

An aerial photograph of a Vermont farm. The foreground shows a large, green field with several rectangular plots covered in blue plastic mulch, likely for vegetable production. A small white building is visible in the middle ground. In the background, a blue pond is surrounded by dense green trees, and rolling hills are visible under a clear sky. The image is framed by green decorative bars at the top and bottom.

# FOOD SECURITY IN VERMONT: ROADMAP TO 2035

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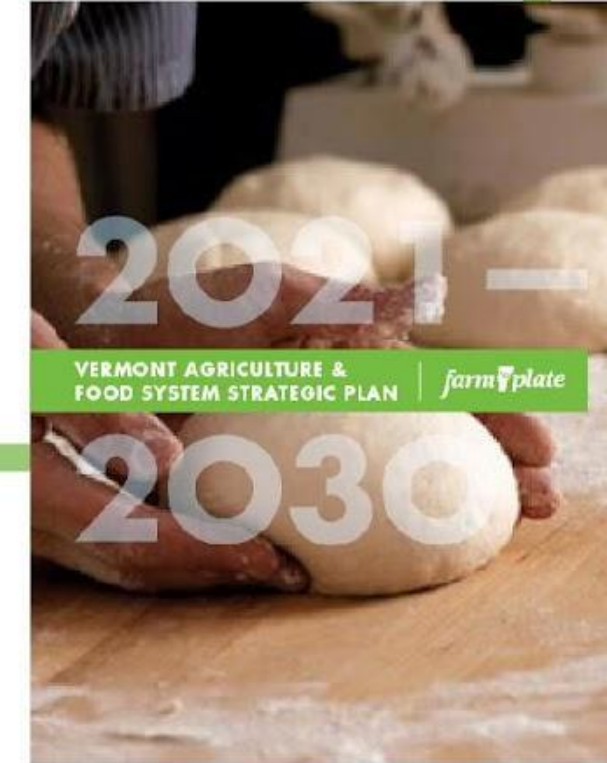
The Vermont Food Security  
Roadmap Coalition

# Today's Presentation

- 1. About The Food Security Roadmap** Our guide for excellent policy choices
- 2. Are Vermonters Food Secure?**
- 3. Policy Requests** to keep us on the road to food security.

# Farm to Plate Investment Program sets forth three Legislative Outcomes

1. Increase sustainable economic development and create jobs in Vermont's food and farm sector
2. Improve soils, water, and resiliency of the working landscape in the face of climate change
3. Improve access to healthy local foods for all Vermonters



**Vermont Agriculture & Food System Strategic Plan 2021-2030**

**24. Develop a Vermont food security plan, centered around a thriving food system and inspired by community-based responses to food insecurity and disruptive events. Involve food insecure individuals as well as farmers in the planning, and investigate questions including, but not limited to, affordable housing, health care, transportation, siting of retail grocery stores, food distribution, and ensuring the continued production of food in Vermont. Work to adopt state and regional level policies, procedures, and plans to ensure that the Vermont food supply is sufficient to withstand global or national food supply chain disruptions caused by climate change and other disasters.**

6 8 10 11 12 13 14 15

**Priority**

19. Support capital...  
20. Quantify...  
21. Invest in...  
22. Increase...  
23. Build...  
24. Develop...  
25. Map...  
26. To better...

**Priority Strategy #24**  
p. 32



**FOOD SECURITY IN VERMONT: ROADMAP TO 2035**

farmplate



# OUR VISION FOR **2035**

We are on the road to food security for everyone in Vermont

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## “Develop a Vermont Food Security Plan”

- *Vermont Agriculture and Food System Strategic Plan 2021-2030*
- *Vermont Climate Action Plan*
- *Governor’s Commission on the Future of Agriculture*



## Statewide Community Input Process, 2022

- 600+ Vermonters
- Interviews, focus groups, survey, research
- Prioritize input from people most impacted



# ROADMAP

## GOALS

**COMMUNITIES** have the tools to support food security.

**VERMONT FARMS** have the resources to be resilient.

**GOVERNMENT** ensures food security for all in Vermont.





# ROADMAP COALITION

## Partners



- Hunger Free Vermont
- NOFA-VT
- Vermont Foodbank
- Intervale Center
- Feeding the Valley Alliance
- Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund
- Land Access and Opportunity Board



