



# Having Visitors on the Farm?



Wednesday, March 29

9-2:00 pm

AGRITOURISM  
WORKSHOP

The Eagles Club, Lakewood Commons  
1233 Shelburne Rd, So Burlington, VT

## AN INFORMATIONAL WORKSHOP

*Defining agritourism, exploring the joys, challenges, and possible liability issues*

Sponsored by Vermont Farm Bureau  
and Nationwide® Insurance



Nationwide®  
is on your side



117 West Main ST, Richmond, VT 05477 • 802-434-5646 • [www.vtfb.org](http://www.vtfb.org)

## AGRITOURISM SPECIALIST PANEL

**Lisa Chase** has been with University of Vermont Extension for the past 15 years. She is also the Director of the Vermont Tourism Research Center, where she supports farms interested in agritourism, direct sales, and education. She is a co-chair of the Farm to Plate Agritourism Task Force. Her favorite part of the job is visiting farms throughout our beautiful state and helping them improve their agritourism enterprise.

**Dana Hanley** is a professional land use planner who has worked since 2006 for the Town of Essex, VT as its Community Development Director. Her background includes administering Act 250 for the Vermont Environmental Board (now the Vermont Natural Resources Board); working as the Associate Director of the Vermont Forum on Sprawl; and serving as the Planning and Zoning Director for the Town of Shelburne, VT.

**Vera Simon-Nobes** coordinates program development and communications for the Farm-Based Education Network, a free member network based at Shelburne Farms which was established to strengthen and support the work of educators, farmers, and community leaders providing access and educational experiences on working farms. Vera holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Environmental Studies from the University of Vermont. At home, Vera raises livestock on a diversified farm in Charlotte.

**Stephanie A. Smith**, is a Chief Policy Enforcement Officer for the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food & Markets where she participates in development and implementation of land use policies and programs supportive of the agricultural industry and farmland protection. She worked for municipal government in a variety of capacities, including in the Municipal Assistance Center at the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies from Boston University and a Master of Landscape Architecture from the University of Georgia.

**Kate McCarthy**, Sustainable Communities Program Director. Kate holds a Master of Regional Planning from Cornell University, and a B.A. in Cultural Anthropology from Rice University, and sees the two fields as closely linked, since both involve understanding culture and place. She brings this perspective to her work with Vermont's communities as they work to manage growth and change. Most recently, Kate worked as a regional planner for the Windham Regional Commission in Brattleboro, where she focused on town technical assistance, supported the Brownfields program, and oversaw the Commission's energy program.

# AGRITOURISM WORKSHOP

9:00 am

## Registration

Chat over coffee and assorted pastries

9:30 am

**Welcome** from *President of Vermont Farm Bureau Joe Tisbert*

9:45 am

## AGRITOURISM SPECIALIST PANEL DISCUSSION

Advising, promoting, defining and enforcing local town ordinances associated with agritourism

**Lisa Chase** - *Director of the Vermont Tourism Research Center*

- What is agritourism?
- Challenges and opportunities for farmers.
- Trends in agritourism.

**Vera Simon-Nobes** - *Shelburne Farms Coordinator, Farm-Based Education Network / Vermont Farms Agritourism Project*

- Resources for farmers to support agritourism in VT, including best practice guides, websites, Farm to plate, agritourism task force, Open Farm Week, technical assistance, safety and risk management technical assistance.

**Stephanie A. Smith** - *Chief Policy Enforcement Officer for the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food & Markets*

- Exemptions for farmers from local regulations and why.
- How the process works to gain that exemption from the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets: what documents or other things must a farm provide.

**Dana Hanley** - *Community Development Director, Town of Essex*

- Agritourism from the municipalities and long term planning point of view.
- How on farm businesses and tourism might challenge, change and economically benefit/ or economically challenge a local municipality.

**Kate McCarthy** - *Sustainable Communities Program Director*

- The 20,000 foot view: What's the right balance between allowing innovation in agritourism while reasonably managing the range of uses – and impacts – that it could involve?

**Open question period**

**10:45 MEET OUR FARMERS INVOLVED IN AGRITOURISM**

Our panel of farmers share their experiences, joys and challenges of running an agritourism business.

