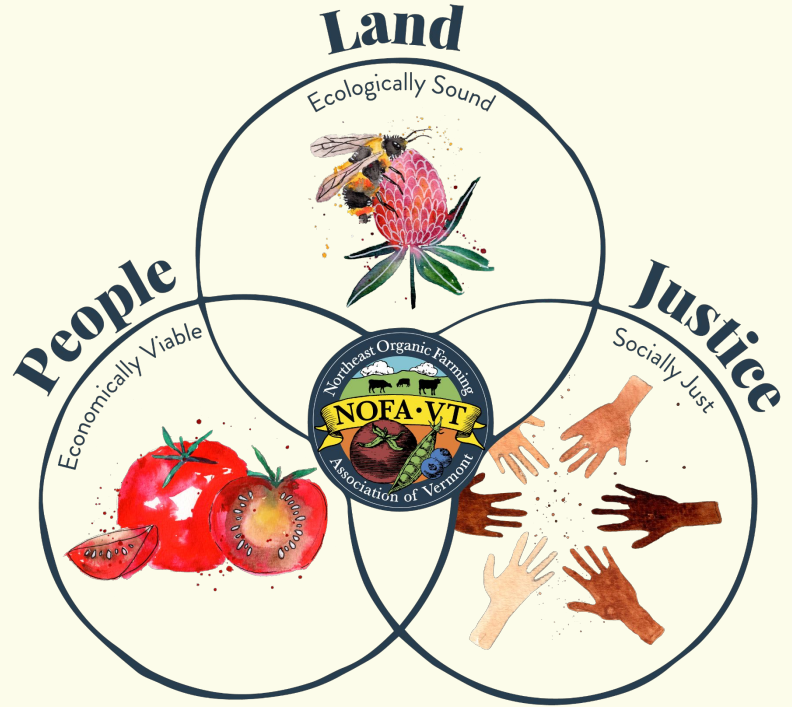
Grace Oedel, Executive Director  
Maddie Kempner, Policy Director



# About Us

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT) is a member-driven 501(c)(3) non-profit organization promoting organic practices to build a food system in Vermont that is economically viable, ecologically sound, and socially just.

NOFA-VT was founded in Putney, VT in 1971, making it one of the oldest organic farming associations in the United States.



# History & Why does it matter now?

NOFA-VT was founded by a group of farmers who believed agriculture could be done in a way that kept people and planet healthy.

We remain farmer-led, with a majority farmer board and farmer-populated committees.

Our core values of stewardship, care, relationship, equity, and ecology are more needed than ever.

## **We stand in a critical moment.**

- Corporate consolidation in the food system
- Intensification of climate change and ecological challenges
- Demand for VT farmland at record highs
- Aging (and shrinking) farmer population

**Our vision of a thriving, verdant, and just food system offers the solutions we need today.**





**NOFA-VT values the expertise of the agricultural community and the lived experience of those most impacted by policy.**

Our goal is to center their voices first and foremost in our advocacy.



## Farmer Services

We support the viability of Vermont farms via technical on-farm assistance, business planning, transition planning, funding opportunities, and other critical resources.



## Food Access

We make local and organic food findable and affordable for everyone—including schools and institutions—because it benefits farmers, communities, and the local economy.



## Advocacy & Policy

We rally our community and work in coalition with partner organizations to ensure state and federal policies support farmers and eaters.



## Education & Community-Building

We facilitate knowledge-sharing and foster a more connected and resilient community through our on-farm workshops, annual winter conference, mobile pizza oven events, and more.



# NOFA-VT's 41st annual Winter Conference | February 18-19, 2023

## UVM Davis Center, Burlington



*Keynote Speaker Winona LaDuke*



*40+ workshop offerings, seed swap,  
film screening, music and more!*



## Vermont Organic Farmers

Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF) is an LLC owned by NOFA-VT. Since 1985, VOF has served as a third-party verification of organic food production and has been accredited by the USDA National Organic Program since 2002.

VOF currently certifies over 750 farms and producers around Vermont including vegetable, dairy, livestock, and maple producers.



