



NOFA-VT Legislative Priorities for 2026

Presentation to Senate Agriculture Committee

NOFA-VT Staff | January 2026



LOCAL FOOD
SECURITY
HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES

CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT

MUTUAL
AID

STRONG LOCAL
ECONOMIES

SHORTER
SUPPLY CHAINS

THRIVING RURAL
COMMUNITIES

ACTIVE
WORKING
LANDS

CLIMATE
CHANGE
RESILIENCY

SOIL HEALTH +
LONG-TERM
PRODUCTIVITY

BIODIVERSITY

PROTECTED
NATURAL
RESOURCES





Farmer Services

We support the viability of Vermont farms via technical on-farm assistance, business planning, transition planning, funding opportunities, and other critical resources.



Advocacy & Policy

We organize with our members and work in coalition with partner organizations to advocate for systemic change that supports our communities' needs.



Food Access

We make local and organic food findable and affordable for everyone—including schools and institutions—because it benefits farmers, communities, and the local economy.



Education & Community-Building

We facilitate knowledge-sharing and foster a more connected and resilient community through our on-farm workshops, annual winter conference, mobile pizza oven events, and more.





Vermont Organic Farmers

Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF) is an LLC owned by NOFA-VT. Since 1985, VOF has served as a third-party verification of organic food production and has been accredited by the USDA National Organic Program since 2002.

VOF currently certifies over 700 farms and producers around Vermont including vegetable, dairy, livestock, and maple producers.



2025 Statistics on Organic Agriculture in Vermont

2025 Vermont Certified Organic Producers

Total Producers	711
Processors (non-farm)	85
Processors (on-farm)	68
Vegetable/Fruit	165
Field Crop	52
Dairy	116
Non-Dairy Livestock	69
Maple	254
Mushroom	9
*Farms producing a variety of products may be listed more than once.	

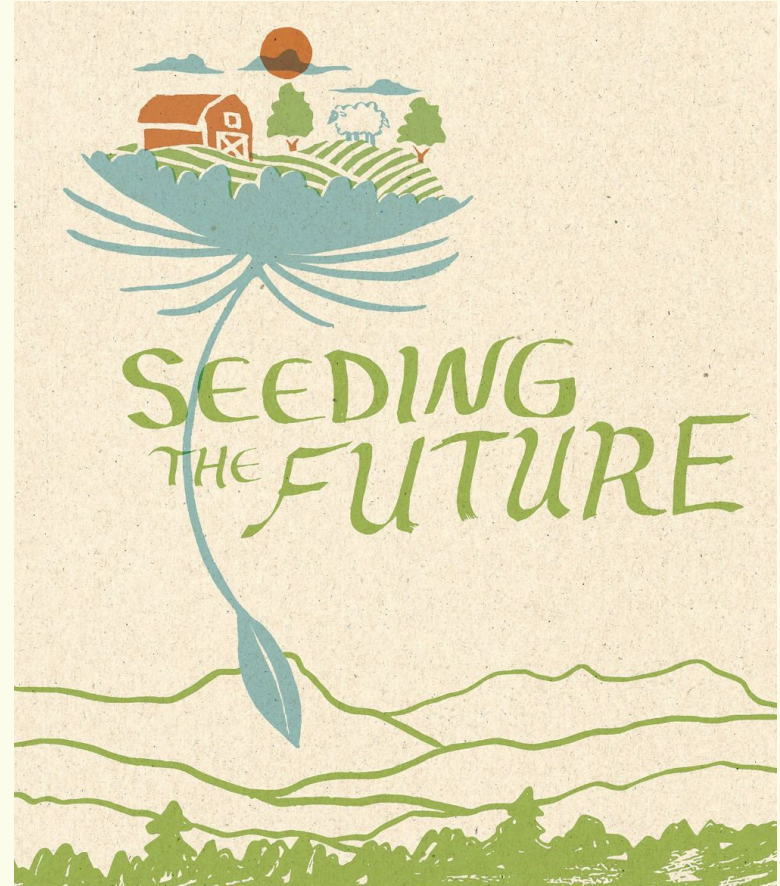
- 155,699 acres certified organic farmland
- Total gross sales (farmers and processors): \$458,886,397
- Total number of producers: 711



NOFA-VT 2026 Winter Conference

February 14 & 15, 2025 | Saint Michael's
College, Colchester, VT

- Keynote Speaker Ira Wallace
- 40+ workshops
- Sunday "Intensives"
- Children's Conference
- Art, music, and really good snacks



NOFA-VT Legislative Priorities for 2026

- \$500,000 in ongoing funding for **Crop Cash (Plus) and Farm Share.**
- Pass and fund S.60 the **Farm & Forestry Operations Security Special Fund** to support farmers impacted by climate emergencies and extreme weather.
- Provide level, base funding for **Local Foods Incentive Grants** and **Farm to School & Early Childhood Grants.**
- Support for **Bridges to Health**, which provides critical services to Vermont's agricultural workforce.
- Support the policy priorities of the **Food Security Roadmap Coalition.**
- Work to restore the **municipal agriculture exemption** and permanently protect Vermont's remaining farmland.