FEEDING THE  
VALLEY  
ALLIANCE



**Vermont  
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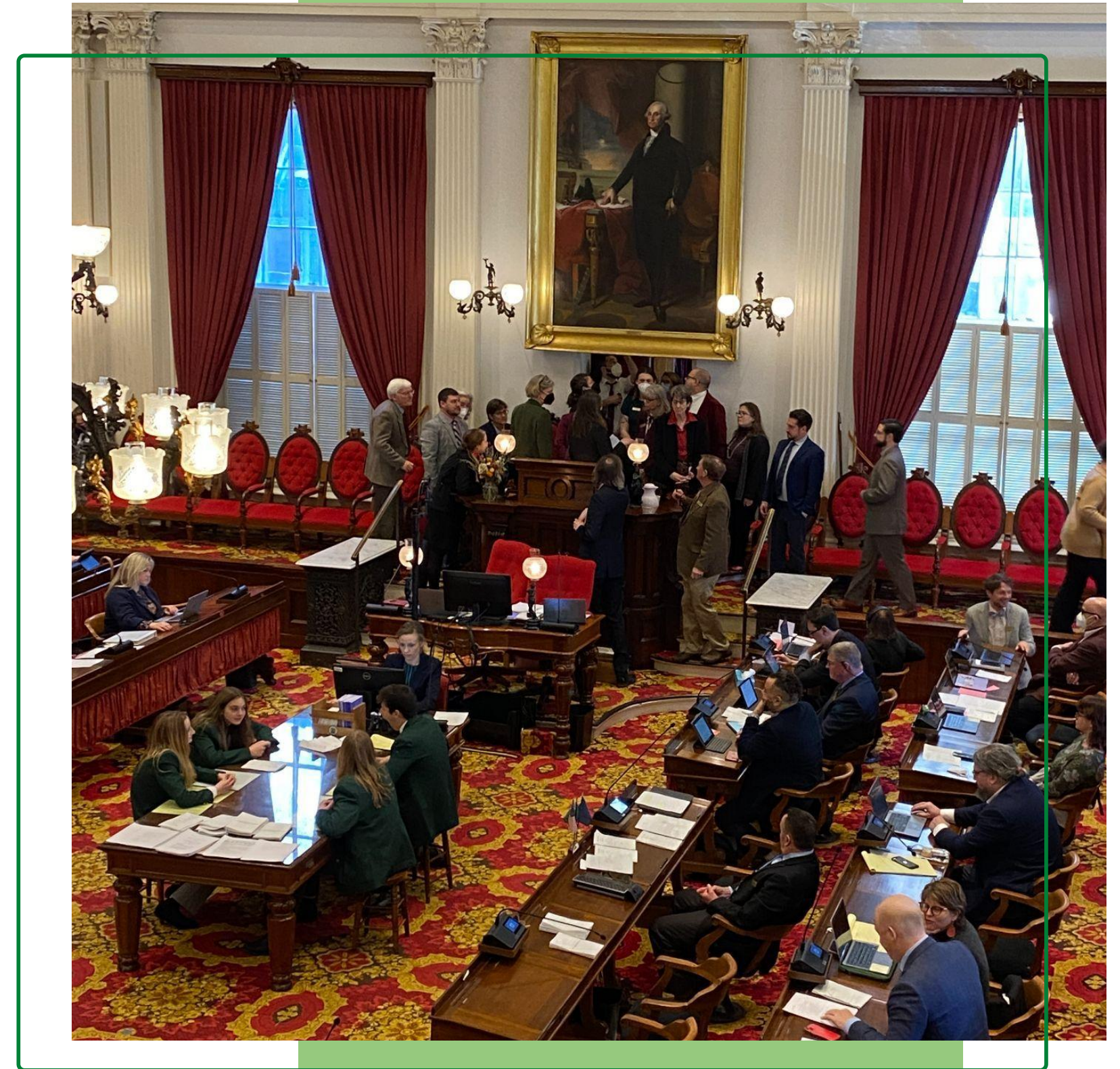
**The Land Access and Opportunity Board**



# WE ARE ALREADY ON THE ROAD

## RECENTLY, THE LEGISLATURE:

- **Appropriated funds for:**
  - Crop Cash & Farm Share
  - Vermont Foodbank and its network of food shelves & meal sites
  - Meals on Wheels
  - Land Access & Opportunity Board
  - Universal School Meals
  - Farm to School & Early Childhood Grants & the Local Purchasing Incentive
  - Recovery for flooded farms & businesses
  - VT-211 to return to 24/7 service
- **Act 143/S.310** added critical food security language to emergency planning & commissioned a SNAP Restaurant Meals Program report



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# ECONOMIC SECURITY QUOTES

“Nothing would really change until poverty and economic inequality are shifted... People aren't only hungry because of inadequate food access programs”

“Food insecurity is a function of financial insecurity”



“I'm down to eating one meal a day so I don't need to choose between paying a huge energy bill or [being] able to eat a meal.”

# ECONOMIC SECURITY DATA

- According to the most recent Joint Fiscal Office Basic Needs Budget report (2022), fewer than half of single-adult households in Vermont (with or without children) could meet their basic needs\*

\*[2022 Vermont Basic Needs Budgets And Livable Wage Report](#) (new data expected in 2025)

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- **Prices are slightly above the national average, while wages are only 84% of the national average, ranking 32nd in the country and the second lowest in New England\*\*\***

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- Prices are slightly above the national average, while wages are only 84% of the national average, ranking 32nd in the country and the second lowest in New England\*\*\*
- **Vermonters of color experience higher rates of poverty, with Black Vermonters and Indigenous Vermonters facing twice the state average poverty rate\*\*\*\***

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\*\*[American Community Survey Data, 2023](#)

\*\*\*[U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis](#) & [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

\*\*\*\*[American Community Survey Data, Poverty by Race, 2023](#)

# FOOD SECURITY QUOTES

“We are your neighbors, we worked hard, we had illness or accidents, we are poor or poorer than we used to be and we can’t afford the food we need.”

