

Vermont's Rural Economy

Senate Agriculture Committee Public Meeting



Farmland Protection

Blodgett Family Farm - Fairfax

Purchasing the farm from the Berthiaume Family allows the Blodgetts to own rather than rent their farmland. Business assistance from the Farm & Forest Viability Program helped the transition to organic. Easement includes surface water protections.





Business Assistance

LSF Forest Products, Fletcher

Tyler Riggs owns the business with his father – a small pine and hemlock sawmill that serves and supplies builders, farms, landscapers and a local wooden cask business. The business is on a steady growth trajectory from milling 400,000 board feet in 2016 towards a million board feet in the next few years. Through the Farm & Forest Viability Program, Tyler is working with a forest business advisor to develop a plan for managing this growth and improving profitability.



Grants to Farmers

Machia & Sons Dairy, LLC
Sheldon

Used VHCB grant to install a new decanter centrifuge to process liquid manure effluent. The centrifuge separates out a portion of solids and nutrients resulting in less volume for farm to manage and a nutrient-rich product that can be sold off site. This project also generates bedding material from the farm's manure that is less expensive than buying sawdust, providing savings to the farm.

Conservation of Natural & Recreational Areas

Ascutney Mountain, West Windsor



Jim Lyall photo

Acquisition and conservation of 469 acres that were added to the town forest creating a 4,730 acre block of protected land.

Added 11 miles of trails to an existing network following the loss of the local ski area.

Values of the land include wildlife habitat, natural resource protection, sustainable forest management, water quality protection.

Community Revitalization

Housing and Historic Preservation in Richford



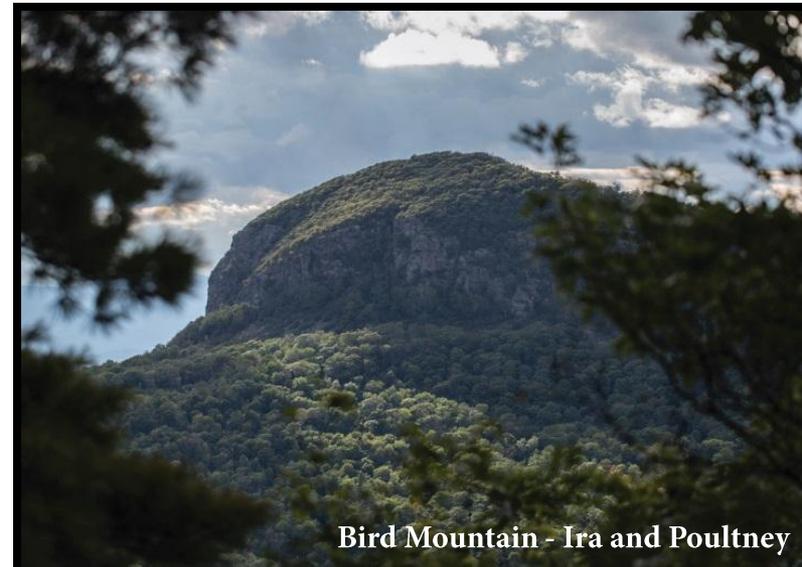
Historic Preservation as Economic Development

Guilford Country Store in Algiers Village



Assets of Vermont's Rural Economy

- Strong working landscape
- Deep traditions and strong communities
- Vermont brand
- Strong demand for local food and proximity to regional markets
- Supportive lenders
- Plentiful water
- Outdoor recreation



Bird Mountain - Ira and Poultney

Economic Constraints



- Demographics
- Succession and transfers of land
- Development pressure
- Low asset values and high cost of improvements
- Access to skills and labor
- Regulatory changes
- Fluctuating pricing and markets

*What is the state doing to help address these constraints on economic growth?
What more can be done?*



Richardson Farm - Hartland

A Vermont Century Farm with award-winning Jersey herd and maple operations. The sale of the development rights facilitated a family transfer protecting both the dairy and sugarbush. Owners received business planning and technical assistance through the Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program.

State Investment through VHCB Conservation Programs

- Farmland Protection
- Forestland, Recreational Land, & Natural Area Conservation
- Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program
- Farmland Access
- Dairy Improvement and Water Quality Grant Programs
- REDI grant-writing assistance for rural towns and enterprises
- Also, funding for affordable housing and historic preservation projects to revitalize and strengthen community centers.

Available Now

Water Quality and Dairy Improvement Grants for farmers

Application Deadlines:

1. October 13th 2017
2. November 15th 2017
3. February 21st 2018

REDI (Rural Economic Development Initiative)

Grant-writing assistance for rural enterprises and
communities

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