# VOF Statistics | 2022



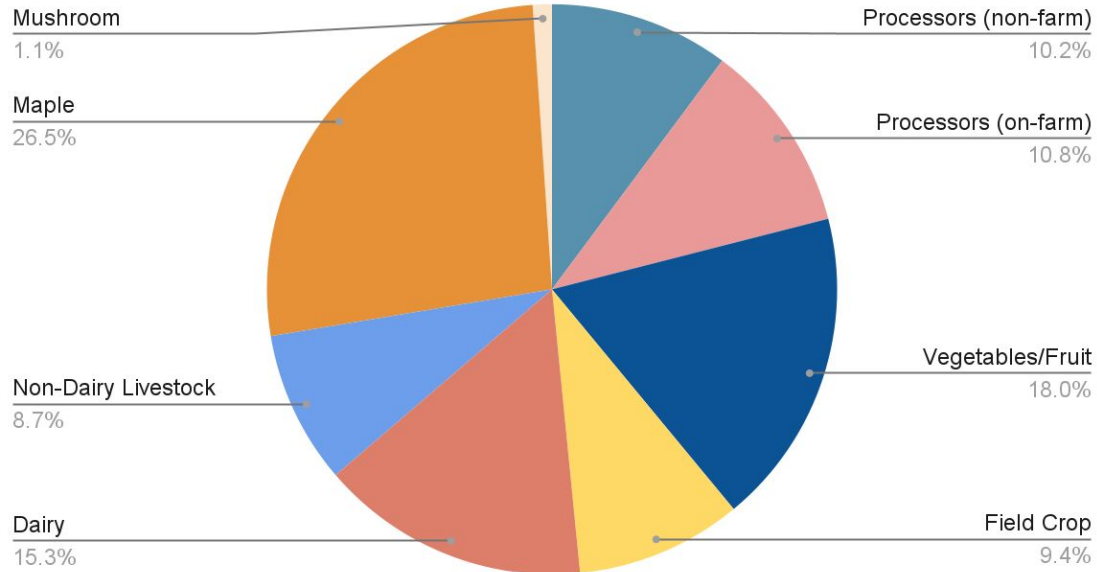
- Total number of producers: 771
- 159,165 acres certified organic farmland!
- Gross sales by VT certified organic farmers: \$127,645,493
- Gross sales by VT certified organic processors: \$221,578,452
- Total gross sales: \$349,223,945





# VOF Statistics | 2022

## Certified Organic Operations (771 total)



# Policy Priorities | 2023-2024 Biennium



Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)

## Policy Priorities

### Action Needed this Session

- Securing permanent funding and support for the **Local Foods Incentive Grant** that provides a financial incentive to school districts and supervisory unions to purchase local food for their school meal programs, as well as permanent funding and support for Universal Meals.
- Securing a clear, time-bound and funded commitment to **stop contamination of soils with microplastics and PFAS**, and establishing funding and other support mechanisms for farmers whose land is found to be contaminated.
- Securing immediate relief and long-term support for **organic dairies in crisis**.
- Reinvesting tax revenue from cannabis sales into communities disproportionately harmed by cannabis prohibition, and improving access to the cannabis market for growers.

### Big Picture Issues we Champion

- Streamlining access to agricultural programs, grants and services.
- Dramatically **reducing pesticide use** in agriculture.
- Increasing support for **organic agriculture as a climate solution**, including as a means of meeting emissions reductions targets set by the Global Warming Solutions Act.
- Increasing access to **affordable healthcare & childcare**.
- Improving access to **land, housing, and nourishing food** for historically marginalized populations.
- Continued **engagement on Payment for Ecosystem Services** models to ensure they center farmer needs, social justice outcomes, and holistic ecosystem function.

### Fundamental Programs:

- Land Access & Opportunity Board
- Working Lands Enterprise Initiative
- VHCBC Farm & Forest Viability Program
- Vermont Farm to Plate Investment Program
- Farm to School & Early Childhood Grants

### Partnerships:

- Vermont FEED
- Vermont Cannabis Equity Coalition (VCEC)
- Working Lands Coalition
- Farm to Plate Policy Strategy Team
- Vermont Renews



# Thank You!

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