



2026 Organizational Overview

SALVATION FARMS' HISTORY

Founded in 2005 under the fiscal sponsorship of NOFA-VT, Salvation Farms was created to build a replicable, community-based model for managing farm surplus through gleaning—engaging volunteers to recover unsold, quality produce from Vermont farms. From its origins at Pete’s Greens Farm in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, the organization has grown into a statewide, regional and national leader in surplus crop management, systems coordination, and food system resilience.



Rooted in the belief that farms are essential to healthy communities, Salvation Farms focuses on reducing food loss on farms, increasing access to locally grown food, and supporting a more sustainable food system. Since its inception, the organization has moved more than 1.25 million pounds of surplus crops from farms to Vermonters, much of it in partnership with food shelves, meal programs, and institutions.

After becoming an independent nonprofit in 2012, Salvation Farms launched Vermont’s first surplus crop food hub, built a custom web application to facilitate gleaning coordination, coordinated statewide efforts in gleaning by spearheading the Vermont Gleaning Collective, and conducted the nation’s first statewide study estimating farm-level food loss—revealing 14.3 million pounds of edible crops left unharvested or unsold annually in Vermont. With strong partnerships, cross-sector collaboration, and a deep commitment to farms, the organization continues to create a parallel, community-centered food system that strengthens local agriculture and ensures that surplus food feeds people, not landfills.

MISSION and VISION STATEMENT

Salvation Farms’ mission is to create a future where all are fed and farms are thriving. Through partnerships, effective use of available resources, and skill-building, we work to fully integrate surplus food from local farms into a resilient and sustainable food system. We envision a resilient, community-based food system where farms thrive, surplus food is fully utilized, and everyone has reliable access to local, sustainable food.

Our work addresses gaps in the food system—bridging farms and communities— and lays the groundwork for systems-wide change by demonstrating how surplus food can be redirected as a reliable, community-based resource. Through practical solutions, strategic partnerships, and education, Salvation Farms advances a more resilient, localized and sustainable regional food system.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: SALVATION FARMS' PROCESSING PROGRAM

In 2026, Salvation Farms will relaunch its processing program through the renovation of a shared space at the Center for an Agricultural Economy's Vermont Food Venture Center in Hardwick. This project will expand access to local food by sourcing and minimally processing farm surplus for institutions and charitable food programs that have historically been priced out of the local food market.

The renovated space will serve as a permanent home for Salvation Farms' processing program and CAE's Just Cut program, while leveraging existing infrastructure and strengthening long-standing strategic partnerships with CAE, Vermont farms, food hubs, institutions, distributors, and others. CAE will contribute co-packing services and distribution through Farm Connex, allowing each organization to focus on its core strengths and maximize impact.

Over 10+ years of pilot programs, Salvation Farms has moved more than 750,000 pounds of surplus produce through large-scale aggregation and minimal processing, including more than 12,500 pounds converted into frozen products. These frozen foods—such as cubed potatoes, pureed winter squash, and coined carrots—have primarily been distributed to institutions and charitable food programs in Vermont, including Vermont Foodbank, Department of Corrections, local schools, and Meals on Wheels programs. In its first year of operations, Salvation Farms anticipates purchasing 50 to 60,000 pounds of surplus food from 15+ Vermont farms generating \$125,000 in revenue.

The value of this work is reflected by Vermont Foodbank: "The fact that Salvation Farms was able to provide value-added processing capability and deliver quantities and pack sizes that worked for us was important. In the world of charitable food, that doesn't happen very often."

Currently, many institutions rely on out-of-state distributors for minimally processed produce due to limited local pricing, availability, and product diversity. Salvation Farms addresses critical gaps in the food system and advances the goals identified in the Vermont Food Security Roadmap and New England Feeding New England, contributing to a more food-secure Vermont and a more self-reliant regional food system. Impacts of the program include:

- Creating community food security by expanding food access for Vermont's most vulnerable populations
- Expanding the availability of affordable, lightly processed local produce for charitable food programs and institutions
- Furthering farm viability by creating a new market for surplus crops and providing supplemental income to farmers
- Mitigating climate impacts by reducing food loss at the farm level and keeping edible food in the food system

Building on nearly a decade of piloting aggregation, minimal processing, and distribution, Salvation Farms has demonstrated strong demand for frozen and lightly processed produce among Vermont institutions, including schools and correctional facilities. The new processing hub will fill a critical infrastructure gap by aggregating surplus crops from Vermont farms and preparing them for sale to institutional customers.

SALVATION FARMS' PROCESSING PROGRAM In ACTION



Salvation Farms' Next Chapter: Advancing farm viability and food access through surplus food



Kelly Dolan, Executive Director
Tony Risitano, Program Director
with Kyle Moore, Food Service Supervisor,
VT Department of Corrections

House Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry

February 3rd, 2026



Salvation Farms' FY27 Budget Request

Salvation Farms requests \$100,000 in ongoing annual funding beginning in FY27 to support the operations of its food processing program. We respectfully request that this funding be included in the House Committee on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry's budget memo.



