

**UVM CENTER
FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**
Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2013



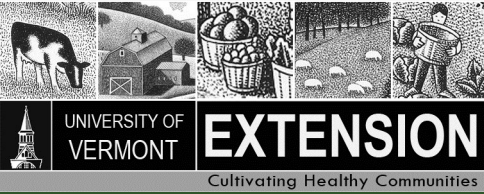
UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture



UNIVERSITY OF
VERMONT

EXTENSION

Cultivating Healthy Communities



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January 2014

Dear Friends and Supporters,

When I experience a challenging period in my life, I tend to manage it by taking stock of my blessings, and remembering (hoping!) that when the planet spins around again, my burdens will feel buoyant. Despite all of the wonderment that comes with farming and other food-related adventures, the uncertainties of agriculture can produce a hefty load that, for some, rarely feels weightless.

During the past year, many Vermont producers were caught up in a regulatory and policy swirl that seemed endless. We didn't have a new Farm Bill, the unbearably lengthy proposed regulations under the Food Safety and Modernization Act awaited comment, and many small-scale farmers were confronted with regulatory issues about which they knew very little. Amidst this craziness, where were the rays of sunshine? For the Center, the light was bright in several ways, many of which relate to all of you!

- We had wonderful partnerships and collaborations on a broad range of topics.
- Our donors kept our jobs substantial and our lights on. Thank you!
- New staff brought us into fresh and exciting territory, helping us feel more prepared for the future.
- Cross-disciplinary connections enriched our research ideas.
- A new office on campus brought us back into the hub.
- Collectively we produced many new publications.

The list could go on, but we'd rather you spend a moment reading the following pages for a rapid review of our work and accomplishments.

Thank you for being part of the Center!

Best wishes,





Farming & Climate Change

Our vision: Farms and farmers that are not troubled by August drought or May floods, who lose no soil during July thunderstorms, and who help heat and power their neighbors during February snows.

A grass-based farmer says,
“Everything comes together on our farm. We do what we do for financial reasons, for water quality, to fight climate change, all of it. The whole plan is based on keeping 100% of the soil covered with grass 100% of the time.”

Staff working on Farming & Climate Change issues and initiatives:

Joshua Faulkner,
in collaboration with
Juan Alvez,
Jenn Colby,
Kimberly Hagen,
and **Ginger Nickerson.**

134,229

= the approximate metric tonnage of carbon dioxide that could be sequestered in Vermont soils per year if farms currently using conventional practices to grow corn and soybeans were to convert to well-managed pasture. That's the equivalent of taking nearly 28,000 passenger vehicles off the road in terms of savings of greenhouse gas emissions.

Youth Agriculture Individual Development Account Program

Our vision: Vermont's next generation will have the tools necessary to steward the working landscape and achieve financial independence.

A program participant says,

“The IDA program has been personally transformative. I have always had a strong interest in farming but the program gave me the confidence and the guidance to focus on my interest, clarify my ideas and create a viable business plan. I am so grateful to the IDA for the workshops, the conferences, the financial classes, and the inspiring people I met over the past year. Without the IDA program, I would not have developed my passion and would not be actively pursuing it now.”

Staff working on the Youth Ag IDA Program:

Ali Zipparo and Ben Waterman



17

= the number of new farm businesses that will be launched by Youth Ag IDA graduates by April 2014.

Food Access

Our vision: Barriers will be eliminated for all Vermonters to gain access to healthy, locally or regionally produced food.

A community member in one of Vermont's identified "food deserts" says,

"I do find it hard in town to get a variety of vegetables or fruits," and, "it's extremely expensive to eat healthy and to provide your kids with healthy and with a variety."

Staff working on Food Access issues:

Linda Berlin

in collaboration with

Suzy Hodgson

Rachel Schattman

31%

= the percentage of people interviewed through current Food Access research who say that the reason they don't buy more healthy food is that it's not available where they shop.

