



— SINCE 1985 —

RURAL VERMONT

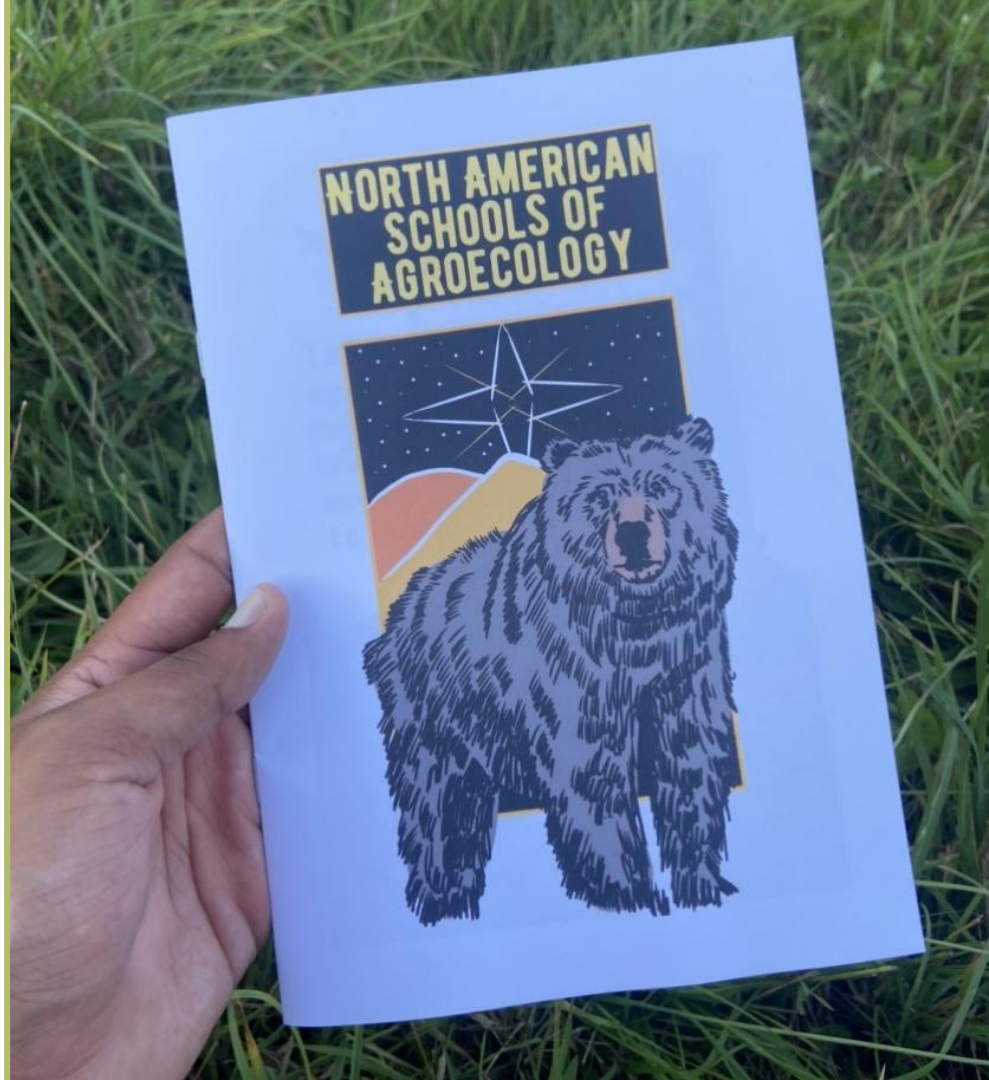




Mission

Rural Vermont organizes, educates and advocates in collaboration with local and global movements to strengthen the social, ecological and economic health of the agrarian communities that connect us all.





Farmers Finding a Voice In New Vermont Group



Associated Press.

