

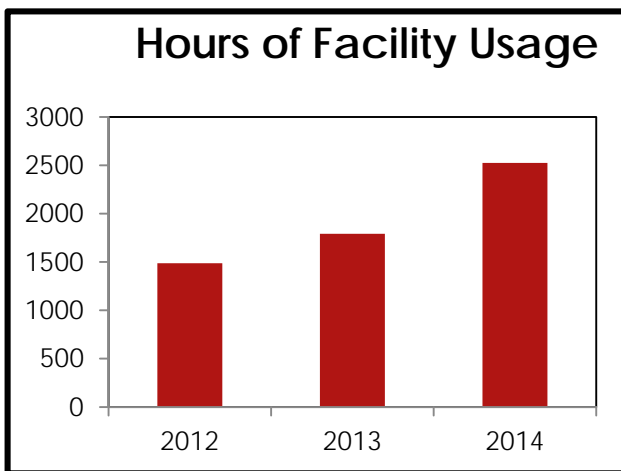
Center for an Agricultural Economy



History: The Center for an Agricultural Economy was founded in 2004 with a mission to engage the public in building a regenerative, locally based, healthy food system. We work through collaboration opportunities, food access and hunger relief, educational outreach and providing infrastructure and technical assistance for farmers and food businesses. In 2011, the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE) became the owner and operator of the **Vermont Food Venture Center**, a business incubation and food processing facility, acting as a shared use food hub in the Northeast Kingdom.

2014 Highlights for the Vermont Food Venture Center:

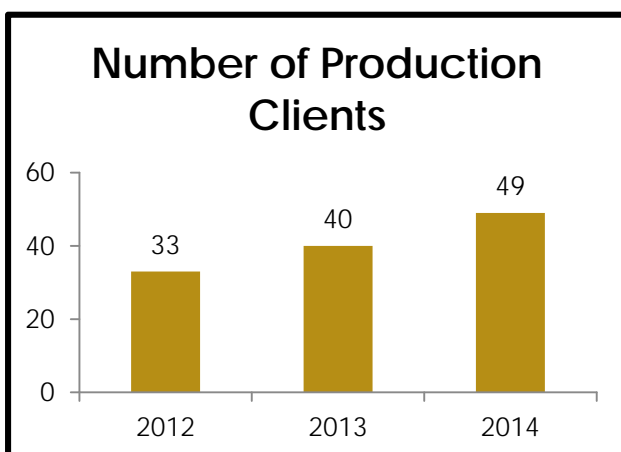
- **2,525 hours of kitchen rentals**, by specialty Vt food businesses, by farmers and by community members for classes and workshops.
- Just over **40,000lbs of locally grown produce**, processed at the VFVC for schools, colleges and hospitals
- Partnership with the **VT Foodbank** to assess routes, aggregation centers, local produce capture and potential opportunities for the Vt Food Venture Center to process and store foods for the charitable food system. Five month research project, due to be completed in February, with specific recommendations/models/comparisons from around the country.
- **Community and Non Profit Partners:** Sterling College Artisan Cheesemaking Classes (2x year), Salvation Farms R&D for gleaned veg products (up to 40 hours in a year), Hardwick Food Pantry – Grow Your Own Nutritional and Cooking Classes (5), Pies for People/Soup for Supper Community Holiday food prep event



Facility Usage: 40% increased usage over 2013

Client Usage: 84% over projected usage by specialty food and value-added clients in 2014

Farm Product Processing: 24% over projected usage by farm product/minimal process usage in 2014 (14 farm clients from across the state)



The CAE works with **farmers, food businesses and our local community**. As an active member of Vermont's *Farm to Plate* network, and the *Working Lands Coalition*, the CAE seeks new market opportunities, creative cross sector solutions, and collaboration throughout our agricultural sector.

The CAE has provided business services and technical assistance for farm and food businesses beginning in 2010. In particular, the CAE provides:

- **Business Services and Technical Assistance for Farmers and Food businesses**, as a part of VHCB's Farm and Forest Viability Program
- **Food Safety Trainings and Recipe Scale Up and Development** for Value-Added Vermont Products
- **Market Expansion and Trainings for Farmers** seeking to grow to Wholesale and Institutional Markets
- **Local Vermont Vegetable Products, processed in-state**, for Vermont schools, hospitals and colleges
- **Emergency and Business Builder Loans** through the *Vermont Farm Fund*
- **Equipment Leasing for Vermont Food Businesses** through the *Vt Equipment Access Program*