Produce Safety

Our vision: All commercial fruit and vegetable growers in the state have written produce safety plans and implemented practices that help keep local food in local markets, while improving farm efficiency as well as produce quality and safety, based on practices that support ecological, social, and economic sustainability.

A produce grower says,
“Thank you!! This presentation helped me realize what harvesting and storage practices my farm is a bit lacking in and I will be rectifying them this upcoming season. I also think your willingness to share your farm safety plans is admirable and helps many of us to have a starting point.”

Staff working on produce safety:
Ginger Nickerson



90+

= the number of produce growers from Vermont and neighboring states who have completed produce safety plans and implemented good agricultural practices on their farms. There are approximately 700 growers in the state.

Pasture Program

Our vision: Well-managed intensive grazing is the solar-powered intersection of profitable farming, robust ecosystems, and really good food. It represents everything that agriculture should be.



A grass-based farmer says,
“The pastures are thriving with our new routine! We’ve divided the fields into much smaller areas ... So very very successful. Thank you again for coming down and helping with this.”

Pasture Program staff:
Jenn Colby, Coordinator
Juan Alvez
Kimberly Hagen

5,500

= the number of Vermont acres impacted by the Center’s Pasture Program in 2013 through 87 farm visits, with assistance ranging from general assistance to full grazing plans.

Land Access

Our Vision: New farmers will have access to productive and affordable farms and land that meets their needs, while senior generation farmers can transition operations to the younger generation in a manner that fulfills core family farming values.


An aspiring farmer and land-seeker says,
“It’s indescribable, it’s huge, to have help like the Land Access program. In Vermont agriculture, the connections with other people mean that one plus one equals much more than two. It gives me a lot of hope, and makes that chance that something will happen exponentially huge.”

Staff working on Land Access:
Ben Waterman



6,000,000

= the estimated number of acres required for New England farms to produce a healthy, varied diet for the region’s residents in 2060. Currently, about 2,000,000 acres are in farmland.



Shiitake Mushrooms as an Agroforestry Enterprise

Our vision: Farmers and foresters work together to realize their enterprise diversification goals and grow the healthy, productive and thriving community that typifies agroforestry systems.

A local produce buyer says,

“The mushrooms are spectacular. The first year we just couldn’t keep them in stock. People were really wowed and surprised that we were getting shiitake mushrooms locally.”

Staff working on the Shiitake Project:

Ben Waterman

\$11,000

= the additional annual income that a modest 500-log shiitake operation can add to a farm’s bottom line.

New American Farmer Project

Our vision: Vermont's resettled refugee and immigrant farmers will have access to the resources they need to become proud members of Vermont's food system, and continue rich farming legacies that are common threads between their new cultural home and that of their homelands.

A New American farmer at the 2013 rice harvest says,

“It has been a long time now ... Although we don’t have a very huge field here, it’s a huge excitement for Nepali people who have come from refugee camps and had an agriculture background. ”

Staff working on the New American Farmer Project:

Ben Waterman

in collaboration with

Linda Berlin

Jenn Colby

Kimberly Hagen

Ginger Nickerson



5,922

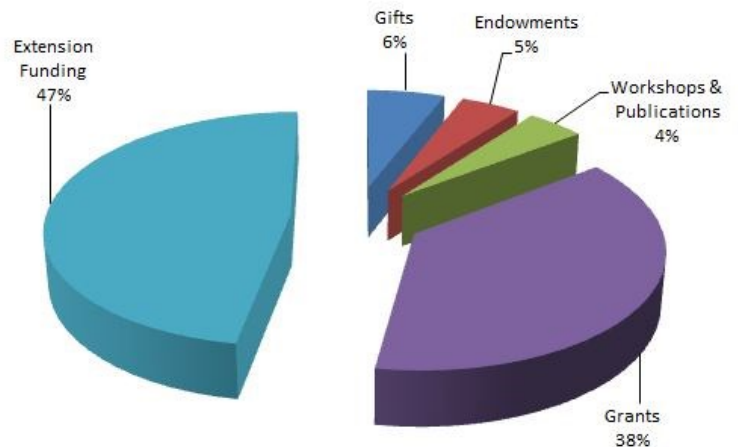
= estimated pounds of rice that could grow from the seed harvested in Burlington's Intervale in 2013