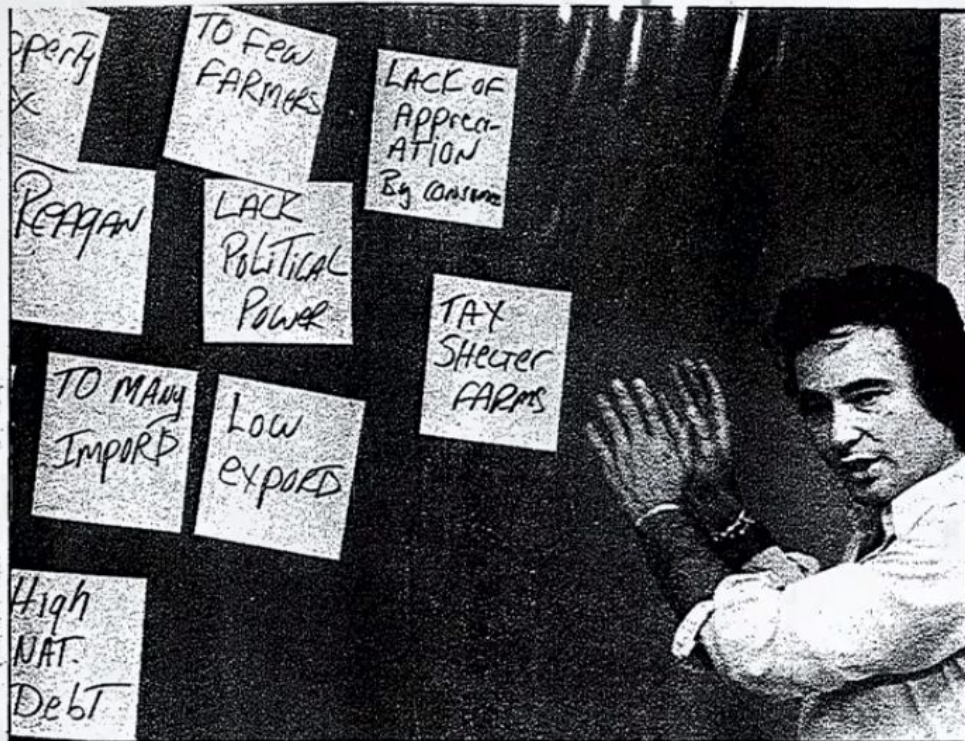
Speaking out: Anthony Pollina, director of Rural Vermont, left, talking this summer with Stanley Christiansen, a farmer in East Montpelier, Vt., about issues facing farmers.

1986

FARMERS WORK
HARD ENOUGH TO BE
ENTITLED TO THE
AMERICAN STANDARD
of
LIVING



1986



Globe photo/Toby Talbot
Anthony Pollina, an organizer of the United Farmer and Rancher Congress, points to a blackboard identifying some of the problems facing farmers. The meeting was held last week in Morrisville, Vt.

'Last-ditch attempt for survival'

