

Food

Vermont

Growing food and access to a decent home Why Vermont needs an agricultural workforce housing committee or similar In Vermont...according to farm to plate 2023 report page 4 economic development

61,506 people are employed in the food system by 11,535 farm and food establishments.

Employment in the food system increased by nearly 1,700 jobs (2.8%) in 2023, though total employment is still below pre-pandemic peak employment by about 3,600 jobs.

Vermont's food system also has a positive employment impact on other sectors of the Vermont economy. Known as the "employment multiplier," for every job created in the food system an additional 0.8 jobs are created elsewhere in the Vermont economy. When this is taken into account, in total Vermont's food system employment impact is 110,711 jobs.

Vermont population is about 650,000..

Why start a farmworker housing committee?

Continuing the farmworker housing stakeholder group..!

Since 2019, meetings helped with information to provide in the Vermont farmworker housing needs assessment.

Brought over 20 unique organizations together and individually advocating and applied for funding opportunities available at the time and help advocate for the creation of the farmworker housing repair program and replacement program that was recently created through funding through the Vermont housing and conservation board work being provided through Champlain housing trust UVM and several others just started beginning in spring 2022 Much more work needed to continue this important work that seen success with over 140 farmworkers and about 35 farms that now have improved homes because of this work of the farmworker housing stakeholders group...

There is no formal statewide group to share research, needs and coordinate planning. In its absence we have this "Ad Hoc Farmworker Housing Group."

LAST MEETING 2023

Housing committees can play an important role in community-based approaches to local housing needs. These groups, whether they are formal municipal committees, informal citizen discussion groups, or anything in between, can document existing housing stock, assess housing gaps, and influence local policy. Housing committees can benefit communities of any size, as evidenced by the many committees working around the state -- and their many successes, ranging from local zoning changes to the creation of Housing Trust Funds.

What a farmworker housing committee would look like?

Bring together all those stakeholders

Seven meetings of this ad hoc group since 2019 •

23 unique stakeholder organizations and individuals (March '21)

Formalizing this group has been a goal since the beginning In John Ryan's 2021 farmworker housing report to VHCB he recommended this group:

- Coordinate efforts
- Develop Stakeholder Commitment
- Create an Action Plan
- Promote Dialogue
- Educate

- Engage existing housing non-profits and programmatic models
- Tailor recommendations to farm scale
- Think creatively

Farmworker Housing Stakeholder Group

Source: John, Ryan. Development Cycles, 2021

From the farmworker housing needs assessment report page 33 2. Develop Stakeholder Commitment. Building on the existing efforts that have resulted in several meetings by a range of stakeholders in Vermont, identify and seek a multi-year commitment by key stakeholders to develop a prioritized action plan as well as participate in the efforts to fund, implement, and evaluate the execution of that plan. Do not overlook the importance of participation in this stakeholder group by organizations that represent farmworkers and farm owners directly. Given the risks associated with non-resident workers face in making themselves visible, it is especially important to make sure an organization like Migrant Justice has a seat at the table in terms of prioritizing needs. The following represents just some of the organizations the consultant recommends be participants in this stakeholder process.

Addison County Housing Trust USDA Rural Development Cabot/ Agrimark UVM College of Ag & Life Sciences Champlain Housing Trust UVM Extension/ Bridges to Health & Migrant Education Programs Dairy Farmers of America VT Agency of Agriculture, Farms & Markets EverNorth Rural Ventures VT's Federal Legislative Delegation Migrant Justice/ Milk with Dignity Program VHCB's Housing, Farm Viability, and Conservation Divisions Pathstone Corporation Vermont Housing Finance Agency Rural Edge Vermont Land Trust ...Potential housing committee activities

- Conduct a housing needs assessment and survey
- Ensure that policies supports housing
- Pursue changes that will help meet needs identified in the housing needs assessment,

including

- Inclusionary housing incentives or requirements
- Accessibility opportunities for rehabilitating older units
- Opportunities to expand farmworker housing creation
- Create opportunities needed that help met the needs of the community
- Farmers request development of farm housing on and off / not all farms have the

capacity to build homes for their employees. Building homes off the farm can benefit farmers and workers in rural communities

- Ensuring health and wellbeing
- Service providers are essential partners
- Bring data and resources and requests new data resources studies ect.
- Include farmers and farmworkers in this process

3. Action Plan. A critical first step for this stakeholder group is to create an Action Plan that does the following: expresses a compelling vision for an improved farmworker housing future; spells out clear definitions, targets, and standards for what decent farmworker housing means; sets strategic approaches to tackling the addressable funding, policy and attitudinal challenges; develops specific actions to address prioritized problems; and assigns measurable goals, timelines, funding requirements, policy changes, and specific responsibility for implementing each of these actions.

4. Continue Dialogue. This study frankly scratches the surface of just some of the challenges that stand in the way of there being an inventory of farmworker housing in Vermont that truly serves both the business and human needs of both farmworker and the farm operator.

The consultant recommends taking the time to more fully understand the needs, constraints, and capacities of both farm operators and hired farm workers around the provision of and occupancy in such housing. It will be equally important for those stakeholders to be able to share their perspectives safely and openly with each other, as well as with those in the funding, policy, and supply chain who can help address some of those challenges.

5. Educate. As wstudy suggests, there is good farmworker housing in the state right now. There are new units being developed and renovated on farms without a comprehensive plan and without much funding focused on the provision of this need. Learning more about how and why some individual farms were able to make this happen and what costs and benefits those investments have yielded will create important stories. These stories need to be shared and celebrated to give farm operators an understanding of the standards others have been able to reach, and provide an increasing number of templates for improving the farmworker housing stock. Education is also critical in shedding light on the condition of farmworkers who do not now have what anyone would call decent housing to live in while they do this essential work for the rest of us. This will be important to motivate consumers to care, which can in turn motivate policy makers to remove barriers or increase funding for decent housing. It can also motivate other players in the supply chain to reward the farms who do commit to providing safe, decent housing as with the Milk with Dignity program.

6. Tailor Solutions to Farm Size and Farmworker Type.

Possible funding

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TABLE IV-1: MATRIX OF POTENTIAL PROGRAMMATIC RESOURCES Federal USDA Section 514/516 Farm Labor Housing USDA Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance USDA Section 502 Direct Loan/Section 523 Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance HUD Community Development Block Grant HUD HOME Investment Partnerships Federal Home Loan Bank Board Affordable Housing Program State funding opportunities will be needed Area of funding to provide support to this housing committee!

Yes

Will the development of off the farm housing be a result?

Housing is a human right then building homes for farmers and farmworkers should be a priority..

What is needed for development of off the farm housing?

Can Vermont develop examples ??

<https://www.harvestcouraptts.org/>

<https://yakimahousing.org/services/farmworker-housing/>

And

<https://www.manomaine.org/housing>