Salvation Farms' Mission and Vision

Salvation Farms' mission is to create a future where all are fed and farms are thriving. Through partnerships, effective use of available resources, and skill-building, we work to fully integrate surplus food from local farms into a resilient and sustainable food system.

Salvation Farms' vision is a resilient, community-based food system where farms thrive, surplus food is fully utilized, and everyone has reliable access to local, sustainable food.



SALVATION FARMS

What is 'surplus food'?



Food from farms that is not reaching traditional markets -
A challenge and an opportunity for Vermont's agricultural economy:

- 14.3 million pounds of vegetables and berries from Vermont farms end up as food waste each year
- Result of supply chain issues, labor shortages, or cosmetic standards. SF is meant to be responsive, able to bridge the gap between farm surplus and those in need



SALVATION FARMS

Our Story: Evolving alongside VT's agricultural and food access needs

- **2004:** Established a gleaning program within NOFA -Vermont. Move to Vermont Foodbank as fiscal sponsor in 2010
- **2012:** Processing programs at Green Mountain College, Harlow Farm in Westminster, and at Southeast State Correctional Facility
- **2013:** Partnership with the Food Venture Center in Hardwick. End program with the DOC in 2015.
- **2016:** Opened and operated Vermont's only surplus crop food hub (Winooski) for three and a half years.
- **2020:** End program in Winooski. Since then, renting kitchen space at the Food Venture Center while looking for a new home.
- **2023:** Salvation Farms receives a State Appropriation
- **2024:** Theresa Snow leaves ED role and is replaced by Kelly Dolan
- **2025:** Award from Northern Borders' Regional Commission's Catalyst Program
- **2026:** Finishing renovation and relaunching farm surplus food processing program



SALVATION FARMS

Salvation Farms' Program Areas:



SF has moved more than *1.25 million pounds* of surplus food from farms to Vermonters, much of it in partnership with *food shelves, meal programs, and institutions.*

- Gleaning Program
- Vermont Gleaning Collective
- Processing Program



Gleaning Program and Vermont Gleaning Collective



- 200,000 servings, 10,000 people fed, 73,000 pounds
- 34 partner farms, 65 food distribution sites
- 100+ volunteers; 300+ hours of service



Salvation Farms' Processing Program

Supporting farm viability and addressing barriers to local food for institutions and charitable food programs

- Affordability
- Accessibility
- Ease of use
- Guided by market research
- Focusing on what we do well and working in partnership with other food hubs



Partnership with VT Department of Corrections

- 6 prisons across the state, 1,600+/- incarcerated individuals and 600+/- staff
- SF's longstanding history with DOC – Southeast State and Northeast Correctional Complex
- Received the Farm to Institution Market Development Grant
- Providing 20,000 lbs of processed produce to Vermont's 6 prisons
- SF Brokering support
- Benefits for incarcerated individuals and staff



What is the goal - New processing space?

Develop new paying markets for farm surplus



- Grow our impact to a statewide model
- Build on existing partnerships with institutions, food hubs and farms
- Feed more people with Vermont grown food
- Generate additional farm revenue using a product that would otherwise be waste

What is the status of the project?

Partnering with CAE to renovate space at the Vermont Food Venture Center



- Leveraging existing resources – Space shared by both organizations' processing programs
- Working on floorplans and equipment list
- Developing business plan with support of VHCB
- Fully operable by August/September

Diversifying our Funding

Potential and confirmed funding sources

- \$500,000 - State Appropriation
- \$469,000 - NBRC
- \$29,750/2 yrs. - Farm to Institution Market Development Grant
- \$125,000 – Sales revenue, yr. one
- \$100,000 – State of VT ongoing funding request
- Planned internal fundraising campaign - operational costs in first 3 yrs.

Year one operational costs - \$325,000

In Summary:

- Reduces food loss on farms, mitigating climate impacts while generating economic value for Vermont farmers
- Recovers surplus crops and delivers affordable, minimally processed local food to charitable programs and institutions, including highly price-sensitive markets
- Expands access to nutritious local food for Vermont's most vulnerable residents, including incarcerated individuals, children, and older adults



Salvation Farms is requesting \$100,000 in ongoing funding from the State of Vermont and inclusion in the House Ag's budget memo

- Goal: Processing 50,000+ pounds of Vermont farm surplus and generating \$125,000 of revenue in year one
- Expanding food access for vulnerable Vermonters, including individuals served by DOC, VT Foodbank, local schools, Meals on Wheels programs, and more
- Economic activity across the local food system, including expanded distribution markets in partnership with food hubs, building toward statewide and regional plans, and increased sales opportunities for 10 to 15 Vermont farms

Thank you for your support

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