Farmers fighting regulations they say will drive them down

Milk-Dumping Protest Escalates in Vermont



1986

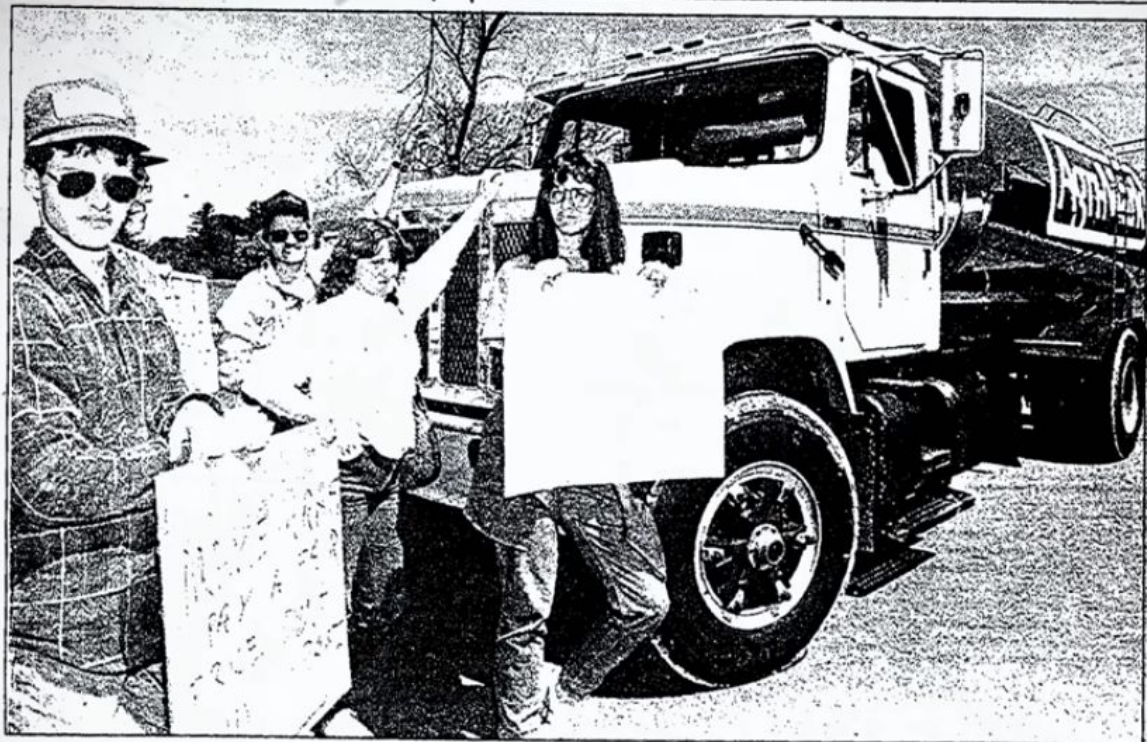
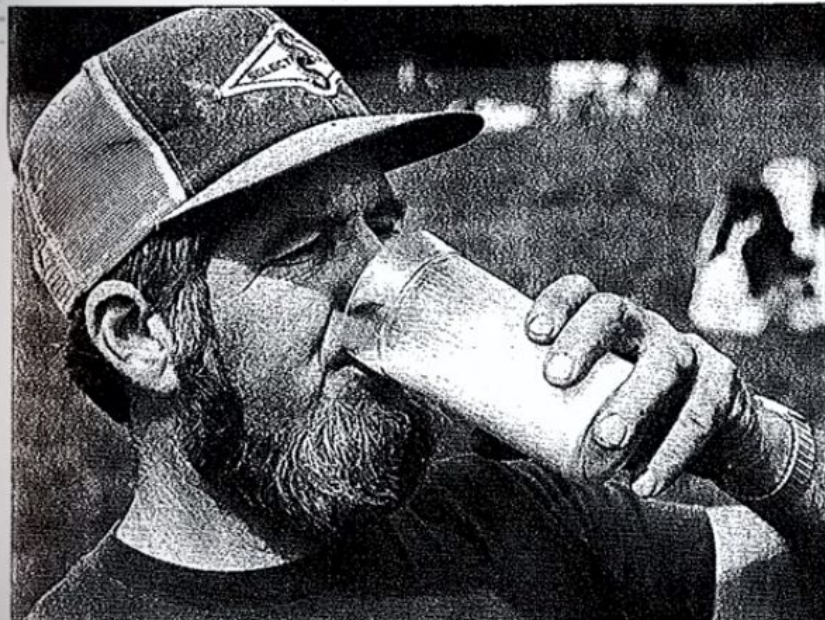


Photo by Sandy Macys

Farm protesters block a driver trying to deliver milk to the Kraft cheese plant in Middlebury Saturday. Farmers charge that the company has profited from record low milk prices and has lobbied against a federal bill that would have boosted farm income.

Farmers Blockade Kraft Cheese Plant In Middlebury In Milk-Price Protest

1991



GLOBE PHOTO / VYTO STARINSKAS

Dairy farmer Ron Morrissette of East Randolph, Vt., opposes use of the growth hormone.

Vt. dairy interests debate use of cow growth hormone

By Yvonne Daley
SPECIAL TO THE GLOBE

EAST RANDOLPH, Vt. — Ron Morrissette, 47, a lifelong farmer, thinks of his handsome herd of Holstein cows as partners in business, partners that deserve respect and good treatment.

That is one reason he is opposed to the use of the bovine growth hormone, which, when injected into dairy cows, can increase productivity by as much as 25 percent. Morrissette calls the hormone "cow crack."