2013 Funding & Expenses

About the Center's Funding

- **Extension Funding** is a combination of federal and state dollars that UVM receives as a Land Grant University.
- **Grants** are from government sources and private foundations.
- **Endowment** income is the interest that is earned from generous donations made to the Center by donors who wanted to ensure that important work can continue in perpetuity.
- **Workshops and Publications** income is derived from workshop fees and the purchases of Center books, publications, and DVD's.
- **Gifts** are donations to the Center's annual fund raising appeals, or those made spontaneously.

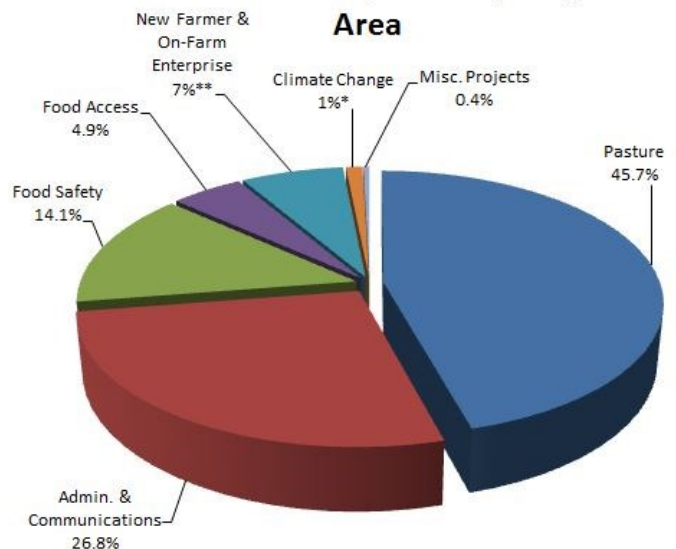
Fiscal Year 2013 Funding by Source



Understanding the Center's Expenses

- **Pasture** represents salaries and program costs for the Center's largest program, with three staffers who engage in research, outreach, collaboration and technical assistance with farmers around the state.
- **Admin. & Communications** monies support leadership, collaboration, development, grants management, financial oversight, support for program staff, outreach and customer service, and allow us to produce the Center's newsletters, calendars and annual report.
- **Food Safety** allowed the Produce Safety Coordinator to help farmers develop and follow plans for safe handling of their on-farm produce.
- **New Farmer & On-Farm Enterprise** expenses supported work in the areas of Land Access, Youth Ag. IDA, and New American Farmer, and projects including the Shiitake Guide.
- **Food Access** funding made it possible to research Vermont's market and capacity for locally grown dried beans, and research how people are accessing healthy food.
- **Climate Change** expenses represent the first weeks of the new Farming & Climate Change Coordinator's work, which began two weeks before the end of the fiscal year.
- **Miscellaneous Projects** included our work supporting the Sustainable Agriculture Council, and the wrap-up of our work with the Small Ruminant Dairy Project.

Fiscal Year 2013 Expenses by Program Area



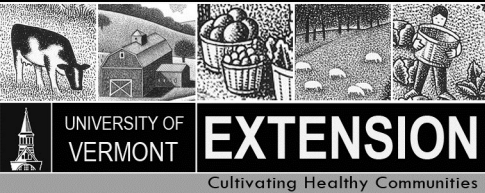
A FEW 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

Clockwise from top left:

1. Farming & Climate Change Coordinator Joshua Faulkner explains rainfall simulation to a group at the Farm Aid concert in Saratoga in September.
2. A group of farmers learn about Mob Grazing from Ian Mitchell-Innes in June.
3. Linda Berlin talks with guests at October's Party on the Farm.
4. The Youth Ag. IDA group at an on-farm learning day with Kimberly Hagen and Extension's Dan Hudson.



UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture



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The University of Vermont and State Agricultural College
CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

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