

THE WORKING LANDS ENTERPRISE INITIATIVE: SUPPORTING VERMONT'S WORKING LANDSCAPE

Our First Ten Years: 2012–2022

In 2012, the Vermont Legislature and Governor Douglas created The Working Lands Enterprise Fund (WLEF), which was tasked with investing in Vermont's working lands enterprises to strengthen our economy, advance job creation, sustain our environment, and keep Vermont beautiful.

The Working Lands Board (WLEB) was tasked with administering the program and is made up of 20 members throughout the supply chains of agriculture and forestry, and staff from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation, Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, Vermont Economic Development Authority, and Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund.

CUMULATIVE PROGRAM IMPACT

Funded

418

working lands businesses
and technical assistance
organizations

Benefitted

14

counties

Distributed

\$13.6M

in Working Lands
funds

Leveraged

\$22.5M

in matching funds



"The grant activities will put our business in a very good position where we can easily scale to meet market demands...Our hopes and dreams for the business is that we can scale to an 8 to 10 thousand cord a year operation by 2025, which would create another six to eight full-time jobs as well as put over \$2 million dollars a year into Vermont's forest economy."

- Ethan and Ashlie Gevry, Gevry Firewood
Addison

FROM 2012 TO 2020, WORKING LANDS GRANTEES HAVE:

Employed

1,118

people

Benefitted

24,007

acres

Created

539

new jobs

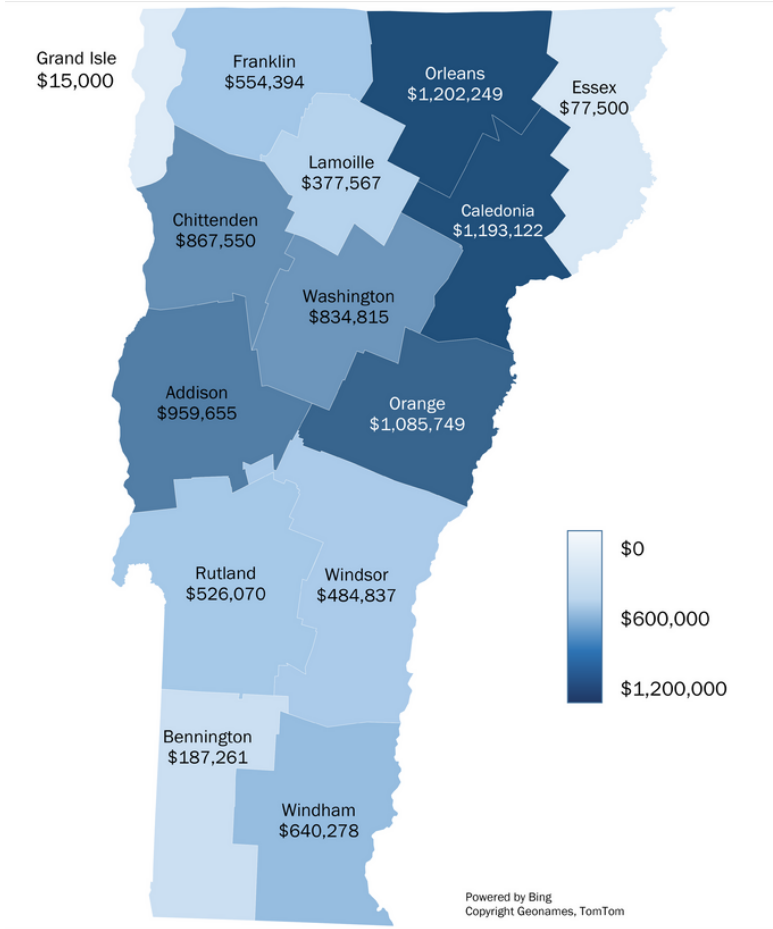
Generated over

\$55M

in sales

WLEI STRATEGICALLY INVESTS IN BUSINESSES AND SERVICE PROVIDER ORGANIZATIONS

GRANT FUNDS TO BUSINESSES PER COUNTY, 2012–2022



Business Grants

Strategic investments in working lands businesses that are poised for growth, can influence their value chain, spur innovation, create jobs, boost sales, increase production, and preserve or increase working lands acreage.

Service Provider Grants and Contracts

Investments in business and technical assistance service providers who work directly with working lands enterprises to support them as they grow, pivot, and adapt to an ever-changing marketplace, or prepare for new capital investment or an intergenerational transfer.

Producer Association Grants

Funds for the organizational development of VT-based producer associations supporting their members with technical assistance, marketing, research, and development.

Trade Show Assistance Grants

Funds for agriculture and forestry businesses to market and promote their Vermont products at out-of-state trade shows.



"We think there are many reasons why livestock farming is a valuable component of the Vermont working landscape. With grant funding from Working Lands, we have an opportunity to build a viable processing system for our farm that secures our future here and takes meaningful steps to helping others do the same"

- Brian Leach, Haystack Farmstead.

Fiscal Year
2022 by
the
Numbers

Matching funds leveraged:
\$11,281,381
Total funds distributed:
\$5,274,921
Number of awards made:
86