"It's a drug that's not good for the cows. It increases productivity, sure, but it takes a toll on the animals. It shortens their lifespan. It stresses the animal. It gives them mastitis," an inflammation of the udder routinely treated with antibiotics.

"Consumers don't want it. They don't want antibiotic residues in their milk, either. And

farmers don't want it because they want to put out a healthy, natural product," added Morrissette, cochairman of Rural Vermont, a farm advocacy network pushing for a more thorough review of secondary health impacts of bovine growth hormone, or BGH, on humans.

Last week, the General Accounting Office, the investigatory arm of Congress, recommended suspension of the use of the genetically engineered growth hormone and further study of its impact on human health. The GAO report was warmly received by small family farmers in Vermont such as Morrissette, as well as Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.) and Rep. Bernard Sanders (I-Vt.), both of whom have called for further research.

In its statement, the GAO also called on the federal Food and Drug Administration to halt the marketing of beef and milk from research animals treated with BGH. Although the FDA

HORMONE, Page 35

1992

Local Residents Protest Proposed Current Use Cuts



1993



1994



Thursday Morning, August 10, 1995

50¢

4 Sections ♦ 28 Pages

Vt. Milk Labeling Law Upheld

By BRYAN PFEIFFER
Vermont Press Bureau

MONTPELIER — Ruling that Vermonters care about what goes into their milk, a federal judge on Wednesday upheld a state law that requires the labeling of dairy products from cows treated with a controversial drug.

U.S. District Judge J. Garvan Murtha rejected the dairy industry's preliminary challenge to Vermont's dairy labeling law, which is scheduled to take effect Sept. 12. The law is designed to alert consumers to dairy products produced from cows injected with a growth hormone that boosts milk production.

Vermont Attorney General Jeffrey L. Amestoy, as well as consumer and farm advocates, applauded Murtha's ruling, saying it preserves the public interest in

"Vermont has a substantial interest in informing consumers of the use of rBST in the production of milk and dairy products sold in the state."

U.S. District Judge J. Garvan Murtha

knowing whether milk and other dairy products come from hormone-treated cows.

"Vermonters will have the benefit of disclosure," said Amestoy, whose office defended the law, "and consumers can make up their own minds about whether they want to buy dairy products with rBST."

The growth hormone, known as rBST,

is a genetically engineered version of a naturally occurring hormone that stimulates milk production in cows. When injected into cows, rBST causes them to produce more milk.

The Food and Drug Administration, which approved the commercial use of rBST in 1993, says it poses no threat to the food supply or to cows. Consumer groups disagree. In pushing for the Ver-

mont labeling law, they say the public at the very least has a right to know whether dairy products come from cows treated with rBST.

Six dairy trade organizations went to federal court last week for a preliminary injunction to stop Vermont from implementing the labeling law. Murtha defended the law and denied the injunction.

"Vermont has a substantial interest in informing consumers of the use of rBST in the production of milk and dairy products sold in the state," Murtha wrote in an 18-page ruling. "The Vermont labels disseminate truthful commercial information, and, contrary to the plaintiffs' assertions, do not necessarily disparage dairy products."

(See Page 6: Labels)



Sandy Macy/Times Argus

'Sending A Message'

Advocates of farming gathered at the State House in Montpelier Wednesday to send their message that more needs to be done on the federal level to help family farms. The group says that since the beginning of this year 69 Vermont farms have gone out of business. Story, Page 8

INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF
FARMERS'
STRUGGLE

TIME OUT
ON
GMOs

NO GMOs!
NO TRANSGENICS
NO OGMs!

ONE CONTAMINATED FARM
IS ONE TOO MANY!
TIME OUT ON GMOs
www.gefreevt.org



THE BARRE

MONTPELIER

TIMES

ARGUMENT

Wednesday, August 16, 2006



Established 1897

State backs off on farm IDs

By Louis Porter

VERMONT PRESS BUREAU

MONTPELIER — The state will postpone requiring Vermonters to register the locations of their farms and what livestock they raise, because of worries that the federal government will not keep the information private.

