

House Agriculture and Forestry Committee
Wendy Knight, Commissioner Tourism and Marketing
February 1, 2019

Vermont's farms, agricultural and forestry producers, and craft food and beverage products are a critical component of Vermont's \$2.8B. One of our core missions is to promote Vermont's products and agritourism. The Department of Tourism and Marketing (VDTM) works closely with the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFM) and farm and producer partners to promote agritourism to an international audience. Below is a highlight of those initiatives.

Partner with Vermont Fresh Network and VAAFM in support of DigInVT.com:

- All agritourism pages on VermontVacation.com refer traffic to diginvt.com
- One-time historical funding for DigInVt.com
- Promote all statewide producer events: Vermont Wine Week, Open Farm Week, Restaurant Week, Maple Open House Weekend, Brewers Festivals, Cheesemakers Festival, Cider Classic

Develop Lake Champlain Tasting Trail as part of CANAMEX initiative:

- Support initiative to connect agritourism sites in Vermont to NY, Quebec, and Ontario, creating a regional/international draw for enthusiasts of authentic culinary experiences
- Delegates from VDTM traveled to Canada on press and familiarization tours and to meet with representatives of these regions/businesses to begin cross boarder collaboration and promotions
- Provided letter of support for grant funding and staff hours to develop the Vermont segment of the international route
- Tourism partner, the Vermont Tourism Network, promoted the Lake Champlain Tasting Trail at the American Motorcoach Association and Ottawa Bus Association and has collaborated with a California based tour operator and Vermont tour operator, Custom Tours & More, to integrate a selection of businesses on the Lake Champlain Tasting Trail into a new offer that includes a Vermont to Quebec itinerary

Participation in industry work groups:

- Farm to Plate Network Agritourism Task Force, including Open Farm Week now in its 5th year in 2019
- Collaborate with the Farm to Plate Agritourism Task Force in the process of updating marketing resources toolkit for farms interested in improved marketing for their agritourism enterprises by bringing peer-recommended, current, and specific resources into one organized place for easier reference
- Presented on workshop panels on resources available for agritourism partners seeking to promote agritourism and overnight farm stay experiences in a three-part series, organized by UVM Extension, the Farm to Plate Network and the Farm-Based Education Network



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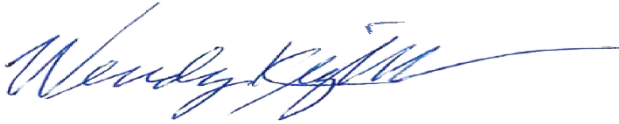
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Work with businesses to leverage promotional opportunities through VDTM:

- Promote Fat Sheep Farm and Cabins article in *Boston Globe*
- Provide letters of support for partners seeking grant funding: Clemmons Family Farm, Fat Sheep Farm and Cabins, VAAFM ACER grant for maple promotions
- Promote statewide and local events via VermontVacation.com and Vermont Tourism social channels: event calendar, landing pages, culinary lodging packages; and press releases
- Support/promote VAAFM initiatives such as the Buy Local Market
- Promote partner attractions at tradeshows including the Big E)
- Participate in industry events such as grand opening of Mad River Taste Place and the debut of their Mad River Taste video series; onsite activation in partnership with VSAA Specialty Food Days Tour and at Welcome Centers
- Supported Vermont Convention Bureau in securing the 2018 Beer Marketing and Tourism Conference
- Connect Vermont Chamber of Commerce with agritourism organizations and businesses who can share their story as part of the Vacation Guide editorial features and/or contribute content directly

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy Knight

Commissioner, Tourism & Marketing