“No one should go hungry or not have access to healthy food options.”



“I think COVID and its lingering effects have shown that food security is not just about access but about supply chain resilience. I think work on food security should take both into account.”



# FOOD SECURITY DATA

- **From United States Department of Agriculture Data, we know that since the end of pandemic government supports, food insecurity has risen each year both nationally and in Vermont.\***

\*Rabbitt, M.P., Reed-Jones, M., Hales, L.J., & Burke, M.P. (2024). [Household food security in the United States in 2023](#) (Report No. ERR-337). U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

# FOOD SECURITY DATA

- From United States Department of Agriculture Data, we know that since the end of pandemic government supports, food insecurity has risen each year both nationally and in Vermont.\*
- **An average of 72k people per month use the Foodbank's network of food access locations across the state.\*\***

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- **65,000 people in Vermont receive 3SquaresVT benefits\*\*\***

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\*\*Data source: Vermont Foodbank.

\*\*\*Prepared by Economic Services Division, Process and Performance Unit Source: [Household and Recipient figures are from PPR extracts of ACCESS data.](#)

# AGRICULTURAL

## QUOTES

"If we can find a way to feed people healthfully and affordably and keep their dollars in Vermont that would be the gold standard."

"I haven't really raised my prices in many, many years, and the cost of everything has gone up. I want lower income people to have access to organic, nutrient dense food, and so how do I still make a living and make my product affordable?"



**"I feel confident about farmers' ability to grow lots of delicious nutritious food – it's about who has the money to access it."**

# AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCE DATA

- According to the 2022 Economic Census, Vermont's food system generated over **\$14.4 billion** in direct economic impact (sales), including **\$1.6 billion in direct wages (reported in 2024 dollars)**.\*



\* [2022: ECN Core Statistics Summary Statistics for the U.S., States, and Selected Geographies: 2022](#)

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- Catastrophic flooding in 2023 caused **\$44.7 million in damage and losses** to the state's farm businesses. The state provided **\$3.7 million** in relief to farms and other working lands businesses through the BEGAP program.\*\*\*

\* [2022: ECN Core Statistics Summary Statistics for the U.S., States, and Selected Geographies: 2022](#)

\*\* [2022 Census of Agriculture - State Data USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service](#)

\*\*\* [Vermont Agriculture Recovery Task Force Extreme Weather Impact & Recovery Final Report: July 2024](#)

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# **ROADMAP PRIORITIES**

## **FOR 2025**

- **FOOD ACCESS**
- **AGRICULTURE**
- **COMMUNITY**





## **FOOD ACCESS PRIORITIES**

- Pass legislation to implement the SNAP Restaurant Meals Program in VT, including funding for administration and restaurant equipment costs.
- Fund Vermont Foodbank's request for \$1.75M in base funding to support responsive readiness & \$3.25M for food purchase and distribution.
- Increase public investment in NOFA-VT's Crop Cash (Plus) and Farm Share programs to \$500k in base funding.

# AGRICULTURE PRIORITIES

- Pass the Farm Security Fund to support farmers in recovering from climate emergencies or extreme weather events.
- Continue to support the Land Access and Opportunity Board (LAOB) so it can perform its statutory powers and duties for improving land and housing access among historically marginalized or disadvantaged communities.





# COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

- Expand and increase the accessibility of the Vermont Earned Income Tax Credit and the Vermont Child Tax Credit.
- Convert \$323,000 in one-time funding for Vermont 211 to base funding.



**Learn more at**

[vtfarmtoplate.com/vermont-food-security-roadmap](https://vtfarmtoplate.com/vermont-food-security-roadmap)



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# ROADMAP COALITION IN THE STATE HOUSE

## HUNGER FREE VERMONT



**Anore Horton**

Executive Director



**Autumn Moen**

Legislative Policy  
Lead

# ROADMAP COALITION IN THE STATE HOUSE

## NOFA-VT



**Jessica Hays Lucas**

Grassroots Policy  
Organizer



**Maddie Kempner**

Policy & Organizing  
Director



**Grace Oedel**

Executive Director



**Johanna Doren**

Local Food  
Access Director

# ROADMAP COALITION IN THE STATE HOUSE

## VERMONT FOODBANK



**John Sayles**

CEO



**Carrie Stahler**

Sr. Manager of  
Government Affairs



# **ROADMAP COALITION IN THE STATE HOUSE**

## **VERMONT SUSTAINABLE JOBS FUND**



**Ellen Kahler**

Executive Director



**Jake Claro**

Director  
VT Farm to Plate

# ROADMAP COALITION IN THE STATE HOUSE



**Monica Collins**

Feeding the  
Valley Alliance



**Becka Warren**

Food Security  
Coalition Manager



**THANK YOU**

QUESTIONS?