The rule has raised the hackles of some small farmers and privacy advocates around the state who believe it could be one step toward federal tracking of individual animals.

State agriculture officials have coun-

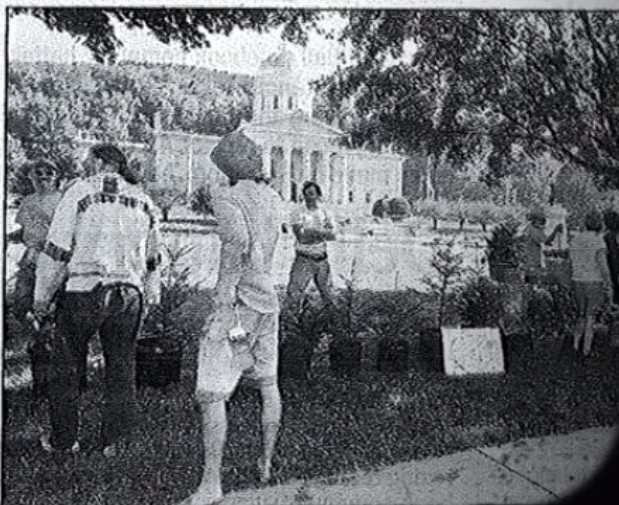
teracted with the federal government. Agriculture revealed Friday that the federal database, which includes the farm registration information, could be made public — for instance to a marketing firm — if the matter went to court, said Secretary of Agriculture Steve Kerr. About 300 farmers who have voluntarily submitted their information to the state can ask to have it removed, Kerr said.

“Given the feds’ recanting of absolute confidentiality, we are going to rethink our whole approach to this,” Kerr said. But the underlying problem remains and some substitute program will have

to be developed. Farmers can still voluntarily join the registration program.

The decision was announced as a half-dozen small farmers and vegetable growers held an unlicensed farmers market on the lawn of the Statehouse to draw attention to what they said is a lack of emphasis by the state on their kind of farming.

“What concerns me most particularly is the national animal identification program,” said Alan LePage of Barre Town, who was selling vegetables at a small stand on the side of State Street. “Government is basically untrustworthy.”



TIMES



ARGUS

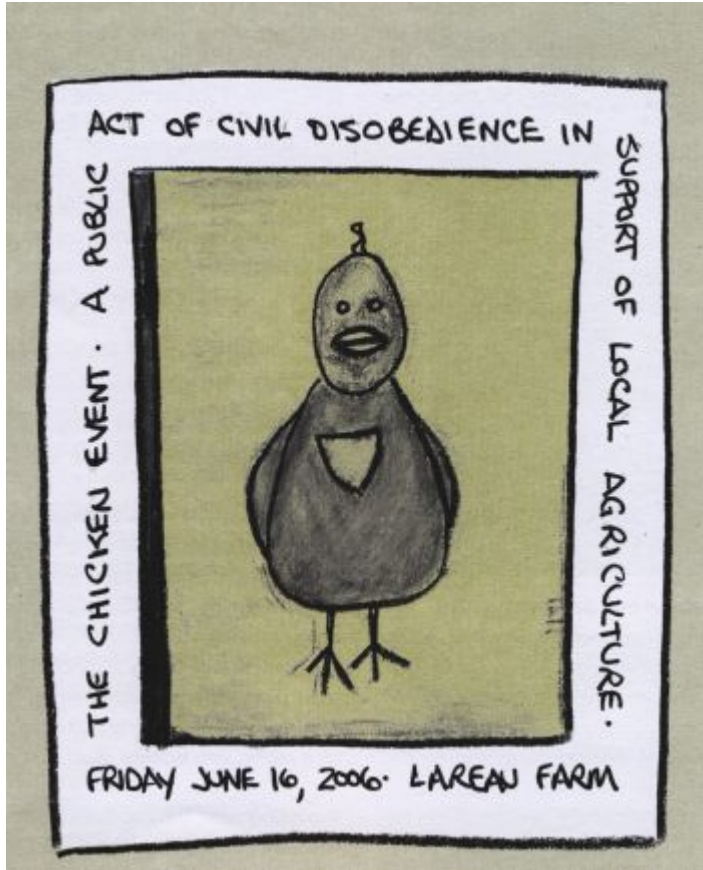
Friday, August 18, 2006



2006

Job Wallace-Brodeur/Times Argus

Rose Friedman, left, performs with a band of chicken actors during a Bread and Puppet Theater Animal Insurrection Circus on the Statehouse lawn on Thursday. The performance preceded a hearing on premises registration and was done in honor of all the animals affected by future rulings.