**Clara Ayer of Fairmont Farm, East Montpelier**

Weddings are a new venture for Fairmont Farm, a way to share the beauty of their land and also a way to supplement their milk income. They milk 1,400 registered Holsteins across three farm locations and educate the public by hosting farm tours from the local pre-school to the Japanese Cheese Association. [www.fairmontfarminc.com](http://www.fairmontfarminc.com)

**Bob Clark of Fisher Brothers Farm, Shelburne**

Grows a variety of berry crops for direct sale as well as for integrated products. Produces several acres of wine grapes, is expanding into a slate of veggie crops, and incubating several ag business startups. Is serving as a drop off/pick up point for CSA's with customers in the Burlington/South Burlington metro area. [www.fisherbrothersfarm.com](http://www.fisherbrothersfarm.com)

**Beth Kennett of Liberty Hill Farm & Inn, Rochester**

has been welcoming guest since 1984. Billed as "A Vermont Farm Stay Destination for All Seasons" their Greek revival home has 7 guest rooms and shares the joys and challenges of life on their dairy farm. Guests are treated to a delicious dining experience in the form of home-made family-style meals made with seasonal fresh ingredients. [www.libertyhillfarm.com](http://www.libertyhillfarm.com)

**Mike Isham of Isham Family Farm, Williston**

As an all season agritourism business the farm offers recreation for the entire family with: pick your own berries and pumpkins, hay rides, cut your own Christmas tree, corn and sunflower maze, calves to pet and more. It also produces and sells maple syrup and has a wedding barn. [ishamfamilyfarm.com](http://ishamfamilyfarm.com)

**Anne and Jay Tisbert of Valley Dream Farm, Cambridge**

Offer an On Farm Dining experience from June 21 through October 18 that begins with an educational one hour tour of their certified organic farm. Family style dinners follow using seasonal certified organic vegetables and other Vermont products. The farm has a farmstand, offers CSA shares, nursery items and wedding flowers. [valleydreamfarm.com](http://valleydreamfarm.com)

# AGRITOURISM WORKSHOP

## 11:45 **WHAT ABOUT LIABILITY?**

Nationwide® insurance Representatives will present possible liability issues of running a farm based business and what you need to be aware of.

- **Serving food**
- **Giving hay rides**
- **Pick your own**
- **Hosting tours**
- **Children's camps**
- **Hosting weddings**



### **Stuart Farnham, Vice President Commercial Farm Sales Frazer Agency, Inc. in Windsor [frazeragency.com](http://frazeragency.com)**

Since 2009 Stuart has been a farm insurance specialist in Vermont, NH and Maine. He insures many farms participating in various agritourism activities that range from on farm dining, weddings, pick-choose-cut-fish your own operations, petting zoos, corn mazes, sleigh-hay rides, children's camps and more. With 16 years in Quality Management for Food Packaging giving him vast experience in Food Safety Programs. He was the first to achieve the highest farm certification of Elite Farm Certified Agent with Nationwide Agribusiness in Vermont and is also FSMA:PCQI Certified.

### **Mary Cobb, Farm Agent at the Jaimes L. Fewer Agency, Barre, VT [feweragency.com](http://feweragency.com)**

Previously working as the Risk Management Consultant in Northern New England for Nationwide Agribusiness from 2011-2015, Mary Cobb joined the Fewer Agency Farm Team in early 2016 as a Farm Associate Agent. During her 6 year career she has either inspected or insured many different types of farms, and is very excited to attend Nationwide's Master Farm Certification course this May. Mary has a farming background herself and still does part time work on a dairy farm where she lives in the Middlebury, VT area.

MARCH 29, 2017

**12:30 LUNCH** Sponsored by Nationwide Insurance  
A special thanks to the Eagle's Club.

**2:00 VERMONT FARM BUREAU EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING**

**Thank you all for coming!**

The House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry has asked for your help to help define the on farm accessory farm businesses bill.

**Please take a moment fill out our survey on the next page.**

# VERMONT FARM BUREAU:

## Represents

# ALL FARMERS

- Provides Benefits and Services That Work For You
- Full-time Advocate for Agriculture
- Has Over 100 Years of Experience

## JOIN TODAY!

117 West Main Street  
Richmond, VT 05477

802-434-5646

vffb@vffb.org

[www.vffb.org](http://www.vffb.org)



Mike Isham  
of Isham Family Farm

# AGRITOURISM WORKSHOP

**1. What kind of activities do you do right now on your farm?**  
(such as weddings, burger night, school tours, farm to plate, farm stand, farm store, trail rides, pick your own)

**2. What kind of activities would you like to do or plan to do in the future?:**

**3. What percentage of your income comes from these businesses and is it a growing part of your business?**

**4. Have you been denied a permit from a municipality before? If yes, please explain.**

**Thank you!**

**Your answers will remain anonymous.**