

*Farmers
Working
Together*



*For a Thriving
Agriculture and
a Clean Lake
Champlain*

January 22, 2020

2019 Annual Report

Membership

Total Current Membership is at 148, with 98 farm members representing 59 Small Farms, 26 Medium Farms, and 12 Large Farms. Our members represent all types of agriculture including dairy, beef, poultry, vegetable, and small grains/cash crops. Member farms operate over 84,000 acres of corn, beans, vegetables, hay and pasture in the Lake Champlain watershed. We also have 8 individual members, 40 supporting business members and 2 special director members.

Farmer Education - Partner with UVM Extension Crop, Soil & Pasture Team

- CVFC co-hosted (with UVM Extension) farmer workshops and field meetings as follows:
 - Farm Financial Management, Planning & Record Keeping
 - Organic Crop & Fertility Management
 - Making System Work: No-Till, Cover Crops and Manure (+ annual manure certification exam)
 - Spring Cover Crop Showcase
 - Buffers & Grassed Waterways Field Day
 - **Total Farmer Educational Outreach through farmer meetings was 85 attendees from 5 events**
- Provided technical assistance to 14 farms to implement conservation practices
- Sponsored Payment for Ecosystems Services Think Tank Meeting in Bridport with LandStream and Vermont Grass Farmers Association.
- Monthly Board of Directors Meetings for formal organization business, open member meeting for presentations and discussion about the latest in water quality and farm viability issues.
- We were an exhibitor to promote CVFC at events including the VT Farm Show, No-Till and Cover Crop Symposium, Legislative Dairy Reception, and Addison County Ag Showcase in Middlebury.
- Weekly Legislative Updates to CVFC members about weekly activity in Montpelier.

Legislative Outreach

- Testified in January 2019 on the pivotal initial conversation with the legislature on the topic of Payment for Ecosystem Services. Director, Tim Kayhart, read a letter prepared by all three farmer watershed groups in support of a pilot project on this subject.
- Members gave testimony to the Wetlands study committee and participated actively in meetings and responding to surveys on ANR's proposal to move jurisdiction of ag wetlands away from the Agency of Agriculture and change permitting requirements and other policies. The committee ultimately recommended leaving things the way they are.
- Brian Kemp participated as a CVFC representative on the Payment for Ecosystem Services working group, which recently submitted a report to the legislature for review this session.

Public Education

- Members hosted school field trips on their farms to learn about farming practices.
- We were an exhibitor to promote CVFC and educate the public at events including the VT Farm Show, No-Till and Cover Crop Symposium, Legislative Dairy Reception, and Addison County Ag Showcase.
- *NEW THIS YEAR: Daily Demonstrations of no-till planting practices at Addison County Field Days*

Partnerships

- Worked with the Addison County Riverwatch Collaborative to improve communication between farmer landowners and monitoring volunteers/staff. Looking forward to more work in 2020.
- Co-wrote PES letter with Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance and Franklin-Grand Isle Farmers Watershed Alliance representing unprecedented organization and collaboration among Vermont Farmers. These groups meet annually (at Vermont Farm Show) to share progress and priorities.
- Marie Audet & Brian Kemp actively participated in the Dairy Water Quality Collaborative group, where Vermont's farmer organizations and environmental groups are at the same table.
- Joined Vermont Farm Bureau and created a reciprocal membership with Addison County Chamber of Commerce.

Staff Transition

2019 saw the transition of our two staff members, Louise Waterman and Nate Severy. While we miss their energy and leadership immensely, we are also excited for a new phase for CVFC with a future hire of an Executive Director and a communications consultant. Please help us spread the word.

Strategic Plan Goals:

1. Promote and train members on innovative farm practices that are adopted by 100% of CVFC Membership.
2. Raise public perception of farmers as worthy environmental stewards of the land and waterways.
3. Acquire stable funding for CVFC staff and programming to include Executive Director, Program Manager and Treasurer.
4. Expand communications externally and internally.
5. Collaborate with other organizations, both agriculture and non-agriculture, to strengthen our voice and expand our understanding of all voices on the water quality topic.
6. Continue to grow a well-respected and involved organization whose members participate in organizational activities.

Funding

Our current funding is primarily from a grant from the Agency of Agriculture's Clean Water Initiative Program. Along with support from UVM Extension and from membership dues, we are able to have an organization that provides a complete and effective set of programs for its members.

Thank you members for your support!

www.champlainvalleyfarmercoalition.com