It began simply enough:
I wanted to buy my neighbor's chicken

2007

2008

VERMONT HEMP FARMING BILL BECOMES LAW

CONTROVERSY RESOLVED BY OPINION OF ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

“Smart and effective grassroots organizing by Vote Hemp and the Vermont-based advocacy group [Rural Vermont](#) mobilized farmers and local businesses, many of which pledged to buy their hemp raw materials in-state if they have the opportunity. Rural Vermont’s Director Amy Shollenberger says that “the Hemp for Vermont bill is another step toward legalizing this important crop for farmers. The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world that doesn’t allow this crop to be grown. Looking at the Canadian experience, hemp provides a good return for the farmer. It’s a high-yield crop and a great crop to mix in with corn.”



Jeb Wallace-Brodeur/Times Argus
Amy Shollenberger, right, director of Rural Vermont, speaks about the Farm Fresh Milk Restoration Act at the Statehouse in Montpelier on Thursday.

Some dairy farmers seek a raw deal

2008

2008-2009

Farm Fresh Milk Restoration Act



2013



Burlington Free Press

SUNDAY 04.27.14

A GANNETT COMPANY

Andrea Stander, an active supporter of GMO labeling, hugs a fellow supporter after the Vermont House backed a bill for the labeling of genetically modified foods.

EARLY MCMANAMY/FREE PRESS

2014

HOW GMO LABELING CAME TO PASS

A well-organized, well-funded, hard-fought **grassroots effort** turned skeptics into supporters of the nation's first law requiring **consumer notification on foods containing genetically modified organisms**. Story by Terri Hallenbeck, 14A







BEN+JERRY'S
SIGN
THE MILK WITH DIGNITY
AGREEMENT







HEALTHCARE IS A HUMAN RIGHT



AN OPEN LETTER
TO THE VERMONT STATE
HEALTHCARE TASK FORCE

JOIN US & SHARE YOUR STORY

ORGANIZED BY THE VT WORKERS' CENTER

People's Hearing on the Right to Healthcare

[f | Share](#)

[t | Tweet](#)

JUNE 30, 2021 - 6:00PM



**PEOPLE'S HEARING ON THE
RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE**



**Wed, June 30th
6pm over Zoom**

Do you have a healthcare story? You're not alone!

Join us on Wednesday, June 30th at 6pm for a virtual "People's Hearing on the Right to Healthcare" to share your story as we build a mandate to make healthcare a human right.



Updating On-Farm Slaughter Regulations - The LOCAL Foods Act (S. 5106)

Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA)

The Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), enacted in 1906 and last updated in 1989, regulates the slaughtering and processing of meat and meat products. It includes a "personal use" exemption that allows the person who raises an animal to slaughter it without inspection for restricted purposes.

The FMIA bases its personal use exemption on who raised the animals instead of who owns them. This means that farmers are allowed to raise, slaughter, and butcher their animals for their own use without inspection. The resulting meat products cannot be sold to customers.



Photo by Donald Campbell (Rural Vermont)

Current Standards for Personal Use

Currently, farmers and homesteaders selling livestock for on-farm slaughter by itinerant slaughterers all rely on on guidance provided by the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) in 2018, which bases the personal-use exemption on *ownership*. **Based on that FSIS guidance, 27 states allow livestock owners to designate an agent to assist in the on-farm slaughter or transportation of their livestock, and to use that meat without state or federal inspection.**

But guidance documents don't bind even the USDA officials, some of whom have threatened states with revocation of approval of their state meat inspection programs for activities that fall within that guidance document. Moreover, the USDA can change the guidance document at any time and impact Americans across the country without any formal process.