Please support NOFA-VT's request for \$500,000 in ongoing funding

to strengthen Vermont farm viability and address food security by
sustaining proven programs:

Crop Cash (Plus) and Farm Share



Crop Cash doubles 3SquaresVT (SNAP) benefits for fruits and vegetables purchased at Vermont farmers markets

Crop Cash Plus expands Crop Cash to all SNAP-eligible foods (meat, eggs, dairy, bread)

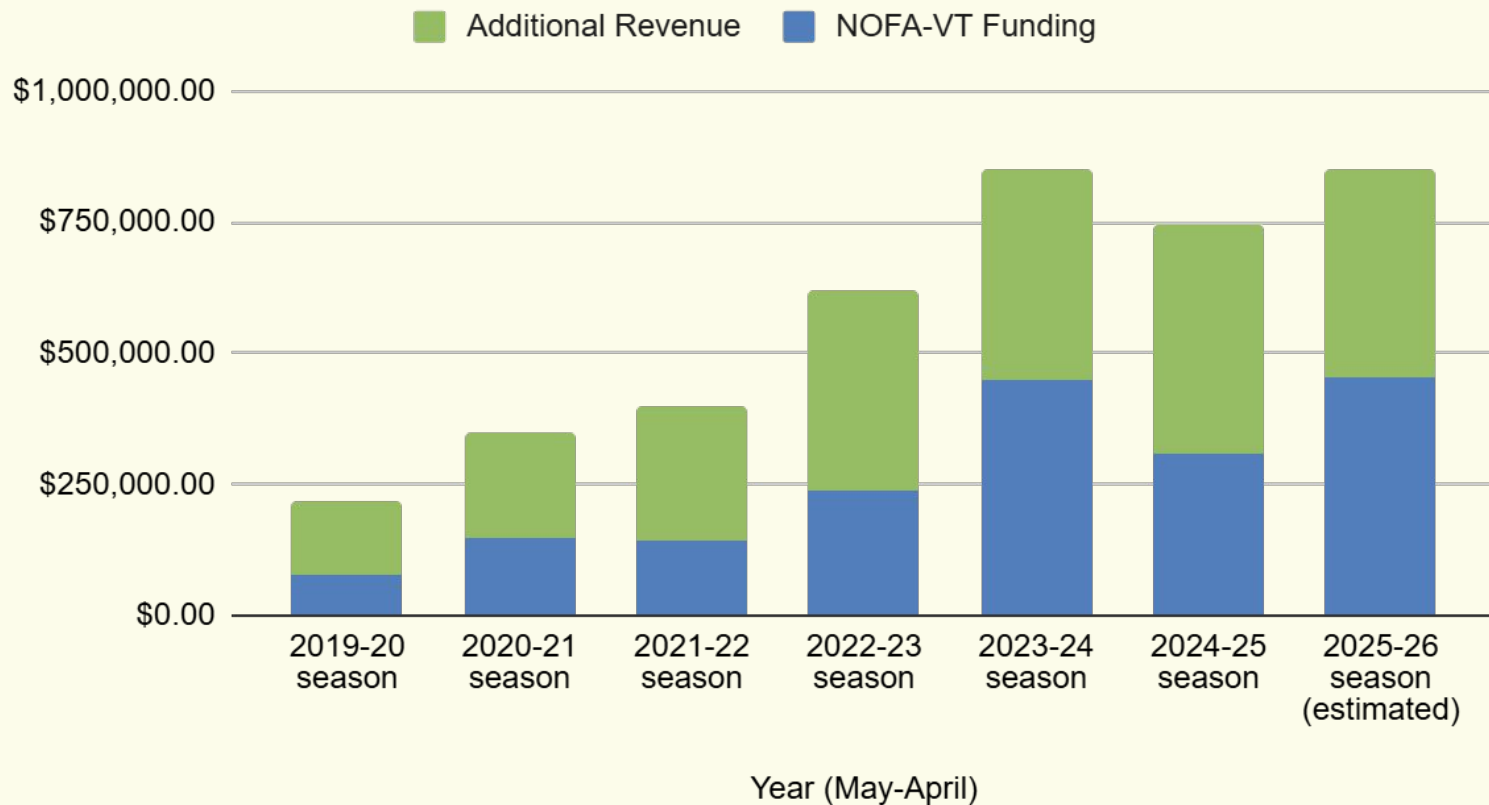
Farm Share subsidizes CSA shares for limited-income Vermonters by paying for 25-75% of the CSA cost