The Livestock Owned by Communities to Advance Local (LOCAL) Foods Act (S. 5106) updates the Federal Meat Inspection Act to reflect current state laws that base the personal-use exemption on ownership and will protect farmers, itinerant slaughterers, and their customers!

Personal Use Based on Ownership



Customer purchases a living animal from a farmer, and contracts that farmer to raise the animal.



An itinerant slaughterer and/or butcher is contracted to process the animal, without inspection.



The customer is able to take home and enjoy their locally raised meat!



Updating On-Farm Slaughter Regulations - The LOCAL Foods Act (S. 5106)

It's time for an update to the Federal Meat Inspection Act that will clarify and protect modern standards for on-farm slaughter! **The LOCAL Foods Act revises the FMIA to reflect current FSIS guidance and state laws and ensure that livestock owners, livestock producers, custom processors and itinerant slaughterers have permanent protection to practice on-farm slaughter in accordance with state laws.** The Act clarifies the outdated FMIA language that bases the personal use exemption on who "raised" the animals, replacing it with language grounded in "ownership" and common law principles, including the ability to use agents and the ability to assume risks.



Updating the Federal Meat Inspection Act by passing the LOCAL Foods Act will:



Relieve pressure on backlogged slaughterhouses and lower transportation costs and emissions



Improve animal welfare as family-scale farmers are able to raise livestock more humanely, and livestock does not face the stress of transportation to slaughter.



Meet the demand for local meat by offering more slaughtering options, and enhance farm viability, local market connections, and food security.



Provide clarity and certainty for state meat inspection programs operating in accordance with FMIA statutory and regulatory provisions.

The LOCAL Foods Act is an important opportunity for legislative support for farm viability and local food markets. Until this change is made, farmers and consumers are vulnerable to agency discretion, and state laws in support of the personal use exemption can be effectively nullified, putting these pathways towards farm viability and food security at risk. Farmers and ranchers need to feel confident that they are complying with slaughtering regulations, are secure in planning their business, and are guaranteed the right to continue this long-standing practice.

For more information please contact:

Caroline Sherman-Gordon
Legislative Director, Rural Vermont
caroline@ruralvermont.org

The 2024 Short Course in People's Agroecology - Presented by Rural Vermont and the People's Agroecology School of Vermont

Friday, October 4 through Tuesday, October 8. Based at Wheelock Mountain Farm in Greensboro Bend, with daily field trips and collaborations with farms and allies in East Hardwick, Stannard, Barre, Glover, Groton, Hartland, Bethel and Quechee.

OBJECTIVES

1. Participants will become familiar with the core concepts of agroecology, sustainable land management, food sovereignty, the VT/NE context from farmers and farmworkers, and the role of social movements in ushering in revolutionary change. **"Changing the story"**
2. Participants will experience hands-on methods and refine on-farm skills for building a stronger grassroots base through agroecological work brigades. **"Building the bigger we"**
3. Participants will build relationships with allies across Vermont, the US, Canada, and Puerto Rico that facilitate long-term collaboration, solidarity, and accompanying of farmers, movement coordination, exchange, and the collaboration of movement-led educational programs with an internationalist lens. **"Build the new"**
4. Outcomes of the brigades will reflect the agroecological practices of the Vermont landscape and context, with the intent of participants being able to adapt techniques to their own communities and contexts. Students will be connected to grassroots organizing networks and movements rooted in agroecological growing and food sovereignty in North America and the Caribbean.