Photo by AS



Farmer Revenue through NOFA-VT Food Security Programs



"As a single parent, balancing rising costs has been challenging, and **[the Crop Cash & Crop Cash Plus] programs have allowed me to stretch our budget while still prioritizing local produce.** It has become an **essential part of how I nourish my family.**" - *Dorset Farmers Market customer*

"I simply would not be able to get the amazing produce from a local farm without this program! My food stamp money mostly goes to milk, eggs, grains, meats, and a few veggies and fruits, **so this program enables me to push my cash SO much further** because of the 'matching' funds that purchase a CSA share." - *Farm Share participant with Walker Farm, East Dummerston*

"We were extremely pleased with Crop Cash and related programs that many of our produce customers used to shop with us this year. Not only did these programs **bring brand new faces** to our farmers market table, but our preliminary analysis also shows that these programs **boosted our sales between 5-10% this season,** which is tremendous!" - *Katie Rose, Head Over Fields, Charlotte*



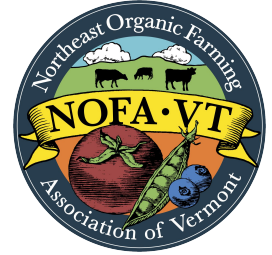
THANK YOU

for your strong support for S.60, the Farm &
Forestry Operations Security Special Fund!

The Farm Security Fund is also supported by:



Center for an
Agricultural
Economy



VERMONT FARM BUREAU[®]
INC.



Vermont Association of Conservation Districts



Shelburne
Farms



SALVATION
FARMS

S.60, Farm & Forestry Operations Security Special Fund

Farmers need reliable, rapidly available funding to be able recover from climate emergencies and extreme weather.

The past three years have taught us what farms need to recover from a weather emergency. We can use what we learned.

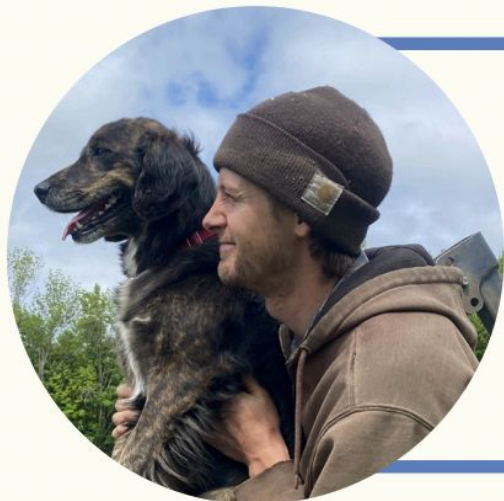
Farmers are essential to Vermont's food security - we must ensure that funds are available when farmers need them most.



\$94 million

Total estimated damage and losses reported by Vermont farms and forestry operations 2023 through December 2025 from extreme weather including untimely freezes, flooding events, and last year's drought.

Supporting Vermont's working lands businesses means supporting rural livelihoods, protecting the health of our land, preserving the heart of our communities, and ensuring strong local economies—critical as communities around the globe face their own extreme weather challenges.



“Extreme weather events can have devastating effects on my business. The Farm Security Fund would help give me a better sense of security as a farm business owner and fill major gaps in the safety net for us farmers. It also would mean that we farmers can feel better supported by the folks we elect to represent us in government.”

- Owen Tatum, farmer at Makeshift Farm in Derby, VT



“Vermont’s farms need the Farm Security Fund for extremely challenging seasons like this one. Farmers have planned and prepared for yearly fluctuations but can’t control the weather, nor a year in which we produce only half our usual crops. Passing and funding this bill will provide crucial support for farmers having to purchase feed we normally wouldn’t have to.”

- Jesse Wilbur, farmer at Lazy Dog Farm in Orwell, VT



“Farms are the backbone of Vermont’s culture, heritage, and economy. They contribute in so many ways to food security, land stewardship, tourism, jobs. The list is endless. We need to support farmers through the Farm Security Fund to ensure that farms can weather this changing climate and thrive as they protect our working lands.”

- Meg Emmons, farmer at Bourdon Maple Farm in Woodstock, VT

Municipal Exemption for Agriculture



NOFA-VT is aligned with many other farming organizations in seeking to restore agriculture's long standing exemption from municipal regulation.

Farmers and those seeking to produce their own food should be able to depend on a clear and consistent regulatory framework under AAFM.

NOFA-VT Staff in the State House



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Thank You!

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