SEMILLAS, ALIMENTOS Y CULTURA -CON YORLIS GABRIEL LUNA-

LUNES
13
FEBRERO

LA
IGLESIA
GREENSBORO
UNITED

5:30 - 8
PM



FREDDY
CONGO SUAREZ
2023 NOMINEE
FOR THE
AGROECOLOGY, EDUCATION
AND ORGANIZING
FELLOWSHIP AWARD









SUNDAY
9.29.24

CHICKEN PROCESSING WORKSHOP
@ UNION BROOK FARM, NORTHFIELD

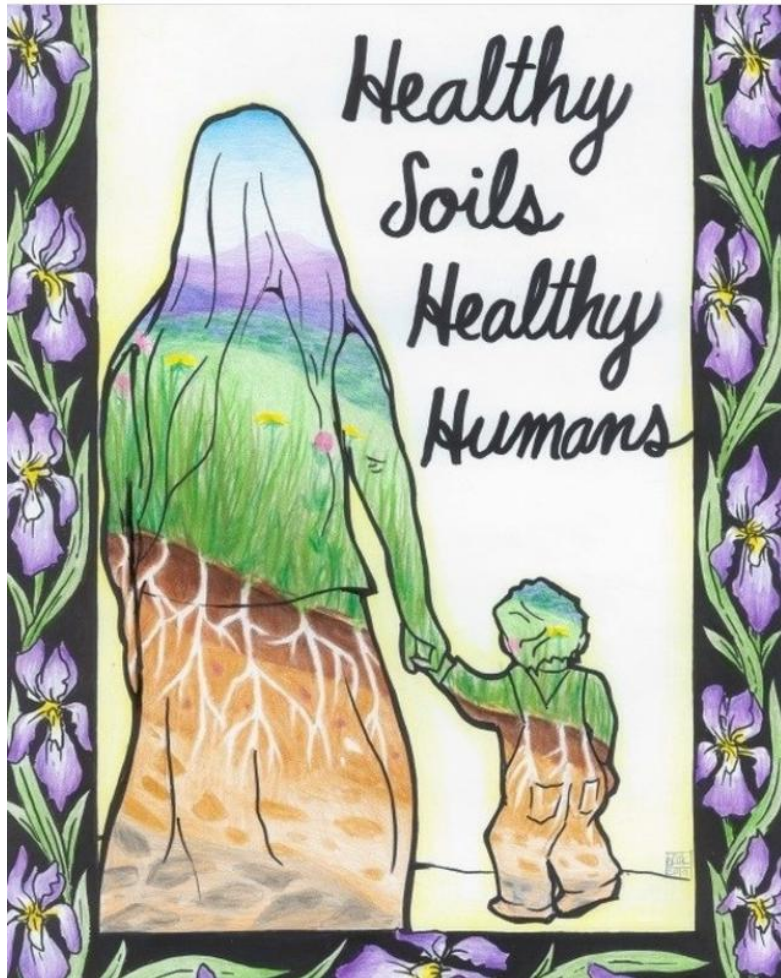
**GENEROUSLY
SPONSORED BY
HANOVER CO-OP
FOOD STORES**

REGISTRATION & DETAILS: WWW.RURALVERMONT.ORG/EVENTS





POWER
TO THE
FARMERS





Art by Rose Friedman Justin and Lander

An aerial photograph showing a rural landscape with significant flooding. A two-lane road runs vertically through the center. To the right, a large area of water has inundated fields and farm buildings. In the foreground, there is a large farm complex with a long, low building with a corrugated metal roof and a smaller house. Cornfields are visible on both sides of the road. The background shows more green fields and a dense line of trees.

VT Farm Security Fund



Who is the VCEC? We are a coalition representing communities across Vermont that came together to support a cannabis economy that is racially just, economically equitable, agriculturally accessible, and environmentally sound for all Vermonters.

Priorities:

- Social Equity: Cannabis Business Dev. Fund and Community Reinvestment Base Funding
- Agricultural status for outdoor producers; striking new cultivation districts and setbacks
- Direct Market Access for Tier 1 and 2 cultivators, Tier 1 manufactures, and Propagators
- Public Consumption
- Home Grow Expansion
- Medical

Fair Share For Vermont

Fair Share for Vermont is a proposal to increase taxes on the wealthiest Vermont residents to build a better Vermont for all of us.

What will the Fair Share for Vermont Proposal do?

The Fair Share for Vermont proposal is a **3% personal income tax surcharge** on annual income over \$500,000.

The proposal will raise approximately **\$98 million each year** in state tax revenue.

The proposal will only affect the **wealthiest 2%** of Vermont taxpayers.

More revenue means more money for **fixing our roads and bridges**, funding **schools** where our students can thrive, supporting **Vermont families**, increasing access to **healthcare and housing**, and protecting **our environment**.



PROTECT OUR POLLINATORS



SUPPORT OUR FARMERS